

INSPECTION REPORT

EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire County Council

Unique reference number: 115504

Headteacher: Mr William Lowe

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th February 2004

Inspection number: 256024

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	83
School address:	Dr Crouch's Road Eastcombe Stroud Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL6 7EA
Telephone number:	01452 770227
Fax number:	01452 770942
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Eastcombe Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Although Eastcombe Primary School is much smaller than most other schools, the number on roll is currently higher than it has been for some time. There are slightly more girls than boys in the school. During the previous year, the school was oversubscribed. The school serves a mixed area of some local authority but mostly private housing. All the pupils are from a white British ethnic group and there are no minority ethnic pupils. There are six pupils on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register and none has a statement of SEN. Pupil mobility is low. Children enter the school at broadly average levels of ability. The school now has four classes each morning and three in the afternoon. The school site is cramped and there is a small playground, but no hall or grassed playing area. The Baptist Church owns the school site. The Headteacher has been in post since September 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19227	Paul Missin	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology.
9446	Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector	
19142	Audrey Quinnell	Team inspector	English, music. Children in the Foundation Stage.
24111	Pam Evans	Team inspector	Science, religious education, history, geography, physical education, personal, social, health and citizenship education, special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants
"Thule"
60 Joy Lane
Whitstable
Kent CT5 4LT
Tel: 01227 273449

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Eastcombe Primary School is a good, effective school where most pupils attain above average standards, achieve well and make good progress. The quality of teaching is good and the very good response which pupils make to their lessons enables them to learn well. The Headteacher has made a good start to his time at the school and he has introduced several important initiatives. However, some of these are not fully developed. The Headteacher is well supported by other senior staff and the governance of the school is satisfactory. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All pupils, including those of higher ability and those with SEN, achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.
- Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, and the very good provision for their personal and social development encourage their capacity to learn and the impressive sense of community within the school.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science and music. However, literacy and numeracy skills are not applied sufficiently across all other curriculum areas.
- The Headteacher's leadership is good and he is well supported by other senior colleagues.
- The school's links with parents and the local community are very good.
- Across the school, pupils are not achieving high enough standards in ICT.
- The good assessment practices in some subjects are not extended consistently across others.
- The school has worked hard to minimise some important accommodation difficulties.

Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Good improvement has been made in addressing the key issues relating to aspects of provision for Reception children and sound improvement has been made in developing the monitoring and evaluation role of the governing body. Strengths in teaching have been maintained well since the last inspection. Standards have been improved, particularly in English and mathematics in Year 6, but they have declined in ICT across the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; 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.

Standards have varied significantly because of the very small year groups in the school and these make the analysis of statistical data very unreliable. For example, standards in Year 6 varied from well below average in 2002 to well above average in 2003. In 2003, standards in mathematics and science were among the top five per cent of schools nationally. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards that are well above average in English and mathematics while those in Year 2 are attaining above average standards in reading and average standards in writing and mathematics. Across the school, pupils are achieving above average standards in science and music, average standards in religious education (RE), art and design and physical education (PE). Across the school, standards in ICT are below average.

Achievement is good across the school. Children enter the school achieving broadly average standards and make good progress in the Reception class to attain above average standards by the

end of the year. Although standards are average in Year 2, pupils are achieving well because there is a high proportion of younger, less mature pupils in this group. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve well as a result of the good teaching they receive.

Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and the relationships established across the school are very good and contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Teachers plan well for the mixed age and ability groups in each class and they have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the work they do. Pupils' learning is promoted well by the very good relationships in the classrooms and their full commitment to their learning. However, teaching in ICT is unsatisfactory because teachers have not ensured that pupils are progressively taught the necessary concepts and skills. There are some good assessment practices but overall assessment is satisfactory because these practices are not used consistently across the school. The curriculum is well planned and is made interesting and relevant by some challenging and innovative enhancements. Resources are good and are managed well but there are some significant limitations in the quality of the accommodation. The school is well supported by very good links with its parents and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The management of the school is satisfactory. The leadership of the Headteacher is good. Since his appointment, he has assessed the needs of the school and has made an effective transition from the previous Headteacher. He has maintained and strengthened the school ethos and the quality of teaching. The management of the work of the children in the Foundation Stage and those with SEN is good. Some initiatives, such as school improvement planning and monitoring of teaching and learning and curriculum development are not sufficiently consolidated. Governance of the school is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The chair is effective and governors' procedures to review and evaluate the school's effectiveness regularly are being developed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are very positive about the school's achievements and are realistic about its accommodation difficulties. Most think that the school is well led and that pupils behave well. They are comfortable about approaching the school if they have concerns. Pupils are overwhelmingly happy with the school. Most name an adult at school whom they can go to if they are worried and say that teachers are fair.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise the standards that pupils attain in ICT.
- Increase the opportunity for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- Further develop the consistency of assessment practices across the school.
- Continue with the school's best endeavours to improve the quality of its accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is good. Across the school, pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding and progress well. Most pupils attain above average standards by the end of the Reception year and in Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in English and mathematics that are well above average.
- Standards across the school are above average in science and music, and in reading and speaking and listening in Years 1 and 2.
- Across the school, standards in ICT are below average and most pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage are achieving average standards when they enter the school. As a result of the good, effective teaching and the well-planned curriculum, most make good progress in their learning and achieve well. They are on course to achieve above average standards in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. The school compensates well for accommodation difficulties which restrict children's free access to the outdoor play area and equipment.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (18.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.5 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.3 (18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Analysis of the results of national tests for seven-year-olds shows that, since 2001, standards have been consistently above and well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2003, standards in writing and mathematics were well above those expected in all schools, and, in reading, they were above average. The findings of this inspection are that standards are lower than those of previous years. This is mainly because of the age composition of the current Year 2 group which contains a higher proportion of younger pupils who lack the usual maturity. These pupils are achieving well for their abilities but not reaching the very high standards of previous groups. Currently, pupils are achieving above average standards in reading, speaking and listening and in science and average standards in writing and mathematics. These judgements are in line with the school's own assessment of the likely end of year results. The inspection also finds that standards are above average in music and average in RE, art and design, and PE. Since the last inspection, where it is possible to make comparisons, standards have improved in music and declined in art and design and RE.
3. Analysis of the trends shown in the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds shows that there has been considerable fluctuation between different years because of the statistical effect of the small year groups in the school. For example, in mathematics, when compared with similar schools, the school changed from being in the bottom five per cent of schools in 2002 to the top five per cent of schools in 2003. This inspection finds that the high standards have been

maintained into 2004. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well above average while standards in science and music are above average. Standards are average in RE, art and design and PE. Since the last inspection, where it is possible to make comparisons, standards have improved in English and mathematics, dropped in art and design and remained the same in other areas that were inspected.

