

INSPECTION REPORT

DOSTHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dosthill, Tamworth

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124154

Headteacher: Mr T G Hand

Lead inspector: Mrs Sue Chesters
Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 255983
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:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	547
School address:	High Street Dosthill Tamworth Staffordshire
Postcode:	B77 1LQ
Telephone number:	01827 475155
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Dix
Date of previous inspection:	09/11/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dosthill Primary School is situated in the village of Dosthill, Staffordshire, to the south of Tamworth. It is larger than most primary schools with 547 pupils on roll. Additionally, there are 28 children who attend the nursery part-time. The roll is slightly less than at the time of the last inspection. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is about 8 per cent of the total roll, which is lower than average. The school serves a well-established community with most pupils drawn from the immediate area. The vast majority of pupils are from a white British cultural heritage background. Three per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The main heritage background of those is Indian Asian British. For two per cent of pupils, English is not their first language. There are no pupils at an early stage of acquiring English. There are nine per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is below average. The needs of these pupils range from moderate or severe learning difficulties to autism and physical disabilities. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. Overall, children's attainments on entry to the nursery and reception classes are average. There are four per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals. This is below average. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2002 and an Activemark silver award for sport in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23196	Sue Chesters	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, science, music
9163	Geoff Humphrey	Lay inspector	
32834	Ged Pinder	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, physical education
2759	Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	English, geography, history
15292	Jan Pollard	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, special educational needs, citizenship, religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good, effective** school which gives **good** value for money. The school is very well led by the headteacher and governance is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics and science are well above average in Year 6. Standards in English are above average throughout the school. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Standards in physical education are above average throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school enabling pupils to achieve well and reach above average standards overall.
- Assessment is good, although the school has identified that there needs to be more consistency in its policy for marking. Pupils could be more involved with assessing how well they are learning.
- The pupils take great pride in their school, have very good attitudes, behave very well and show great respect for each other and for all staff. There is a good behaviour policy, although it needs updating to reinforce a consistent approach to managing behaviour throughout the school.
- The school has a good curriculum, which is very successfully enriched by very good quality extra-curricular activities and opportunities outside lessons. Links between subjects are developing well but could be improved further, particularly in information and communication technology.
- Parts of the accommodation are unsatisfactory.

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed the issues raised then. Information and communication technology (ICT) now has a higher profile in the work of the school, staff expertise has improved and pupils achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. Subject leaders are more involved in the management of their curriculum areas. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. It is now very good and gives children in the Foundation Stage a very good start to their education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall achievement is **good**. The majority of children start school with average levels of attainment. They achieve well in the pre-reception and reception classes and, by the start of Year 1, most will reach the goals set for each area of learning. About one third of this year's reception class are likely to exceed the goals set. Pupils achieve well through Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, reach above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to achieve well. In Years 5 and 6, achievement accelerates as pupils build on skills acquired earlier. Thus, by the end of Year 6, standards in English are above average and, in mathematics and science, they are well above average. The table above shows that in the national tests in 2003, results in English and mathematics were well above average, and in science, they were above average. When compared with similar schools,

these results were average in English, above average in mathematics and below average in science. Indications are that results will be higher this year, particularly in science. It is likely that more pupils will achieve the higher than expected level, Level 5, in the 2004 tests.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at play. They have very good attitudes to school and show great respect for other people's feelings and beliefs. Relationships are very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good. Overall, teaching is good in Years 1 to 6. Staff work together as a good team. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will work hard and behave well. This results in the pupils working very hard in a busy, purposeful atmosphere. Teachers know their pupils very well and use this knowledge effectively to plan work for most groups. Assessment procedures are good, although, opportunities are missed to engage pupils in assessing their own work. Many lessons are exciting and allow pupils to work practically and become involved actively in their learning. The curriculum is good. It is very successfully enhanced by educational visits and by a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs. Good links are made between subjects. However, these could be developed further, particularly in the use of information and communication technology. The mobile classrooms are not entirely satisfactory. They inhibit the use of information and communication technology because they are not as secure as the main building. It also makes art and design lessons and some science investigations problematic because water has to be carried from the main building. The school works very well with parents, with the local community and with other schools. It cares for and supports its pupils very well. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of the education. These attributes ensure a good education for all pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the governance and leadership of the school are **very good**. It is managed **well**. The school has a very good headteacher who is committed to providing the best for the whole school community. He is very successfully supported by staff and governors. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents speak very highly of the school and have very positive views about its work. They feel that it cares very well for their children. The children say that they are proud of the school and like coming to school very much. They are confident that the staff value them and listen to their views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- draw together the good marking practice which exists and implement a consistent system throughout the school which will also involve pupils in assessing their own learning;
- update the behaviour policy in order to reinforce a consistent approach to managing behaviour throughout the school;
- improve curriculum links, particularly in information and communication technology;
- continue to seek ways to improve the accommodation in order to reduce the barriers to learning presented by the mobile classrooms.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall standards are **above average** and pupils achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English throughout the school are above average.
- Standards in mathematics and science in Year 6 are well above average.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.

Commentary

1. There has been an upward trend in standards in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. This trend has roughly mirrored the national trend, although standards have remained above the national averages. Indications are that results in this year's (2004) national tests at the end of Year 6 will continue the upward trend in all three subjects. It is likely that the number of pupils reaching the higher than expected level (level 5) will be higher than in previous years. This represents continuing good improvement.
2. The majority of children begin school with levels of attainment that are expected for the age group. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage¹ because of the very good provision made for them. This year's group is on course to reach the goals set for each area of learning. About one third are likely to exceed the goals.
3. The 2003 results in national tests for six-year-olds were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. When compared with similar schools, these results were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. The table below shows the results of the 2003 national tests and tasks for six-year-olds.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The results in national tests in 2003 for Year 6 pupils were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When compared with similar schools, these results were average in English, above average in mathematics and well below average in science. The table on the next page shows the 2003 results. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Physical education (PE) standards are also above average.

¹ The Foundation Stage is the curriculum for those children in the pre-reception and reception classes. There are six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage; personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. There are average goals set in each of these areas which it is expected children will reach by the time they start Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.5 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 84 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. They do this because:

- the good quality teaching results in good quality learning;
- the curriculum is good and matches their needs;
- they enjoy lessons and work very hard.

Achievement accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Pupils use the skills that they have acquired earlier and build on them successfully in the upper year groups. This boosts achievement and impacts positively on standards at the end of Year 6.