4. Across the school, pupils achieve standards in ICT that are below those expected for their age and their achievement is unsatisfactory. The main reason for this is that pupils have not been progressively taught the necessary concepts and skills to enable them to reach higher standards. There is too much reliance on skills developed at home. Pupils have not had sufficiently regular access to computers to encourage their use across other subject areas of the curriculum.
5. Strengths in pupils' achievement across the school are in the standard of their speaking and listening skills. Pupils consistently listen attentively to their teachers and they are given good opportunities to develop their speaking skills through class discussion and more formal situations, such as class council meetings. Many pupils are confident, articulate speakers and converse at a very mature level. The specialist teaching and opportunity for instrumental tuition promotes good achievement in music. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are particularly well challenged by the range of reading books offered in English and through the variety of aspects of mathematics which they study. This enables them to achieve very well. A weakness in pupils' achievement is the underuse of their literacy and numeracy in other subjects across the curriculum.
6. Pupils with SEN reach similar standards to their peers because of the good support they receive. The targets in their individual action plans are very carefully matched to their individual needs. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met well. The school ensures that these pupils have good opportunities of progressing to appropriately higher levels in the National Curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show very good interest in learning, concentrate very well and are enthusiastic.
- Their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships between pupils and adults and among pupils are very good.
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility. They are confident, highly articulate and supportive of one another.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of right and wrong and show very good respect for others' feelings and beliefs.
- Pupils have a very strong sense of community.
- Attendance is well above average.

Commentary

7. Attendance and punctuality are very good and staff monitor attendance well. There is no unauthorised absence. There have been no exclusions for some years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.2	School data	0.0
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	83	0	0

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

8. Behaviour is very good throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions, despite the cramped conditions. There are few school rules, but pupils are all aware of how they should behave and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. No bullying or harassment was observed and pupils are very clear about what they should do should it occur. Parents feel overwhelmingly that behaviour is good. Pupils have very positive views of the school. For example, most comment that teachers are fair and listen to their ideas.
9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson on expressive language, pupils were keen to learn and very attentive. Pupils are eager to contribute to discussions and listen well to others. They are enthusiastic and co-operate very well. They respond very well to teachers' high expectations of them and are confident, friendly, polite and articulate. For example, in two class councils observed, pupils were able to put forward their ideas in a well-judged and thoughtful way. The two chairs of the meetings took their responsibilities seriously: one chair listened to opinions carefully before saying, "I'll just take three more comments and then we'll take a vote".
10. Pupils are enterprising and respond very well to the many very good opportunities for taking responsibility. Relationships between pupils and adults and among pupils are very good. Pupils get on very well and are able to work and play together. They have a very strong sense of community and support one another very well. The class councils and school council and the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE) make a very good contribution to pupils' social development.
11. The family ethos and moral development of the pupils are very good. Pupils behave with consideration for others and have a well-developed sense of how their behaviour might affect other people. Older pupils take care of younger ones and Year 6 pupils read with pupils in the Reception class. Staff are good role models, presenting a calm and thoughtful approach to life and discussing issues with pupils during current affairs sessions and PSHCE lessons. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and regularly raise money for charities. They are keen to take part in extracurricular activities.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the beliefs of others through RE (RE) and during collective worship. They are well supported by local churches and all pupils and teachers say prayers together at the end of the day.
13. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Very good numbers of pupils learn musical instruments through the school and pupils have good opportunities to learn about different cultures through RE, art and geography. The school is very well aware that it is an all-white school in a multicultural society and has addressed the issue in a variety of ways, for example, through visits to a local mosque, an Indian dance workshop and displays of Islamic art.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Although there are some good assessment practices, they are not consistently applied by all teachers and across all subjects. A strength in overall provision is the very effective promotion of pupils' personal development and their commitment to the school's work. The school has developed very effective links with the local community and the work of the parents positively encourages the

high standards achieved in the school. Provision in ICT is a weakness.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. Assessment procedures are good in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with SEN but satisfactory in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that pupils are well motivated and are committed to doing their best.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and well prepared.
- Teachers provide well for pupils of different ages in each class.
- Assessment data are used well to create ability groups in each class, but assessment practices are not sufficiently co-ordinated across different subjects or classes in the school.
- Teachers have not ensured that ICT skills are taught progressively across the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	21	4	0	0	0

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

14. The findings of this inspection are broadly similar to the judgements made at the last inspection. At that time, there was no unsatisfactory teaching and a small proportion which was very good. This is still the case. The quality of teaching has been improved in the Reception class. Both parents and pupils felt that the teaching was good.
15. The most important strengths in teaching across the school are in the very good relationships established and the very good attitudes to work shown by pupils which teachers cleverly create. This is created through the firm but fair way in which pupils are treated and the way that pupils' contributions to school work are obviously valued. Pupils are involved well in their lessons and teachers' high expectations encourage their full commitment to their learning. As a result, they try hard and are keen to do their best. Teachers are enthusiastic and innovative in their approach. For example, extension work on older pupils' recent World War 2 project made a significant impact on pupils' understanding and awareness. Teachers are skilful in adapting the curriculum to the needs of the mixed ages in each class.
16. Other strengths in teaching which promote good learning are the way in which instructions are given clearly and pupils are reminded well about how the current lesson fits in with what they have done before. Teachers encourage pupils to use a wide vocabulary accurately as they discuss and they use questioning well both to assess and extend pupils' understanding. Only very occasionally do teachers fail to ensure that they have the full attention of pupils before explaining tasks to them. Teachers plan well and show good subject knowledge, especially in English and mathematics. A weakness in teaching is that pupils are not taught a sufficient range of topics to an appropriate depth to enable them to reach average standards in ICT.
17. Further strengths in teaching were observed in a PE lesson to pupils in Years 3/4. There was a prompt and positive start to the lesson despite the fact that the class had to walk to the village hall some distance from the school. Throughout the lesson, pupils were managed well and they were encouraged by the enthusiasm and fun generated by the teacher. The class undertook a warm-up activity to music which was well led by two pupils. The main focus of the lesson was to rehearse and perform sequences of movements based on a circle theme. Pupils co-operated well in their groups to devise several interesting movement patterns and they enjoyed performing them to others.

18. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. The teacher provides a good range of activities to interest and challenge the children. There are good opportunities for them to develop their independent learning by selecting an activity and using their imagination in free play activities. The teaching of pupils with SEN is also good. Teachers ensure that pupils' individual learning plans have clear, specific targets which address their needs well. Pupils are well supported by class teachers and support staff.
19. Overall assessment procedures are satisfactory. Subject co-ordinators undertake a useful analysis of the results of national and optional tests. The regular use of commercial reading tests provides important information about the acquisition of pupils' reading skills. In some subjects, testing is carried out after each unit which is taught to assess pupils' understanding. There are clear procedures in the Foundation Stage for assessing the progress that children make. However, a weakness is the inconsistent nature of the collection of assessment data between different teachers and in different subjects. Whole school assessment procedures lack coherence. Examples of pupils' work are regularly collected in an individual portfolio. The value of this is lessened because of the quantity of work which is stored and because most has not been matched to National Curriculum criteria.
20. Assessment data are used well. They are used to identify which pupils would benefit from booster groups and to establish the ability groups in each class. In several cases, higher and lower attaining pupils are identified and they are then encouraged to work with groups that may be above or below their chronological age. Data are also used in order to set learning targets for groups and individual pupils. This process is at an early stage of development. There are some examples of good practice. An example is the targets for writing which are matched well to the different levels of the National Curriculum. The use of literacy targets is well established and those for mathematics have been very recently introduced. Procedures for assessing and recording the attainment of pupils in other subjects which are related to National Curriculum levels and in RE are insufficiently developed. Some teachers have developed useful processes by which pupils can assess their own work, in art and design for example. This aspect of assessment is underdeveloped across the school. The marking of pupils' work by teachers is sound but of variable quality.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided is good. The school works hard to provide an interesting and varied range of experiences both in and beyond the classroom. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. The range of resources to support the implementation of the curriculum is good but there are some important limitations in the school's accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils with SEN and for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Good use is made of the local environment and offsite visits to promote pupils' learning.
- Across the school, work in ICT is not provided to an appropriate depth.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not used fully across all curriculum areas.
- There are some important shortcomings in accommodation which the school is aware of and is working hard to minimise their impact.

Commentary

21. The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and it meets the needs of pupils well. More able pupils are challenged well and recently the school has had a higher proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in national tests than in most schools. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are met through the provision of specific instrumental tuition in music and as, for example, one pupil in Year 5 receives additional support for his exceptional mathematical ability. The policy for gifted and talented pupils is currently being ratified by the governing body. The

school ensures that curriculum opportunities are available to all pupils. Literacy and numeracy work is provided in line with the respective formats recommended nationally. A weakness is that curricular provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. The school has not ensured that work is covered to a sufficient depth. Curriculum planning does not show sufficiently clearly how pupils can use their literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects.

22. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils are fully included in the school's curriculum and are given appropriate work. Individual action plans are of good quality and have clear, specific targets which address pupils' needs well. They are given work that is carefully matched to their needs and the support they receive from teachers and support staff is effective. The interesting curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage makes a significant contribution to their good achievement. Although the accommodation limits the children from having easy access to an outside play area, the teacher ensures that they have a good range of outdoor play activities each day.
23. The school uses the local community well to enhance pupils' learning and to develop and extend their social responsibility. For example, pupils grow vegetables and flowers on their allotment which are then sold, or entered into local horticultural shows. Also pupils sell fresh herbs at the local farmers' market in Stroud. Older residents in the village are welcomed as volunteers to work in classrooms and also to offer their reminiscences of life during the Second World War. Opportunities are taken to offer pupils multicultural experiences. These include a steel band workshop and an Indian dance afternoon.
24. Good use is made of educational visits. For example, pupils in Years 4, 5, and 6 travelled to the Imperial War Museum and the Cabinet War Rooms and stayed overnight on HMS Belfast. This added a very valuable perspective to their history topic on the Second World War. Older pupils also have their life skills enhanced through rafting and abseiling in the Forest of Dean. The school has a good range of extracurricular activities for its size including football, gardening, French, art and craft, recorders and book and story club. It takes part in competitive sports with other schools including cluster sports days, football and cross-country. Good use is made of the gym and ICT suite at the local secondary school.
25. The school has a good range of learning resources which supports curricular provision well. These are carefully managed and arranged so that staff and pupils have easy access to them. The effective management of resources is a high priority in the school. The school's accommodation has some serious limitations. Classrooms are small and not always of a regular size. There is a lack of available rooms to undertake medicals, small group work and, as observed during the inspection, music tuition necessitated the use of both the Headteacher's room and the school office. There is no room for teachers to relax in. There is no hall for assemblies or PE and the outside playground area is very small. However, the school works very hard to make the best use possible of these limitations and to ensure, as far as possible, that no pupil is disadvantaged. At their pre-inspection meeting, parents were fully aware of both the accommodation limitations and the school's attempts to minimise their effect.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and the support and guidance provided are good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for children in the Reception class are good.
- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Adults know pupils well and provide very good levels of care for their wellbeing.
- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are informal but effective.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is very good.

Commentary

27. There are good induction arrangements for children when they start at the school, which are enhanced by the good relationships with the local playgroup. These procedures include a very gradual introduction to school for very young children as well as opportunities for parents to visit the school with their children on several occasions. These visits enable teachers to gather useful information about the children. As a result, children settle in quickly and make good progress. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring their achievement on a day to day basis.
28. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. The Headteacher and the SENCO are the designated persons for child protection and for looked-after children and are due to be retrained shortly. All staff are very aware of child protection issues. Links with the educational welfare officer and social services are satisfactory. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are good and all staff have been trained in water safety.
29. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with pupils. Nearly all pupils felt that there was at least one adult whom they could turn to for advice. Adults know them well and provide them with very good role models of courtesy and fairness. Pupils' personal development is carefully fostered and monitored on an informal level. Academic monitoring is used well to inform pupils' reports. However, assessment is not used consistently to help pupils to set their own targets and to understand how they can improve.
30. Pupils' views are consistently sought through circle time, PHSCE lessons and assemblies. The class councils and School Council ensure that pupils' opinions are heard. Pupils in their questionnaire felt confident that their opinions would be heard and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with good information about preparing their children for school and about their progress.
- Good links with the local playgroup and good links with other local schools provide many benefits for pupils.
- Communication with parents is good.
- The school has a high profile in the local community.