6. Standards in ICT are above average throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were low. Standards have risen because:

- staff have more confidence to teach ICT because their skills are better;
- the school has improved hardware and software enabling more pupils to become competent ICT users;
- the subject is well led and staff receive clear guidance on how to manage ICT lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are overall **very good**. Pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes is **very good**. They have **very good** attitudes to school and respect other pupils' feelings and beliefs. Relationships between pupils and adults in the school are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning help them to be interested in school life and they want to learn during lessons.
- Many opportunities are available to help pupils develop confidence and self-awareness. They are able to take responsibility.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good during lessons, in assemblies and in the playground.
- Pupils' relationships with adults and their peers are very good and they have a very good understanding of right and wrong.
- Attendance is satisfactory because of more rigorous procedures and better co-operation by parents.

Commentary

7. Pupils listen attentively and are interested in their learning. They respond very well in the lessons and are keen to discuss and carry out their tasks willingly. Good relationships ensure that they enjoy their work. Pupils' self-awareness develops well because the quality of discussion allows them to respond to questions in their own time, giving them time to think and reflect. Regular opportunities for considering personal issues are given in assemblies, when pupils think about hardship, unfairness and ways of sharing food for those in need. These support the positive attitudes within the school and contribute towards pupils' spiritual development and awareness. Pupils gain in confidence through discussing issues to take to the School Council. Pupils say that they can get things changed and they can be active in the way in which the school develops. For example, the pupils are excited that the new litter bins that they asked for have now arrived.

8. Behaviour is very good throughout the school. There is no evidence of any bullying behaviour. Pupils identified with the theatre group's portrayal of bullying and learn the ways to prevent this happening. They behave well in assemblies; but there is little space when the whole school is in the hall. Pupils know the school rules and are happy to keep them. Staff use the behaviour policy well to maintain pupils' good behaviour. However, the school has identified that the policy needs reviewing and updating so that it continues to be implemented consistently.
9. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. Staff are good role models and encourage the pupils. They show concern for all the pupils' individual needs. Moral development is taught through assemblies and supported in religious education. Circle Time² also helps pupils to understand and reflect, ensuring that positive messages are encouraged.
10. Pupils' social development is also very good. In the classroom, pupils work well together in small groups, sharing books and materials. At playtime they are considerate to each other. There are good relationships between pupils and adults and this creates a secure environment for the pupils. Pupils' cultural awareness is enriched through a number of visits to local churches, art galleries and sports events. Visitors come to the school to make pupils aware of the culturally diverse society. Through assemblies, as well as lessons such as literacy, history and music, pupils are also made aware of their own culture and the contributions of other cultures to society.

Attendance

11. The introduction of more rigorous procedures and better co-operation by parents has raised attendance, which is now in line with national expectations. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Exclusions

12. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.3*
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.2*
National data:	0.4

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

** The school's figures are for the year 2003-2004. The national data is for 2002-2003*

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
541	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
8	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0

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

² Circle Time: in these sessions, pupils sit in a circle and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues which touch them all.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides **good** quality education. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **good**, although there is room for further improvement in links between subjects, particularly with ICT. The school takes **very good** care of its pupils and they feel valued and secure. There are **very good** links with parents, with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. This is good improvement since the last inspection. As a result, all pupils achieve well. Assessment is **good** but opportunities are missed to involve pupils in assessing their own learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good.
- Teachers have very high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard, which result in pupils working very well together and independently.
- Teachers generally plan challenging activities for pupils. Occasionally, lessons with less challenge result in pupils' interest waning.
- There are good assessment systems, although the school has identified that pupils could be more involved in assessing their own work.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. This results in very good learning. Children make a very good start in the pre-reception and reception classes because they are taught so well. Teaching is very good because all staff:
 - work together as a very strong team;
 - plan exciting and challenging activities which engage the children's imagination and enable them to achieve well;
 - value all of the children's contributions which means that children are not afraid to make mistakes and are eager to try hard.
14. Teachers, throughout the school, have high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard. As a result, pupils do. They say that they enjoy their lessons because they know that staff listen to them and appreciate their ideas. Pupils are, therefore, very keen to do their best and work hard. Teachers plan opportunities into lessons for pupils to share their ideas and discuss their work. This enables pupils to work very successfully, not only independently, but also collaboratively.
15. Many lessons are planned so that pupils are involved in practical activities. Teachers plan a wide range of challenging activities which enable pupils to take charge of their own learning. Thus, pupils learn effectively because they have to organise the way in which they are going to tackle the problems presented. This is particularly evident in science and design and technology lessons. Teachers expect pupils to make their own choices about resources that they are going to use to complete the task set and to plan how they will achieve that task. Very occasionally, lessons do not have adequate challenge. In such lessons, pupils lose interest and the pace of learning and the quality of their behaviour dips. To address this, the school has planned to review teaching and learning styles and to update the behaviour policy to ensure that it is used consistently.
16. There are good assessment procedures in place which teachers use well to provide targets for pupils' achievement. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and comment positively on the work done. Some marking, particularly in English, is very good and makes it very clear to pupils what they have to do to improve their work. However, practice is not consistent and opportunities are lost for involving pupils in assessing their own learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (6%)	13 (24.5%)	24 (45%)	13 (24.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that helps pupils to achieve well. There is a **very good** enrichment programme and a **good** range of extra-curricular activities. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum has impacted well on standards in many subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well although currently, because they are withdrawn from lessons, they do not receive their full curriculum entitlement.
- The very good enrichment programme extends the curriculum and helps pupils make the transition to the next stage of education.
- Personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) provision is good.
- There is a good variety of out-of-hours activities that appeals to a wide range of interests.
- While resources for learning are good, there are some unsatisfactory features of the accommodation.

Commentary

17. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Planning is exemplary. Staff link together all the areas of learning exceptionally well and make natural connections between topics and subjects. As a result, children have a 'joined-up' approach to learning and the work that they do makes sense to them.
18. The curriculum for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is planned well. It reflects the principles of the literacy and numeracy strategies and includes national guidance for most non-core³ subjects. Sufficient time is allocated for each subject with priority given to core subjects. Religious education is taught satisfactorily and meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
19. The steady improvement in standards in core subjects in Year 6 can be partly traced to a review of the curriculum that resulted in time being specifically reserved for the teaching of key skills. For example, in literacy, pupils now have additional, dedicated guided reading time for practising this core skill. On one day each week, spelling and handwriting skills form the main literacy foci. The impact of this change has been positive, as standards of reading and pupils' presentation skills are above average.
20. Provision for special educational needs is good. The individual educational plans are well organised and identify pupils' specific needs. The clear targets are shared with pupils and parents. Currently, pupils are withdrawn for specific help. This means that pupils miss lessons, or parts of lessons and do not receive their full curriculum entitlement. The school has this under review, and is considering having staff working with small groups in the classrooms instead. During lessons, pupils are often grouped according to ability and appropriate work is planned, particularly for literacy, numeracy and science lessons. There is a register for gifted and talented pupils who are identified through the tracking system. These pupils currently have

³ Core subjects: English, mathematics and science.

Non-core subjects: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

extension work within the lesson. The school runs motivational projects in football for boys and girls in Year 6. This has enhanced pupils' self esteem and achievement. Support assistants are well briefed on their role in lessons. They provide sensitive help and encouragement. As a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This was seen during the inspection when a learning support assistant joined a class of Year 6 pupils specifically to help two pupils meet their writing targets. They achieved very well because of this very effective support. In a Year 1 lesson, a teaching assistant worked alongside three pupils, improving their confidence in speaking and writing. Consequently, the pupils were more eager to ask questions and more capable of completing the work set for them.

21. The curriculum is enriched very well through good partnerships with other schools and through the use of visits and visitors. The curriculum enrichment activities for Year 6 pupils in mathematics and music typify the positive action taken to ease the transition of these pupils to the next stage of their education. Year 6 pupils work through a bridging unit in algebra where they learn strategies that will help them face the challenge of solving harder problems. A specialist high school music teacher teaches Year 6 pupils, extending their repertoire of songs and instrumental skills. This specialist teaching helps the pupils to become more confident and prepares them well for the high school. School visits provide good opportunities for pupils to widen their knowledge and try new experiences. An activity week at a field study centre promotes teamwork as pupils face new challenges. Pupils regularly visit museums and art galleries and listen to musicians who perform at the school. The recent introduction of a visit to France has provided pupils with the opportunity to experience a European dimension in their learning.
22. Lessons formally planned to cover health and sex education, personal safety and solvent abuse are now formally delivered through the good personal, social and health education and citizenship programme. Visiting specialists make an important contribution to the programme offered. During the inspection, a theatre company led a workshop on strategies to overcome bullying. Pupils found the experience challenging but rewarding as they were actively engaged in short drama sequences that promoted understanding of the issues raised.
23. The good variety of extra-curricular activities has improved since the previous inspection and caters for a wide range of interests. There are very good opportunities for sport. Pupils receive recognition for their achievement in sport, such as school colours for dance and proficiency awards for gymnastics. The Active Mark Award given to the school is recognition of the progress made in extending provision for physical education. Pupils can join the orchestra or become a representative on the Eco-Awareness committee to help promote environmental themes.
24. Although in most subjects resources for learning are good, there are some unsatisfactory aspects of accommodation that are a barrier to achievement. The library is well stocked and organised but its present location is distant from many classrooms, which hinders the promotion of independent research skills. Resources and facilities for ICT have improved in the main school. However, there is unsatisfactory access to ICT in the eight mobile classrooms. These also lack water and toilet facilities. Consequently, water has to be carried across from the main building for some lessons in art and design and science. Other areas of the building are also difficult to organise. For example, the staff facilities and the administration areas are cramped. The head teacher is working with governors to resolve the unsatisfactory aspects of accommodation.

Care, guidance and support

The standard of welfare, care and support is **very good**. Relationships are **very good**. Pupils trust their teachers and other staff and know that their views and opinions are valued.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for welfare, support and pastoral care is very good.
- Very good mutual respect exists between pupils and staff.
- The induction arrangements for children joining the school are very good.
- There are very good arrangements for child protection, health and safety.
- Pupils know that their views and opinions are valued.

Commentary

25. The school provides very good support, pastoral care and guidance, well matched to pupils' individual needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff know their pupils very well and this enables the school to provide an ethos within which everyone is encouraged to work hard and do their best. The school regularly undertakes a thorough review of every pupil's academic and personal development and implements effective intervention strategies where necessary. The quality of the advice and guidance pupils receive is very good and contributes very well to the standards that they achieve. There are very good arrangements for welcoming and supporting pupils when they first join the school.
26. The school has a very good awareness of the needs of vulnerable pupils. The arrangements for child protection are very effective because those responsible are experienced and well trained. The school draws upon external advice and support when it is appropriate. Health and safety practice is very good. Risk assessments, and monitoring of all health and safety matters by governors and staff are rigorous. The school is cleaned and maintained to a good standard. There is good provision for first aid.
27. The relationships and trust among pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils say they are confident that, if they have a concern, there is always someone who will listen and respond to their need. The school runs a breakfast club that is very well used and regarded by pupils as a valued social occasion. The school has a good personal, social and health education programme that teaches pupils about personal hygiene, drugs awareness, relationships and sex education. Pupils' opinions are sought and valued. The School Council members take their responsibilities very seriously and function as a very effective consultative link between pupils, their teachers and the school management. Many aspects of the pastoral care, welfare and guidance provided for pupils have improved significantly since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has achieved a **very good** partnership with parents. Parents express **very positive** views about the school and the quality of education and personal care that it provides. Community links and liaison with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good partnership is maintained with parents.
- Parents have positive views about the school.
- There are very well developed links with the wider community, other schools and colleges.

Commentary

28. The school has worked hard to achieve a very good partnership with parents. Many opportunities are provided for parents to participate in school activities and to gain a better understanding of the curriculum, and the teaching and learning process. They receive very good information about what their children will be expected to learn and the annual reports provide a good summary of their children's progress and achievement. The parents, for their

part, have very positive views about the quality of the education provided by the school and its standards of care.