Commentary

31. In a high return of their pre-inspection questionnaire, parents and carers expressed very positive views of all aspects of the school. The staff were felt to be very open and approachable. The school regularly seeks parents' opinions through questionnaires and acts on their opinions. Information provided for parents is good. Topics are sent to them in advance and regular newsletters keep them well informed of events. The prospectus and governors' Annual Report are clearly written and informative. Homework and reading diaries are used well as a means of dialogue between school and home. Written annual reports are good: they provide diagnostic and thorough information on children's progress and set targets, although they do not offer parents and pupils the opportunity to comment. All parents have signed Home/school agreements. Communication with parents of pupils with SEN is also good.

32. The school establishes good links with a variety of local schools and the local playgroup. There are good links with the local secondary school: the school uses the sports hall, playing field and ICT suite. There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of education. Good links have been built up with other schools in the cluster, through art and sports. There are good links with the local teacher training college.
33. Parents support the school very well, through their regular help in school in a wide range of activities and on trips and visits. The PTA runs a good range of social and fund-raising events, which provide the school with very good funds to help buy equipment to enhance pupils' education. Members are very supportive at consultation evenings and other events.
34. The school is at the heart of the local community. For example, pupils take part in the village garden festival and summer fair and produce from the school allotment is sold at the farmers' market. There are good links with local churches. The local pub holds a Lamb Roast in the summer holidays, which is attended by members of the school. Part of the proceeds is shared with the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The Headteacher's leadership is good and he is well supported by other senior staff. The management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The management of the provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The school's finances are managed effectively and efficiently.
- The Headteacher has made a good start to his time at school and has introduced several important initiatives but some of these have not yet been sufficiently consolidated.
- The ethos of the school and its position in the local community have been maintained well.
- Useful developmental priorities are identified in the school improvement plan and in co-ordinators' subject action plans but they have had insufficient impact on raising standards.
- Governors are supportive and are increasing their knowledge of the school's work but they do not review and evaluate the school's effectiveness rigorously enough.

Commentary

35. The headteacher's leadership of the school is good. In the relatively short time in which he has been in post he has begun some important initiatives. He has settled quickly to the demands of leading and managing this small school and undertaking a half-time teaching commitment. The process of changing headteachers has been managed well and he has secured the confidence of staff, governors and parents. He has sensibly taken time to assess the school's needs and to work with all the staff to secure their commitment to the development process. He has successfully maintained several important strengths of the school. Despite some recent changes in staff, the quality of teaching has remained good. The school is still an important part of the local community. However, the process of school improvement is not fast enough in some areas.
36. Overall, the headteacher's management of the school is satisfactory. He has introduced several new initiatives, some of which are still being developed. Several new versions of the school improvement plan have been introduced recently. The process of devising, reviewing and evaluating the plan is not fully secure. Until very recently, the improvement plan was not sufficiently focused on raising standards and this important feature has not been sufficiently embedded in the school's work through different curriculum areas. The Headteacher has introduced a clear and manageable programme for the systematic monitoring of different curriculum areas. This aspect of the school's work was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The current process involves prioritising and then undertaking a review of teaching

and learning, pupils' work and full curriculum evaluation when the subject is a main focus. However, this process has not been followed and adopted with sufficient rigour.

37. Performance Management procedures have been introduced soundly. The process of setting targets for individual teachers has established clear links with the school's overall planning programme. Good links are made with teachers' professional development. Teachers attend a good range of in-service courses. Good use has been made of Local Education Authority (LEA) support to improve the Headteacher's monitoring skills as paired observations of lessons have been undertaken. The Headteacher is supported well by an effective and efficient administrative assistant. She provides a welcome for parents and other visitors to the school, manages the school office well and provides good links with the local community.
38. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are fully met. The governing body is led well by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic chair. Governors give the school good support within the local community and gain a sound view of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the work of the main committees and the full meetings. Committees for finance and buildings and premises are active and well informed. Governors are given clear information about the work of the school through the Headteacher's regular reports. A strength is allocation of curriculum responsibility to different governors and the recent creation of 'Governor of the Month' whereby a different governor visits the school and makes reports on their visit to the next meeting. This is improving governors' knowledge of the school and of teachers' work. A relative weakness is that governors' procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of developmental initiatives in the school improvement plan are not sufficiently regular or rigorous. This makes it more difficult for governors to assess the effectiveness of different initiatives or the overall work of the school. This was a weakness which was also identified at the last inspection.
39. The teacher in the Reception class provides good leadership. She is a very good role model and helps to inspire and motivate others well. She has a very good understanding of how young children learn and ensures that the children feel safe and secure, which enables them to learn well within a caring environment. The leadership of the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) is good. She knows the pupils well and uses her expertise to ensure that they make good progress. She works closely with the governor with responsibility for SEN issues.
40. The management of the school's finances is good as it was at the last inspection. A very recent financial audit judged that the financial systems in the school were operating at a high standard of efficiency and the school indicates that the minor recommendations that were made have been addressed. Previously high roll-over figures, which were being earmarked for building improvements, have been reduced and the roll-over is now within recommended levels. Good financial management has provided funds for the development of an extra downstairs classroom and toilet improvements. The process of devising the annual budget and monitoring progress through it is secure. The chair of finance provides good support.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	275,608
Total expenditure	233,498
Expenditure per pupil	2,831

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	34,766
Balance carried forward to the next	42,100

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

41. Children are admitted to school on a part-time basis during September in the year in which they become five. They are gradually integrated into full-time attendance, usually by their first half term in school. They enter a class that also has a group of eight Year 1 pupils. There are currently eleven children in the Reception year. Induction procedures are good and this means that the children quickly get used to the school routines. Overall, their attainment on entry is average. By the end of the Reception year, most children are achieving well in all six areas of the recommended curriculum for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, which enables the children to achieve well.
42. The teacher provides a good range of experiences that are well suited to the needs of the children. There are good opportunities for children to develop their independent learning by selecting an activity and using their imagination in free play activities. Although the school's buildings place some restrictions on the range of outside activities, the very good care and support given to the children ensure that their personal and emotional needs are well met. The school has worked hard to improve the key issues identified in the previous inspection relating to the provision for children in the Reception class. A good range of large wheeled toys and some balancing equipment for outside play, and more opportunities for free-choice in imaginative play and art have been provided.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are confident and happy in school.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- Consistently good teaching and learning enable the children to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- A good curriculum is matched well to the children's needs.

Commentary.