29. The school has good lines of communication with parents that enable it to elicit their views and concerns and respond accordingly. However, there is a need for a more structured consultation system to ensure that all parents are successfully engaged in meaningful dialogue. The majority of parents participate in, and support, their children's learning very well. Attendance at progress review meetings is very high. All parents of pupils assessed as having special educational needs attend regular meetings to review progress and set targets for future learning.
30. The parent-teacher association provides very good support for the school by organising social and fund-raising events and becoming involved in specific projects. A significant number of parents volunteer to help in school, particularly in the nursery and reception classes, and with extra curricular activities. The school has established very good links with the wider community. It takes part in a number of village events, attends services at the local church and chapel, and older residents, particularly grandparents, are frequently invited to lunch with pupils.
31. The school has very good links with other schools. It works closely with the local pyramid of schools, which includes the main receiving secondary school. The secondary school has performing arts status and is therefore able to promote many opportunities for joint projects in art, drama, music and sports. This close relationship ensures that pupils preparing for transfer into secondary education receive very good support and guidance. In many areas the partnership with parents, the wider community and other schools, has improved since the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The head teacher provides **very good** leadership and is **very well** supported by the leadership learning team and governing body. The co-ordinators manage their subjects **well**. Governance is **very good**. The experienced governing body monitors school performance and ensures that it meets all statutory requirements. The school is **well** managed and effective financial and management procedures underpin its everyday work. The school is well placed to move forward rapidly although parts of the accommodation remain a barrier to learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are supportive of the school and are very perceptive. They understand their role and have a very realistic appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The head teacher provides very good leadership, a clear vision and educational direction.
- The leadership learning team provide very effective support to the head teacher.
- Subjects are well led and managed.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is well organised.
- Performance review is used effectively to raise standards.

Commentary

32. The governors are very strongly committed to the vision and values of the school. They are very well informed and have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. As critical friends, they both support and challenge the head teacher and the leadership team. They have a central role in shaping policy and direction and agreeing strategic priorities. There is an appropriate emphasis on the creation of an inclusive learning community that values and respects all individual pupils and celebrates diversity. They have effective monitoring procedures that enable them to ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties and makes efficient use of its resources.

33. The leadership provided by the head teacher is very good and provides a clear vision and educational direction for the school. The head teacher, supported by a very effective leadership team, is committed to raising standards further by creating a very positive climate for teaching and learning. A new deputy head teacher will join the team at the beginning of the autumn term. The leadership team is particularly active in introducing initiatives designed to encourage pupils to see themselves as good learners who can communicate their views with confidence, participate fully in all aspects of school life and achieve their full potential. The analysis of performance is detailed and provides a clear picture of the achievement of individual pupils and realistic targets for further improvement.
34. Members of staff with subject responsibilities carry out their responsibilities well. Subject leaders have developed effective, motivated teams that are committed to raising standards in their subject areas. A thorough performance management system is in place. The self-reviews have been well used to diagnose strengths and establish priorities for improvement. There is a strong commitment to meeting the learning needs of all pupils. The recruitment of permanent staff to fill all available posts has been a key priority and a full complement will be in place from the beginning of the autumn term. The school provides good support to new staff and newly qualified teachers. Arrangements for continuous professional development are good and the school contributes effectively to initial teacher training.
35. The organisation of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that all teachers have access to the appropriate information. Files are well maintained and pupils with statements have appropriate help. All pupils are well included in lessons. Reviews of pupils with special educational needs are regular, each term or when required. Parents are involved and are kept informed of their child's achievements. There is an assessment pack which helps to monitor pupils' achievements. There is a positive approach to the identification of dyslexia and the individual educational plans reflect this. Parents can attend courses in this area. Resources are good, with a computer that has appropriate programs for basic skills. Good use is made of the external services to support special educational needs. The governor for special educational needs is very skilled and takes a keen interest in how well the school delivers the appropriate programmes. She has regular meetings with the head teacher and the SENCO and discusses issues for maintaining and developing this area.
36. School finances are managed well. The head teacher, chair of governors and chair of finance meet regularly to ensure that spending is properly planned and monitored and that the principles of best value are observed. The carry forward balance is allocated for on-going improvements. The school's administrative team perform their tasks in an efficient and effective manner and make a good contribution towards the smooth running of the school. Many aspects of the leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has improved the accommodation, although parts of the building still remain as obstacles to further improvement. This is an effective school and it provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1271933
Total expenditure	1243844
Expenditure per pupil	2183

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	101168
Balance carried forward to the next	95729

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for the children in the pre-reception and reception classes is **very good**. This is a **very good** improvement since the last inspection. All the issues identified in the last report have been achieved. Teaching and learning are at least good. Some very good and excellent teaching and learning were observed. The children start in the pre-reception classes when they are four and in the reception classes in the year in which they are five. There is a clear, stepped induction programme for the children and parents to ensure that the children feel confident when their parents leave them. There is also a positive move to Year 1.
38. There is a very cohesive team in the Foundation Stage. The Early Years co-ordinator has the shared planning very well organised. Very good observations about children's achievement are made so that their development over time is well documented and appropriate work is provided. This contributes significantly to their very good achievement. Improvements for the outdoor area are under discussion and the school is planning the best way for this to be achieved. Most children will achieve the goals for the age group and about one third of the group will achieve beyond this by the start of Year 1. The attainments of the pupils are broadly average and their achievement is at least good with some very good achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching provides a secure environment in which the pupils flourish.
- Well-organised daily routines help the children to become confident and independent.
- Very good relationships between the adults and children encourage very good achievement.

Commentary

39. Very good teaching encourages children to learn and achieve well. The pre-reception classes spend time with the children while they have their drink, making it a social occasion and developing further their social skills. The teachers and support staff create a lively and exciting environment that the children explore and enjoy.
40. The classrooms are very well organised and activities are well planned. Children work in small groups. They wait for their turn when using equipment. They share and are willing to help each other. One child observing another said, 'Can I help you?' They both completed the task together. When they finish their tasks, they work independently and enjoy going in the 'Mini Beast Cave', using torches, and magnifying glasses. Many children describe what they have been doing clearly to the whole group with confidence.
41. There are very good relationships between the adults and the children. There is trust and, because the children are happy, they feel secure and work with enthusiasm. Their learning is effective in an environment that is supportive to their needs.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning encourage children to achieve well.
- Children are enthusiastic readers.
- Children write independently very well.

Commentary

42. Very good and excellent teaching encourages children to achieve very well in speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Children are given a range of ways of listening including listening to each other and then listening to silence. Children are confident speakers because adults spend time listening and waiting for them to finish what they want to say. Small group teaching helps children to extend their vocabulary. They talk about the mini beasts and ladybirds and about their features, such as black spots and six legs. The mini beast cave is a source of pleasure for the children and they use it to extend their language.
43. Children enjoy looking at books and hearing stories. They join in to find information about the butterfly and the sequence of its life cycle. Small group teaching helps children to extend their vocabulary and reading as a small group encourages pupils to understand 'left to right'. All children have reading books and are keen to read in their group. They join in and read simple sentences and talk about the pictures. Some children begin to read with confidence, and use their knowledge of phonics to help with reading new words.
44. Independent writing in the reception classes is very good indeed and children love to write. For example, there was great excitement because they were going to write about the hungry caterpillar. They wrote well, most making their letters correctly and spelling words phonetically. They love making labels for the classroom and made some for the mini beast cave. They write their names and some write sentences unaided and read these to an adult. By the end of the year most children in the reception classes write their own names and confidently write sentences independently. Children enthusiastically use their information books, writing about mini beasts. Because of the very good and excellent teaching, children's learning and achievement are very good.

Excellent teaching in the reception classes came together in an excellent literacy session with well managed groups.

The children were comparing the difference between fiction and non-fiction books using a reference book about butterflies. This linked with their work on mini-beasts. The children were totally engaged and absorbed by the transition of the caterpillar into a butterfly. They worked at well above average levels and responded to questions, focused and concentrated on their learning. The children were stretched and challenged throughout the lesson. Staff were enthusiastic and encouraged the children who responded eagerly. The way in which the children worked in groups was outstanding. Children loved writing and were excited and were keen to start work. They wrote independently about mini beasts in their information books. Their emergent writing was very good; they made very good use of their knowledge of phonics and wrote sentences that they could read to adults. Children in another group announced that they were 'sequencing' as they put pictures in the correct order for the lifecycle of the butterfly. They collaborated very well, talking to each other and agreeing the order of the pictures. The lower attainers had a session with the teacher who stimulated them and made the development of vocabulary so exciting for them that they enthusiastically learned new words. The organisation was excellent and children were inspired to achieve very well and to enjoy the very many well planned activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching allows the children to achieve well
- Very good use of mathematical equipment ensures that the children understand what they do.

Commentary

45. Pupils are secure in their mathematical awareness. They are confident in counting, forwards and backwards to 20 and put the numbers in order. They sort, match colours and use accurately shape games. As a result of the very good provision children develop their mathematical awareness well. They enjoy counting the number of hot dinners and packed lunches, and do so confidently. There is very good teamwork between the staff and a consistent approach. For example, all staff use very good questioning techniques and this results in articulate responses from the children. Children become confident when approaching new tasks and use previous learning successfully to help them solve new problems. Through the very good teaching, children differentiate between different shapes and name three-dimensional shapes well. They know the differences between faces, sides and corners. They use a wide vocabulary, such as 'smooth', 'curved', 'one circular face', 'two circular faces', 'cylinder' and 'cone' and describe the differences between these. The children are well managed, are asked challenging questions, for instance, 'What can you tell me about...?' and are given enough time to frame their responses. They receive clear directions which helps their learning, for instance 'Watch hard', 'Look closely...' The use of the mystery bag fascinates the children and they enjoy their work.
46. Resources in the classes are good and are used very well by staff. Children have first hand experience at feeling three-dimensional shapes and are able to count the corners, sides and faces of a wide variety of shapes. Very good use of construction equipment allows children to work in small groups independently creating shapes that are then discussed in the plenary part of the lesson. Children answer questions about what they have been doing, the order of their work and what they found out. They are stimulated and learn successfully. They enjoy the activities and this helps them to understand mathematical ideas.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

47. Work in this area of learning was sampled but no judgements have been made about teaching or standards. In the pre-reception classes, children discussed types of travelling as part of their transport theme. The activities were well selected with wet and dry sand where children made tyre tracks. This stimulated their conversation. They build vehicles, using boxes and paper of different types, and use scissors and glue effectively. They listen to sounds and match these with pictures and use construction toys that show gear movement. The discussion that they have with staff helps children to develop their confidence in speaking and the range of activities help them to develop successfully their manipulative skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

48. No judgements have been made about teaching, learning or standards. The children have lessons in the hall and enjoy using the large equipment outside. There is a small outside area for the pre-reception children who gain much pleasure in using the large wheeled toys with confidence. They have adult support and enjoy using the sand. They have structured or free choice outdoor play when they can take responsibility for what they want to do. The reception class also use the large equipment with confidence and share without fussing. This is an area that the school has acknowledged needs improvement and plans are underway to extend this provision.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

49. Activities were sampled in this area but no judgements have been made about teaching, learning or standards. Children have a wide range of planned experiences. For example, the pre-reception children enjoy playing the percussion instruments. They have created the mini-beast cave and their paintings are bold and confident. Children have made a Plan of Dosthill High Street, the journey to the Zoo and the coach trip. They help to create the displays and write labels for them. Creative work takes place in literacy when children make their own books and paste pictures of the lifecycle of the butterfly in their correct sequence. This demonstrates how well the activities are integrated.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards of presentation are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The use of marking to help pupils improve is inconsistently applied.
- The leadership of English is good.
- Pupils are unable to readily access ICT in some classrooms.

Commentary

50. Standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing are above average in Year 2 and in English overall in Year 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection in terms of attainment in Year 2 and maintenance of good standards in Year 6. Early indications show that, in the 2004 tests for pupils in Year 2, a high percentage of these pupils are likely to attain above average results in both reading and writing. The school pupil tracking system shows that the achievements of pupils in Year 6 have accelerated in their final two years at school.
51. The inspection has confirmed most pupils achieve well in all aspects of literacy throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 have achieved well, from being broadly average on entry to Year 1 to above average when assessed in Year 2. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 have achieved well in junior classes because they have improved from being average in the national tests at age seven to the above average standards shown in this inspection.
52. In Year 2, most pupils speak clearly and listen attentively. Teachers encourage them to contribute to lessons and listen to each other. When the teacher reminded Year 2 pupils about writing captions, one spontaneously responded, "Come and try our rock!" By Year 6, many pupils can hold a mature conversation on a wide range of topics. They listen carefully to each other's point of view and respond with assurance. For example, a higher attaining pupil felt a character in a story was "being manipulative".
53. Most pupils achieve well in reading and, by Year 2, some are starting to use expression. Pupils have developed strategies to overcome the challenge of text that they find initially difficult, such as sounding out letters and word building. Higher attaining pupils cope with more demanding words, such as "tourist" and "loch" successfully. Many Year 6 pupils read fluently and confidently. They justify their choice of a favourite character and predict how different threads in a story might be brought together and lead to a resolution.