43. By the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to exceed the goals children of this age are expected to reach in all areas of the curriculum. Teaching and learning are consistently good in all areas of the curriculum. The children make good progress in their **personal, social and emotional development**. They are happy to come to school and settle easily into their activities each day. They work and play enthusiastically with each other and with the older children in the class. Relationships between adults and children are very good, and this helps to promote the children's self-esteem and confidence well. They are encouraged to feel confident by sharing their successes with the rest of the class. Children show respect for each other's needs and views and this is promoted well through encouraging them to think about sharing. Good opportunities are provided for children to choose activities for themselves and the teacher organises a good range of free play activities, which enables the children to initiate their own ideas through play. Children behave very well and respond willingly to requests to stop their activities and be ready to listen.
44. The children make good progress in developing new skills in **communication, language and literacy**. The teaching and curriculum for speaking, listening, reading and writing are good. Many children are confident speakers and these skills are developed well, as they are given many opportunities to talk. Good 'circle times' ensure that every child has an opportunity to express their ideas to the class while the rest listen to them. The children are encouraged to

build on their good vocabulary by explaining their ideas both about stories and while at work. The teaching of phonics is linked well with early writing skills and the children are provided with a good range of writing activities to develop these skills. Children are achieving well, with several already applying the knowledge of sounds to their writing. Those who have not reached this stage are encouraged to use their emergent writing skills. This is very good, as it enables them to feel confident to write. They explain what they have written to the teacher, who then writes below the children's writing so that they can see the correct spellings. The children listen to stories with great interest and attention and many know about books and how to use them. They take books home to share with their parents, and are provided with a book in which the teacher and parent share valuable information on the progress of the child.

45. In their **mathematical development**, children are encouraged to count by playing games and by singing a variety of number songs. They develop their ideas through practical experiences, such as using play materials to count out and match to number cards. The direct teaching of mathematics is often imaginative and takes full account of children's interest and experience. For example, after looking at the patterns of stripes and circles on a shed snakeskin, some children made their own repeating patterns with play dough, some used paint and shapes to create a painted pattern, while others found patterns on walls, windows and in the hopscotch game in the playground. Adults question the children very well while they are engaged in these activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. Aspects of mathematics that demand the use of language, for example, describing quantity and position are good.
46. Children gain well in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They are enjoying being 'explorers' in their 'Antarctic' role-play area, which linked very well with their own experience of a recent snowfall. They explore and learn well through first-hand experiences, such as looking at different forms of lights in the local area. They used torches and material of different thicknesses to find out which material would be best for curtains to keep a room dark. Children's awareness of religious and cultural traditions is appropriately enhanced through stories.
47. Although the limitations of the accommodation mean that children do not have free access to an outdoors play area, most children have good control of their bodies in their **physical development**. Alternative arrangements are in place for them to use the village hall or the scout hut for physical development lessons. During the inspection, the children walked to the scout hut and enjoyed their movement lesson, responding well to the music. Although they cannot spontaneously use the outside area, the teacher provides the children with a time outside each day to use the very good range of large wheeled toys, which the children control well. The teacher provides children with a good range of experiences to help improve their manipulative skills by handling modelling materials, scissors and brushes. When writing, both the teacher and teaching assistant encourage children to form their letters correctly.
48. Most children achieve well in their **creative development**. They explore a suitable range of materials, create simple collage pictures, learn how to mix colours together and enjoy using paint to make attractive pictures of teddy bears. In music, children are given the opportunity to explore the percussion instruments, which they play to accompany their singing. They know a wide variety of action songs, can clap in time to taped music and use the percussion instruments skilfully to make different sounds. In their creative role-play, the activities allow the children to explore and use their imagination well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are above average in Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject.
- Teaching is consistently good and the subject is managed well.
- The restrictions of the accommodation limit access to the school library.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their literacy skills across all curriculum areas.

Commentary

49. In Year 6, most pupils attain standards that are well above average and their achievement is very good. This includes pupils with SEN and more able pupils. The school has successfully maintained the high standards attained by Year 6 pupils since the last inspection. Standards in reading are above average in the current Year 2, which is similar to the time of the last inspection and to the 2003 test results. Most pupils read texts accurately and know how to sound out unfamiliar words. They readily talk about the books they read and show a suitable understanding of the story and characters. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards that are well above average in their reading. They enjoy reading and understand its importance in all aspects of their learning. The additional guided reading times provide very good opportunities for pupils to engage in a high level of discussion about the books they are reading. By Year 6 most pupils are avid readers who can confidently tackle a wide range of texts. Pupils have developed the necessary skills for finding information in books and on the Internet, which they use well to extend their learning. Although there is a good range of colour-coded books in the school library, the position of the library limits easy access to the reference books.
50. Standards in writing are average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. The majority of pupils achieve well, because of good teaching. Pupils are taught about grammar and punctuation and have an increasing knowledge of how these should be used. A few more able pupils in Year 2 have a secure grasp of the spelling of common words and use adjectives well to enhance their stories. Less able pupils have a variable understanding of how to form simple sentences accurately, particularly in their use of basic punctuation. Many pupils in Year 6 use paragraphs, correct punctuation and good grammatical structure in their written work. Teachers use assessment information well in order to set targets to help pupils to improve their standards of attainment.
51. Throughout the school, teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and this encourages effective learning. As a result, standards are above average by Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Pupils listen well in lessons and speak confidently to each other and adults, using a good, extensive vocabulary. In Year 6, there were many examples of pupils contributing well to discussions on a range of issues. For example, during a class council discussion, the pupils showed that they could conduct a formal discussion well and use persuasive language.
52. Across the school, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good with several very good features in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and implement it effectively. Teachers' lively presentations quickly engage the interest of pupils. The pupils respond enthusiastically and concentrate for long periods. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour enable all to learn and make a significant contribution to their high standards of attainment. Strengths in teaching are where teachers use open-ended questions effectively to direct pupils' thinking and pupils' learning is consistently extended. Teachers use good quality literature well, such as *Beowulf* and *The Lord of the Rings*, to extend and enhance pupils' vocabulary and learning of story structure. When pupils are working on individual or group tasks, activities are matched well to their abilities, which extends their learning well. Teaching assistants are well prepared for lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

53. The management of the subject is good and there has been a good improvement in English since the school was last inspected. The school has successfully maintained high standards in English since the school's last inspection. Assessment in English is very effective and teachers use this well to plan further work. Results of national tests are analysed rigorously to identify areas where pupils have difficulty. This enables teachers to set realistic targets for pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through all subjects. Teachers are very aware of the need to promote accurate and clear speaking skills and so they provide many opportunities for pupils to speak with partners, as part of a group or in front of the whole class. By Year 6, pupils confidently use reference and resource books. Literacy skills are used well in some subjects, such as when Year 4 pupils wrote how they used sheep's wool to make felt in their design and technology (DT) lessons. However, this good practice is not consistent across the curriculum and opportunities are missed to develop writing and recording skills, such as the overuse of worksheets in science and RE.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good.
- The curriculum ensures a good balance between number work and other aspects of mathematics.
- Opportunity for pupils to apply what they know in different contexts and to devise their own investigations is not sufficiently developed.
- Numeracy skills are not consistently applied across other curriculum areas.