54. At the beginning of Year 2, many pupils write a short account of a day at the beach, recording events, such as building a sand castle and eating ice cream. Many pupils have become confident writers and include good descriptions in their work. A higher attaining pupil wrote that in a garden there were “shiny pink flowers” and “shimmering sweet, green grass”. By Year 6, pupils write their own autobiography. Some recall with feeling the saddest moments of their lives. Most pupils’ books include several substantial pieces of independent writing. Spelling is usually accurate and punctuation correctly applied. Higher attaining pupils use more sophisticated and complex sentences to present their ideas.
55. Teaching and learning are clearly directed towards raising standards and, overall, literacy is taught well. Teaching weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection have been eradicated. Consequently, teachers now use worksheets very selectively and much more emphasis is given to new learning, building successfully on pupils’ prior knowledge. Literacy sessions are taught very confidently, teaching is regularly engaging and pupils are regularly challenged. Pupils in Year 1 were enthralled when their teacher introduced two soft toy bears in a lesson that helped them develop the skills of asking questions. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher challenged the pupils to take on the role of writing as an “Agony Aunt” in response to a plea for help. The lesson provided good opportunities for the exploration of personal and social themes in a more adult context.
56. The marking of pupils’ work is variable. Some pupils receive very detailed comments, with clear suggestions on how to improve the quality of their writing. This good level of communication is matched well to pupils’ individual level of attainment. However, sampling of past work shows that this good practice is not consistently applied and although pupils receive an acknowledgement for good effort, they are not often guided to how they might make further improvement.
57. Co-ordination of English is shared between two staff. Their good leadership has given clear direction on improvement to the teaching of core skills and the opportunities to develop literacy through other subjects. Monitoring has been purposeful and focused on raising achievement. Co-ordinators have provided a good lead on using writing assessments, holding discussions with pupils and analysing their work. This has helped introduce effective target setting that has impacted positively on standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise their English skills in other subjects. Pupils’ past work from Year 2 shows they have written instructions to make a jam sandwich during a design and technology lesson. In science they wrote instructions on how to sow a bean seed and record its growth. The parts of the bean were labelled correctly. Year 6 pupils used ICT to compile a multi-media presentation advertising the advantages of visiting a field study centre.
59. The absence of ICT in the mobile classrooms is a barrier to progress in writing and research skills. Although pupils affected do have timetabled access to the ICT suite, where they do learn these skills, they cannot readily access a computer on demand.
60. Most pupils take much pride in their work and achieve good standards of presentation. This is a good feature of their written work. A lower ability pupil achieved very good quality presentation in science work that included labelled diagrams, tables, lists, headings and a line graph. Some pupils achieve high standards in both writing and illustrating. They give considerable attention to layout, blending text with illustrations. Some are very capable at drawing and labelling specialised diagrams, such as those representing circuits in their science work on electricity.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is consolidated by regular practice at solving problems.
- More use could be made of computers to support learning in lessons.
- There is good leadership of the subject by the co-ordinator.
- Work is set which matches the abilities of different groups of pupils.

Commentary

61. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. Indications are that there is an improvement since 2003 in the results of national tests and tasks for both year groups. Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection. When they enter the school, pupils' understanding of mathematical ideas is broadly average. They achieve consistently well as they move through the school.
62. The quality of teaching and that of learning are good throughout the school and this results in good achievement. Some very good lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan, present and develop the pupils' mathematical concepts well. Pupils learn well, because they are given good opportunities to explain their thinking, and to learn from each other. In one very good lesson, pupils used 'talking partners' to give clues to a shape and guess what it was. The correct technical vocabulary was used and learned in this way. In all the lessons, work was set with different levels of challenge to match the abilities of different groups of pupils. This enables pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well at their own level. Throughout the school, lessons regularly include opportunities to solve problems and do investigations. These reinforce and consolidate calculating skills, and pupils develop effective ways of approaching problems. A notable feature of the lessons seen was the very good attitude to learning shown by the pupils. Behaviour in lessons is very good and pupils work hard.
63. Analysis of pupils' exercise books and displays throughout the school show that there is a good amount of work completed. Teachers' marking, though generally good, is a little inconsistent between different classes. There is plenty of work on number, shape and space. Data handling skills, such as reading and drawing graphs and tables, are variable, with some classes in Years 3 and 4 having less work in this area. In only one of the lessons seen was a computer used to give practice in the skills being taught, and few examples were found of mathematical work done on computers in exercise books. More use could be made of classroom computers to support learning in lessons.
64. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable, leading and managing the subject well. The assessment systems are effective. They involve annual tests which reveal pupils' individual achievements. There are also teachers' assessments at the end of each unit of work. Furthermore, the co-ordinator analyses both responses to test questions and work from across the school. Outcomes from this data are used to put initiatives in place, such as the recent focus on higher attaining pupils. In one very good lesson, younger pupils who were more able, were given numbers to halve, although the main teaching had not covered this in detail. They succeeded, as the teacher had expected they would. Assessment information also helps teachers set individual or group targets for pupils. The action plan includes well chosen initiatives to improve provision further, including the greater use of ICT and a revision of the planning used to incorporate newly available materials.
65. There has been good progress since the last inspection. Standards are now higher. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are given work

more closely matched to their needs. Data, which shows how well pupils are doing, is now collected and analysed much better, enabling improvements to be made.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Mathematics skills are developed well in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils record data from experiments and show them as graphs. Some science work also includes measuring, reading scales and using angles. In geography and design technology, there are opportunities for measuring and using co-ordinates. There was some good work seen by the oldest pupils, in which they derived data from opinions about aspects of an outdoor pursuits visit that they had made and presented the information in the form of graphs and pie charts, some done on the computer.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average.
- Teachers place great importance on scientific enquiry.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

67. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. In Year 6, they are well above average. Standards have risen steadily. Pupils achieve very well. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels, level 3 at Key Stage 1 and level 5 at Key Stage 2, has also risen. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In the 2003 national tests, the results for Year 6 pupils were above average, although, when compared with similar schools, they were below average. The indications are that the 2004 results will be higher, with a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher level, level 5.
68. The overall qualities of teaching and learning throughout the school are good. Teachers emphasise to pupils the importance of scientific enquiry. They plan very good opportunities for pupils to experiment and investigate scientific concepts for themselves. Thus, pupils learn how to set up fair tests and how to organise experiments for themselves. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and discuss and share their ideas. In this way, pupils become very adept at setting up investigations and interrogating the results. Teachers also find a very good variety of ways for pupils to record the results of their findings. Throughout the school, charts, graphs, diagrams, lists and annotated sheets are used to record results of experiments. As a result, pupils concentrate on the scientific findings and their recordings do not become writing lessons.
69. This all came together in a very good Year 6 lesson. Pupils worked extremely well in groups to plan, carry out and record a complete investigation into the concentration and bubble production of a variety of washing up liquids. They clearly understood what they were doing, organised themselves most efficiently and spent time on the planning without rushing straight into the practical investigation. This meant all groups were successful and came to logical and well reasoned conclusions. This high level of scientific enquiry is the culmination of the school's good focus on practical and investigative work. Pupils build on these skills as they move through the school so that, by the time they are in Year 6, they are able to work as scientists with very good understanding of methods of investigating problems.
70. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader advises and guides her colleagues most successfully. The school has adopted national guidelines as its scheme of

work. However, it has tailored these guidelines to incorporate as much practical and investigative work as possible. This matches the needs of the pupils very well and enables teachers to challenge pupils very effectively. This enables pupils to reach the high standards that they do by Year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Word processing and document production skills are developed very well.
- Pupils have very good basic ICT skills, such as logging on and controlling computer programs.
- Older pupils achieve very well indeed with particular types of software.
- Assessment of pupils' achievements does not impact adequately on learning.