Commentary

55. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards that are well above average. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. The current results are similar to those achieved by the previous Year 6 group. Pupils in Year 2 are currently achieving average standards. This is significantly lower than the very high standards achieved by the previous Year 2 group but matches the school's assessment of this group's likely attainment in the 2004 national tests. It is also similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well while those in Year 2 achieve well. Pupils with SEN also achieve well.
56. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are well above average. Pupils deal confidently with larger numbers using the four mathematical rules. They have a good understanding of place value including thousands and thousandths. They record other aspects of their work accurately. For example, they produce translations of regular and irregular shapes and draw careful reflection and rotations of shapes. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards. Most deal confidently with money totals to £1-00 and know the pattern made by odd and even numbers.
57. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Teachers' planning follows the format recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. The learning intended in the lessons is identified and activities are organised which make clear reference to the different abilities of pupils in the class. Teachers are skilful in adapting their approach and lesson organisation to cater for the mixed age ranges in each class. They often work hard to introduce concepts and skills at several different levels in each lesson. During group activities, pupils are well supported by learning support assistants and teachers who circulate around the classroom and intervene effectively in the groups as they work. An important reason for the good quality of pupils'

learning is the very good learning environment which teachers create. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, they consistently create an environment where pupils are enthusiastic, work hard and are committed to doing their best.

58. A strength in provision is the way in which the planned curriculum ensures that different aspects of the subject are given appropriate consideration. The use of text and workbooks ensures that number skills are taught and reinforced well. Pupils also maintain clear records of work that they have done on shapes, space and measures. Pupils have some opportunities to investigate numbers as they solve word problems associated with their current work. During a lesson observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 were challenged well to consider some addition and subtraction problems as an introduction activity to the lesson. However, there are insufficient opportunities for them to initiate their own investigations or for them to consider 'real-life' applications of the numbers and patterns which they are using.
59. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Appropriate opportunities are provided for her to monitor and review work in the subject according to the agreed monitoring schedule. This has involved lesson observation and the sampling of pupils' work. Assessment in the subject is good. Data from the national and optional tests are analysed well to identify strengths and weaknesses and pupils are tested at the end of each unit of work. Data are used well to form teaching groups based on ability within the mixed age classes and to identify those who would benefit from booster work. The process of using assessment data to set class and individual learning targets is just beginning to be established. Those for Year 6 are very recent. This good practice has yet to be consistently applied across the school. The creation of a separate Year 4 class each morning is helping to raise standards in the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. There are some opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects, such as the use of timelines in history in Year 5 and 6 and the use of tally charts in Year 3 to record the favourite food of pupils in the class. However, there are important opportunities which are not taken, particularly in the use and analysis of data in science and in ICT. This makes the overall application of mathematics across the curriculum unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

Science

The overall provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across the school, pupils achieve above average standards.
- There is a strong emphasis on learning through investigation.
- Pupils enjoy science and behave very well during lessons.
- The school environment is used well to enhance learning.
- The recording of science inhibits independent research.

Commentary

61. Standards attained in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. The judgement is similar to the findings of the school's last inspection and the assessments made by teachers. In the 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds and teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, standards were among the top five per cent of all schools nationally. The current Year 2 and Year 6 groups are not attaining the very high standards achieved by previous groups. The inspection finds that children start school at average standards. Across the school, the good teaching and learning promote the good achievement of pupils of all abilities, including those who have SEN and also more able pupils.

62. Pupils are taught all elements of the subject as they move through the school. In a Year 1 lesson, many pupils made good progress when they were able to identify a range of objects that light up either from mains electricity or batteries. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of which materials will let light through. Pupils in Year 6 are able to build parallel and serial electrical circuits. Most pupils are developing a scientific vocabulary to explain their observations as they undertake investigations. As a result, by Year 6, most pupils are able to provide clear explanations and record their findings accurately when writing up experiments.
63. Teaching and learning are good, especially when specific investigations are undertaken. When this is done, pupils make the best progress in their learning. Teachers are skilled at developing the appropriate scientific language that pupils need to talk about their work. This supports their speaking skills well. Lessons are well prepared, organised and interesting. As a result pupils are positive about their work. Much of the work set is challenging and builds well on pupils' previous learning. However, there is too much emphasis placed on recording findings onto prepared worksheets. As a result pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to plan and devise ways of recording their own work. There is also a loss of pace to lessons when pupils copy out detailed charts and flow diagrams. There are lost opportunities for pupils to undertake individual research through using the school library and ICT. This has an impact on the quality of written work produced by pupils.
64. Good use is made of the local environment to enhance scientific understanding. As part of their work on habitats pupils use a local pond for dipping. Their careful observation has resulted in Year 6 pupils being able to explain how water boatmen are able to travel across the surface of water. A particular strength is the use of the school allotment to grow vegetables and flowers. The produce is entered into local horticultural shows and sold to parents and at the local farmers' market. This activity enhances literacy and numeracy skills and also contributes to the pupils' very good personal and social skills.
65. The subject is well led and managed, ensuring that all teachers feel confident to teach science through the use of scientific investigations. Teachers analyse pupils' work each term, but the use of some undated and unmarked sheets of work prevents pupils obtaining an immediate feedback on their performance and hinders them from knowing what they need to do to improve. There are limited opportunities for this subject to make a contribution to literacy which is in contrast to the last inspection when science was seen to enhance literacy. There has been a satisfactory improvement in science since the school was last inspected.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have not ensured that pupils have been progressively taught the necessary concepts and skills to enable them to reach average standards.
- The use of ICT to support work in other subjects is not consistently developed.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently detailed or applied consistently across the school.
- During the inspection, individual pupils were using computers appropriately.

Commentary

65. Across the school pupils, reach below average standards. Pupils with regular access to computers at home achieve much higher standards than those without. These current judgements represent a significant decline since the last inspection when standards were average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Across the school, pupils are not achieving as well as they should. There is significant underachievement in Year 6.

66. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is unsatisfactory. During the inspection, no direct teaching of ICT skills was observed. Conversation with pupils indicated that this was the common practice. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and conversation with pupils showed that they had not been introduced to a sufficiently wide range of concepts and skills as they moved through the school. Across the school, pupils are aware of some word-processing features and they have written and printed some of their work. However, they have not been progressively taught to use a sufficiently wide range of techniques to use in their work. Pupils have significant gaps in their appreciation of the use of computers to display and analyse data such as in databases or on spreadsheets. The use of e-mail and control programs is underdeveloped. During the inspection, individual pupils were observed using mathematics programs to reinforce work which they were currently doing and useful illustrative work was done in Year 2's work on shadows in science.
67. The co-ordinator has not monitored standards in the subject with sufficient rigour to be aware of the underachievement in the subject. Plans for improvement have concerned additional hardware and building improvements and have not been sufficiently focused on raising standards. Curriculum plans are in place, but, in practice, they have not been followed with sufficient rigour. Resources are sound. The ratio of computers to pupils is broadly average. Opportunities in the subject are enhanced well through the use of a specialist technician who visits the school regularly and by links with the local secondary school which enable groups of pupils to use its computer suite. Staff have all undertaken recent in-service training. Assessment procedures are not consistently applied. Some younger pupils complete a useful 'I Can...' which records what they have achieved while others use a simple tick list of programs they have used. There is no agreed format for systematically recording pupils' knowledge and skills which are matched to National Curriculum criteria. The school has collected a portfolio of examples of pupils' completed work. However, some of the work is not sufficiently recent and it has not been assessed according to National Curriculum levels. Management of the subject and its improvement since the school's last inspection are unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Teachers work hard to provide opportunities for individual pupils to use computers to extend and develop their work in lessons. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 were using computers to reinforce their understanding of the different value of digits in numbers. Older pupils had had some opportunity to use the Internet to find out information, for example, for their World War 2 project and finding out about Indian animals. However, overall, ICT is not used consistently and to an appropriate depth to support work done in other curriculum areas.

HUMANITIES

69. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about provision or standards achieved in **history** or **geography**. Inspectors did not see any lessons in geography and there was not enough previous work available to make a reliable judgement about standards. In history, inspectors analysed samples of pupils' work and talked to groups of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 to check their knowledge and understanding. Curricular planning was examined and discussions held with subject leaders. In the single lesson observed in Year 2/3, where pupils were learning about life in Anglo-Saxon times, teaching and learning were good. The lesson began with a useful review of previous work. The teacher used pictures of Anglo-Saxon clothes, jewellery, food and sources of light as discussion points with her class. Despite the teacher's enthusiasm, pupils were not fully responsive and only a few contributed to the class discussion. However, when pupils went to work in their groups they settled well to their tasks. Groups of pupils were asked to discuss the hypothesis that 'most were farmers', 'some men wore rough stockings', and that 'large family groups lived together in huts'. This lesson contributed well towards speaking and listening skills. By the end of the lesson, pupils were able to appreciate how information about the past can be gathered and that there are different ways of interpreting evidence.

Religious education (RE)

Provision in RE is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal, social and moral development.
- Good use of local facilities enhances pupils' learning.
- Overuse of worksheets inhibits opportunities for the development of pupils' recording and independent research skills.

Commentary

70. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection were in line with expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. At the time of the last inspection, standards were also average. Only one lesson was observed and written work was examined. Analysis of the work and talking to pupils indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school. In the single lesson seen in the Year 5/6 class, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. The lesson provided an effective opportunity for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills as they shared thoughts on the places that were special to them. This introduction to the lesson led well into pupils' understanding of why the Ka'bah is important to Muslims. A small group of pupils asked questions about the size of the Ka'bah. However, there was a missed opportunity for these pupils to use their research skills to find the answer and a worksheet task restricted pupils' response to the subject. Discussions with pupils indicated that they are being given opportunities to discover the consequences of their actions, such as bullying and broken promises. Although their written work showed a suitable coverage of other religious faiths such as Judaism and Islam, there was a heavy reliance on the use of worksheets in Years 3 to 6. This means that there were lost opportunities for pupils to undertake their own research work or pursue a sustained project.
72. Good use is made of visits to local churches. In Years 1 and 2, there are good links across several areas of the curriculum when pupils study the theme of spring. They are taken for nature walks, decorate Easter eggs, make cards and visit the local church. Older pupils in Year 4/5/6 have the opportunity to visit a mosque and Gloucester Cathedral. These pupils also experience a Jewish Passover meal. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator supports her teaching colleagues well and has a clear idea of how the teaching of the subject can be improved further. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the school was last inspected.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about provision in **DT**. Evidence from teachers' planning and from a limited amount of previous work shows that pupils are given the opportunity to design and make an appropriate range of artefacts. Topics such as moving pictures, bridges and wind-up monsters are taught. Evidence from a Year 3 project on bread shows good attention to detail. Pupils investigated well different types of bread, such as soda, pitta, white and brown. They discussed the implements you might need in the kitchen to make them and evaluated the appearance, smell, texture and taste of a variety of sandwiches before designing and making their own healthy sandwich. Teaching in the single lesson observed during the inspection was good. Pupils were fully involved in making their own models of cams to show different types of movement.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have opportunities to use a variety of tools and techniques.
- Satisfactory links are made with work in other subjects.

Commentary

74. In Year 2 and Year 6 pupils reach average standards. This represents a decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to have been above average. Across the school pupils achieve soundly and make satisfactory progress.
75. Pupils are introduced to a sound range of tools, techniques and media as they move through the school. In Years 1 and 2, younger pupils investigate the effect of mixing different coloured paints and make patterns using thick and thin lines. Older pupils paint coloured flower/shape pictures using oil paint and blend coloured chalk crayons effectively in their firework pictures. In Years 3 to 6, younger pupils arrange strip paper collage patterns while older pupils produce colourful designs for their mugs and plates.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. At the last inspection, it was good. Teachers explain the context of pupils' work well by reminding them of what they have done before and explain techniques carefully. A strength in teaching is the wide variety of activities provided for pupils to follow. For example, in a good lesson to Year 4/5 pupils, the teacher had devised weaving, sewing, printing and painting activities to follow. These groups were well supported by the class teacher and her assistants. In a lesson to pupils in Year 1, care was taken by the teacher to emphasise how to use scissors safely and effectively.
77. The subject is managed by a recently appointed, temporary part-time teacher who is knowledgeable and has settled quickly to her new responsibilities. She has a clear vision for the development of the subject which involves planning for the development of particular skills through the topics undertaken by classes. This new format is in the process of being adopted. She has devised a useful subject action plan. The importance of drawing is emphasised in Years 1 to 6 as all pupils have and use sketchbooks. However, work in their sketchbooks does not show a sufficiently clear progression in the development of pupils' drawing skills. The co-ordinator has introduced some useful self-assessment checklists which encourage pupils to comment critically on their own work. This is being established well in Years 4, 5 and 6. Some good links have been established with work in other subjects. For example, work on display shows that effective pictures and patterns had been produced which were based on pupils' Second World War history topic. Interesting sculptures, which had been produced during a previous art and craft week were also displayed well. Improvement in the subject since the school was last inspected has been satisfactory.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning enables pupils to achieve above average standards.
- The leadership of the subject is good.
- A high proportion of pupils learn to play a musical instrument.
- Live performances enhance pupils' appreciation of music.