Commentary

71. Standards of work are above average throughout the school, and pupils achieve well. In all the classes seen, pupils were able to find their way through the menus and passwords to the program they intended to use. Only the youngest pupils needed any help with this. In particular, teachers encourage the use of computers for word processing, and, by Year 2, pupils are confidently writing, changing fonts and adding pictures to their work. By the end of Year 6, most pupils work with some software at a very high level. They have very good attitudes to the work, and confidently experiment with menus and effects. They know how to go back if something unexpected occurs.
72. Pupils throughout the school have very good basic skills such as logging on and using and controlling computer programs. They build on these skills very successfully as they move through the school and, by Year 6, understand very well what they have to do to achieve required outcomes. This was demonstrated very effectively in an excellent Year 6 lesson.

A Year 6 class works on individual Powerpoint presentations linked to a recent outdoor education visit.
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Pupils log on and find their work. The teacher very quickly uses the Smartboard to demonstrate how to add buttons to link the pages and add links to web sites. For most of the lesson, pupils continue work and freely investigate the many different effects that can be obtained; sizing and placing the buttons, animating the titles and transitions. One boy has added a voice over to his text. This skill spreads along the row of pupils and soon six others have done the same. When problems arise, they help each other. Three low attaining pupils are easily achieving in line with expectations. Meanwhile, the teacher acts as an enabler, open to ideas, encouraging and advising.

73. Talking to the oldest pupils revealed that, in some areas of the subject, they are less confident, and their skills less well developed. These include the use of spreadsheets, databases and email. This is mainly because the pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not yet had sufficient time to use the new computer hardware and software to cover these aspects in the same depth as other skills.
74. Teaching and learning are good overall, but in the lessons seen there was wide variation. Where lessons were good, teachers planned, explained and demonstrated well. Pupils were confident in using the Smartboard and software themselves. In other less successful lessons, the planning was too ambitious or not well thought out. For example, in one class, some Logo programs were given to pupils to enter and to watch the effect as the turtle drew the shape. However, the sizes of the moves were too large, and the turtle disappeared from the screen.

75. ICT is well led and managed. The curriculum leader has very energetically overseen the commissioning of the new suite. This has been followed by some useful training events for teachers, and confidence in using the digital projector and recently acquired software has increased. He has considerable expertise, and teachers are able to benefit from this. Curriculum planning is better, and an overview plan should ensure that there is more even coverage of the requirements as pupils move through the school. There remain some areas for development. The school has identified that, in view of the variability of teaching, efforts should continue to identify weaknesses and support less confident colleagues. At the time of the inspection, no whole-school scheme for assessment of pupils' skills to support their learning was in place. There is, however, a scheme being trialled in Years 2 and 5 which is intended to be developed for all year groups.
76. Since the last inspection, there has been very good progress. The classroom computers are now linked to the network and pupils can now work on any computer, for example continuing work begun in the suite back in the classroom. There are other additional improvements. For example:
- standards have risen steadily;
 - teachers have had extra training and are more confident;
 - coverage of the curriculum has improved and is set to improve further;
 - there have been significant improvements to the resources including the software;
 - a second computer suite has been added within the last year;
 - there are now enough machines in the suite for one per pupil.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The computers in the original suite, and those in classrooms are available for supporting learning in other subjects. A few examples were seen where this was done well. For example, a series of photographs was taken of a drying puddle to demonstrate evaporation in science. There were many examples of good word-processing work in English. However, teachers do not sufficiently plan to use classroom computers and miss opportunities to use the original suite in daily lessons. There are some limitations due to the accommodation. Classes in mobiles do not have enough laptops and security issues preclude keeping computers there. Increased use of ICT across the curriculum has also been identified by the school as an area for development.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.
- Appropriate use of resources supports teaching and learning.
- There is variation across the school in the amount of recording pupils do in their religious education books.
- Good use is made of the local churches to support learning.

Commentary

78. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Statutory requirements are met. Analysis of pupils' work

in their books and on display and talking to pupils during lessons shows that pupils' achievements are, overall, satisfactory throughout the school.

79. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are interested in their work and join in discussions well. Teachers use questioning techniques effectively and this encourages pupils to reply because teachers wait for them to complete an answer and do not cut them off before they have finished speaking. Pupils respect others and listen to each other's contributions. They settle to their work quickly and stay on their tasks concentrating and collaborating well.
80. Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory, with some good teaching observed with the older pupils. Use of artefacts, a video, photographs and the work of artists provide additional stimulus for the lessons. For example, the good use of an illustration by Barnett Newman stimulated discussion about the creation story. Older pupils undertake independent research, using the Bible, to find out what God created on their particular day. Their illustrations are thoughtful and well produced. Younger pupils learn about a Jewish wedding and again good use is made of artefacts to help the pupils to understand the significant points. Following the showing of a video with the Year 6 pupils about the miracles of Jesus, in the ensuing discussion, pupils' concentration and interest were evident as they responded accurately to the well-framed questions and the written tasks that followed.
81. There is an inconsistent approach across the school in the amount of work pupils write in their books. Some books have a rich range of responses, showing how the pupils have achieved during the year. Other pupils have fewer opportunities to record in their books.
82. Pupils in Year 2, learning about Christianity, visited the local church and took part in a wedding ceremony taken by the Vicar. This helped their understanding of the Christian way of life. There is positive support for the school from the Vicar. He takes assemblies and encourages the use of his church as a resource.