Commentary

78. Across the school, pupils reach above average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to have been average. All pupils achieve well and make good progress in this subject.

79. Across the school, pupils sing tunefully, with awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics and enjoy singing. Inspectors heard children singing in collective worship and listened to tape recordings of pupils' singing and playing musical instruments. In the two lessons which were observed during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 sang 'Row, row, row your boat' as a two-part round very well, which is well above the standards expected for their age. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use percussion and tuned instruments well to perform simple melodic patterns and keep good rhythm. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 compose and record their own tuneful compositions.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. In the two observed lessons, the teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge which was used well to help pupils move forward. In one lesson to pupils in Year 3/4, the teacher's high expectations of concentration and behaviour set the scene for good learning throughout the lessons. Pupils were well motivated and the brisk pace kept them so involved in the lesson that they gave of their best and showed that they wanted to learn. The use of a specialist music teacher adds significantly to the quality of provision.
81. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is a part-time teacher but she has a good understanding of the working of the subject across the school because she teaches the subject in each year, except the Reception class. She works hard and effectively to ensure that the subject has a high profile in the school. Pupils are taught all elements of the curriculum through the introduction of a scheme of work that is linked to the nationally recommended guidelines and adapted to the needs of the school. Two recorder groups and instrumental teaching in the guitar, violin and flute enhance pupils' learning well. Pupils perform in the annual performances at harvest, Christmas and Easter, which make a good contribution to their overall musical experience. The yearly performances by a string quartet and a steel drum band, together with visits to the theatre and other visiting musicians enhance pupils' appreciation of music very well. This positive picture shows a good improvement in music since the last inspection.

Physical education (PE)

Provision in PE is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and organised.
 - Pupils co-operate well in group and shared work.
 - Pupils evaluate their work successfully and understand the effects of exercise on their bodies.
 - The lack of a school hall and playing field results in pupils having to travel to other sites that have these facilities.
82. Across the school, pupils attain average standards. In Year 2, pupils know how exercise affects their bodies and the importance of warming up before beginning their activities. They move with confidence and are able to move imaginatively to different pieces of music. By the end of Year 6, pupils show appropriate co-ordination and are able to build a series of complex moves. They show a good sense of rhythm and pace, and work well together. Although swimming was not observed during the inspection, the school's record indicates that standards are average. Most pupils can swim 25 metres safely and unaided, using recognised strokes, by the end of Year 6 and many swim more capably than this. The last inspection noted that the outdoor and adventurous aspect of the PE curriculum was not being met for older pupils. This is now in place. Adventurous activities are undertaken at a centre in the Forest of Dean and the school has the use of a playing field at an adjacent school. The school won the last sports day held for local schools. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in cross-country running.
83. Across the school, the standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This enables the pupils to achieve satisfactorily in this subject and to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In Years 1 and 2, lessons begin with an appropriate warm up session and teachers make sure that pupils are appropriately dressed. In the dance lessons seen, the pupils worked

well together in teams and there was a good pace to the sessions as pupils organised themselves into groups. In the Year 6 lesson on country dancing the teaching of specific skills, making a basket and casting off, improved the pupils' performance. Older pupils will be using their dance skills at the Country Dancing Festival in Stroud later in the term and the forthcoming performance provides a good focus for them to perfect their dance skills.

84. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and ensures that the curriculum is well covered despite the challenges that the site imposes. The school compensates well for the very small playground and a lack of a field and a hall by using the indoor and outdoor facilities of neighbouring schools. A strength in provision is the use of self-assessment and target setting which is involving pupils well in their own learning. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have review diaries for assessing their own work and for setting personal attainment targets. They analyse their performance in gymnastics and swimming and record their ideas for games. These diaries are very effective in focusing pupils on deciding what they need to do to improve. In addition, they are well marked by the Headteacher who acknowledges the comments made by pupils. Where appropriate, he changes lesson plans to take account of their targets. For instance, one pupil wrote that he found it difficult to maintain a regular breathing pattern when swimming for a considerable number of lengths. The Headteacher replied that he would take a swimming lesson that would help with breathing techniques. There were no clear judgements about quality and standards in the subject in the last inspection. The evidence indicates satisfactory management and satisfactory improvement since that inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, and the very good provision for their personal and social development positively encourages their capacity to learn and underpins the impressive sense of community within the school.

Commentary

85. PSHCE is given a high priority in the school and throughout the curriculum. The subject is on the timetable for each class. Older pupils' understanding of citizenship is developed well through regular opportunities for them to discuss current affairs. PSHCE makes an important contribution to establishing very good relationships between everyone in the school. Its success is reflected in pupils' good attitudes to learning, which supports their good achievement. There are both school and class councils and these are used effectively to address items of concern for pupils, such as improving the locks on the toilets and agreeing not to bring in toys from home. The school council negotiated the improvements to the school playground markings. In Year 2, pupils are able to contribute to a discussion on what they consider fair and unfair. They are encouraged to discuss their views and take a vote. In addition, pupils are given the opportunity to chair meetings. They are sufficiently confident to share their thoughts and respect the views of others and feel that in their school 'everyone has responsibility for their own actions'. In discussions with pupils, they feel confident that they can discuss any problems with any adult in the school. This reflects the good relationships that are firmly established. The school has given high priority to health education and a health week finished with a sponsored skip to raise money for the Heart Foundation. The school received the Gloucestershire Healthy Schools Partnership Commendation for promoting the health of the school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
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	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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the Headteacher	3
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).