History and Geography

83. Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson in **history** was observed during this inspection. No **geography** lessons were seen. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in these subjects. Pupils' work was scrutinised and this shows standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly average.
84. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learned about life in a fictional island community from a story based on that setting. They have compared living in Dosthill with that on a remote island. In history, pupils have learned about events such as the Fire of London and the work of famous people, including Florence Nightingale. Pupils looked at old photographs of seaside outings when comparing past and present days out.
85. By the end of Year 6, most pupils write detailed accounts of the main features of a historical period, such as the "Sixties". To help their understanding of chronology they plot significant events on a timeline. Pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of distant place. They located cities, used as venues for the Rugby World Cup tournament, on a world map. They compared the climate, population and land use of Ecuador with that of the United Kingdom.
86. Photographic evidence shows that pupils learn about people and places, past and present through a curriculum that is enhanced by visits and visitors. A field study activity week provided good opportunities for pupils to study the course of a river, measuring its depth and speed of flow at different locations. A visit by a senior citizen, who lived through World War 2, provided pupils with first hand knowledge of concepts such as rationing and the experience of life as an evacuee.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

87. In **art and design**, only one lesson was observed, but pupils' sketchbooks were analysed together with displayed artwork around the school. There is a satisfactory range of work using a variety of media in two and three dimensions. One good display included lively posters and photographs of aboriginal art which were the stimulus for some good paintings, collages and prints by the class. In a few classes, the work of artists, such as Cézanne and Henry Moore was studied, but there was not generally enough investigation into artists' work. Similarly, there was less evidence of observational drawing skills being developed than might be expected. However, some of the sketchbooks revealed clear improvements in drawing skills over time. Most of the displays of artwork contained good quality pieces. The curriculum leader has considerable expertise and a clear vision of how she would like the subject to develop. The artwork in her class was of a high standard, and included a good original example of using ICT to record finished collage work.
88. Some high quality work in **design and technology** was seen in a Year 6 class. A sketchbook recorded the work of the year. This included a very good range of topics, including food technology (biscuits), musical instruments, mechanisms and textiles. The elements of generating and developing designs, planning and making, and evaluating products were all well recorded. The class had recently designed and made slippers, considering criteria and using a wide variety of textiles and techniques in their production. Work seen elsewhere in the school is not always of such a high standard, but there is good continuity. For example, younger pupils learn to use paper fasteners and axle mechanisms and older pupils use cams, motors and pulleys. Food technology is a regular feature, and the skills of designing, making and evaluating are improved as pupils move up the school. An efficient feature of organisation is that a whole day is given to the making part of each topic. A good collection of tools and materials is prepared, and pupils have time to complete their projects in most cases. Resources for the subject are good.

Music

89. Too few lessons were observed to make judgements on standards, teaching and learning, but it is clear from planning, talking to pupils and from the work seen that **music** plays an important part in the life of the school. Singing throughout the school is good. Provision is enhanced by two specialist teachers who take lessons in some year groups. Year 6 are taught by a specialist teacher from the local high school. This has a significant impact on standards and prepares the pupils very well for their secondary music education. Year 6 perform with confidence, both as soloists and in groups.
90. Music is also considerably enhanced by a number of extra curricular opportunities, such as brass, woodwind and strings tuition. Pupils also have the opportunity to play in the school's very good orchestra. Pupils who learn instruments are encouraged to perform in lessons. This was seen in Year 6 when a 'string section' played the music that they had composed and arranged by themselves. The subject is well led. Planning covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the subject leader successfully supports and advises his colleagues.

Physical Education

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to physical education.
- The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator.
- Good links with sports clubs enable coaching and activities in a wide range of sports.

Commentary

91. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and standards are above average. The lessons seen during the inspection were good or very good. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety, and have good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned, focusing on the development of skills and techniques. In one very good lesson the class watched a pupil jump safely from apparatus, land properly and finish with style. The teacher also demonstrated this. Pupils then practised and improved their own performance. There are good elements of personal and social education, as pupils work together both collaboratively and competitively. Relationships are good, and because pupils enjoy the lessons they have very good attitudes to physical education.
92. Leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator are very good. The development of physical education was a focus for the whole school within the last two years. Planning was completely revised using up to date materials. External advice was sought, and the outcome was a much better balance between and coverage of the different elements; dance, games, gymnastics, swimming, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities. The development continues. However, monitoring of lessons revealed further minor areas for improvement. An important part of curriculum revision was in-service training for all the teachers in dance, gymnastics and games. This has directly improved teaching. The improvements to provision also include extra funding which has ensured that sufficient teaching resources are available. There is, at present, no assessment system in place.
93. The school sends teams to many inter-school competitions, often with very successful results. Sports represented include athletics, cross-country, netball, football, swimming and rounders. There are good links with the local sports development officer and other local organisations, who often send specialist coaches to run extra curricular sessions. In addition, there are a few after school clubs run by staff. As a result of improved provision, the school was awarded an Activemark (silver) award in 2004.
94. The school has made good progress since the last inspection; achievement then was satisfactory and it is now good. The teaching and learning has also improved markedly; half the lessons then were unsatisfactory or poor, and most lessons seen during the inspection were good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have opportunities to consider issues such as friendship and feelings.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and to help others.
- Pupils have opportunities to reflect on issues that affect people worldwide.

Commentary

95. Very good social attitudes are reinforced throughout the school. The development and use of Circle Time has helped pupils to talk about their feelings and issues that are important to them. A visiting theatre group re-enacted issues relating to bullying. Pupils identified with the characters and eagerly took part in the drama. Any issues raised are dealt with sensitively and pupils are confident and secure and are encouraged to make decisions. Teachers reinforce positive social attitudes through praising good behaviour and politeness. Pupils respect others and they flourish in the positive school environment. There is a programme of sex education, alcohol and drug misuse. Science lessons include promoting a healthy lifestyle. All adults in the school are careful to stress personal safety whenever there is risk, such as carrying their

lunch trays with hot food to their tables and spending time explaining the importance of warming up before physical exercise.

96. Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. They undertake tasks in the classroom and take the register to the office. There are elected representatives from each class on the School Council. Pupils make requests and these are taken to the Council. Recently they decided on the colour of the railings and have been able to follow through the provision of new litterbins for the playground. The governors are involved in giving their approval. Pupils chose and ordered them. They were very excited at receiving them and seeing their request completed. This gives the pupils a feeling of ownership and strengthens the very good community feeling.
97. Whole school assemblies contribute strongly to global issues, such as hunger and how there is unequal sharing of food. Very good use of the segments of a chocolate orange unequally shared between pupils had a dramatic effect on them and they were very keen to express their views of unfairness confidently in front of the whole school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
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	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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

