

INSPECTION REPORT

FOXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foxton, Cambridge.

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110608

Headteacher: Mrs J Jones

Lead inspector: Mr M Carter

Dates of inspection: 1 - 4 December 2003

Inspection number: 256167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	104
School address:	Foxton Primary School 11 Hardman Road Foxton Cambridge
Postcode:	CB2 6RN
Telephone number:	01223 712447
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Griffiths
Date of previous inspection:	9.3.1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the village of Foxton and surrounding areas some eight miles south of Cambridge. Since the last inspection, the school has relocated into a specifically designed building, attached to a new community centre. It has been in use for just over a year and underlines the school's links with the community. Despite the new building and the school's popularity with its parents, there are fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection and the school is smaller than average. There are 103 pupils with one more attending on a part-time basis. There are slightly more girls than boys. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds but more than average have parents with a higher education. The proportion of pupils claiming a free school meal is below the average for most primary schools. The pupils' homes include a mixed range of housing from expensive owner-occupied to local authority provided dwellings. Socio-economic indicators for the area are above average.

Before starting school, most children attend the village pre-school, which is located in the attached community building. Overall, their attainment on entry to the school is typical for their age. However, in some years it is better than this with more children of a high capability than average. There are currently 16 pupils with special educational needs and, although there are differences between year groups, the overall pattern is of an average proportion compared to primary schools nationally. There are four pupils with statements of special educational needs and this is an above average proportion. Since the last inspection, this proportion has been consistently high and includes pupils with a number of difficulties likely to make learning harder, such as autism, dyslexia, and speech problems. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and none from minority ethnic backgrounds.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20714	Mr M Carter	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education.
9275	Mrs C Kalms	Lay inspector	
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	English Foundation Stage Art and design History Geography Music Religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is good and it is improving under the very good leadership of the headteacher. The pupils achieve well whatever their capability because of the individual attention they receive. Standards are high in test results. Teaching and learning are good throughout with some very good teaching. The curriculum has been improved and is good and enriched well. There are effective links with parents, whose views about the school are very positive, as are the pupils'. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are very good. Management and governance are good and effectively implement improvements. The school has a very good ethos and this is reflected in the pupils' good behaviour and very good attitudes. The school provides good value for money.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve good standards overall and test results are often above the average for similar schools.
- Members of staff give very good support to each individual pupil, especially those with special educational needs and those needing a high degree of challenge.
- A high proportion of the pupils develop very good speaking skills, and there are particular strengths in art and design and in the pupils' imaginative presentation of their work.
- Standards in writing are limited by too few opportunities for extended writing and by relatively weak skills of spelling and punctuation in the middle years.
- There is good teaching throughout, with some particularly effective features, such as the methods used to engage all the pupils well.
- The headteacher's leadership and sensitive management are very good and have been particularly influential in the school's adoption of its new premises.
- Marking and checks on learning are used insufficiently in several subjects that are not tested nationally and so co-ordinators cannot evaluate standards in these subjects accurately.
- The pupils gain very good attitudes to learning because lessons are interesting and varied.
- Links with the community and other establishments are very good and mutually beneficial, and the partnership with parents is good providing good support for pupils' learning.
- There are good links made between subjects and the curriculum is enriched well.

Since its last inspection in March 1998, the school has improved well. There have been significant improvements in national test results, which, for Year 6, have risen at a rate similar to the national trend but starting from a point significantly higher than average. There have been improvements made in each of the areas raised as issues in the last inspection. However, not all of them have been completed to full effect. For example, the roles of some subject co-ordinators still have shortcomings, and marking and other checks on the pupils' learning are not consistently used. There are plans for further improvements in these. Nevertheless, schemes of work are now completed and the curriculum is secure. Homework contributes effectively to the pupils' learning and the new school provides well for learning, with its users gaining a sense of pride from the building.

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	A	B	D
mathematics	B	A	A*	A
science	A	A*	A*	A*

Key: A* - in the top 5% of schools; 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.

The attainment of most children on entry to the reception class is typical for their age and in some years better than that. By the start of Year 1, most children meet the Early Learning Goals expected of children at this age in all areas, sometimes exceeding them. Standards by the end of Year 2 are often well above average, with good numbers of pupils achieving above the levels expected. However, the current Year 2 group has higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs and standards are average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6 because of the good gains that pupils make, especially in mathematics and science, where very high proportions of pupils reach standards above those expected. Overall standards by Year 6 are above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in a range of other subjects. Standards in art and design are well above average. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and their learning. Behaviour and the **pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall**. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall in each part of the school. The provision made for individual pupils is good and often supported very well by teachers and classroom or learning assistants. Consequently, all the pupils learn well and overall achievement is good. The teachers plan lessons well to engage the pupils' interest and provide a range of activities involving different levels of difficulty. However, sometimes marking and checks on past learning are not used enough. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and by withdrawal at appropriate times. Their progress is closely tracked and they achieve well as do pupils of high capability. The well-enriched curriculum is good and has improved with schemes of work now available for all subjects. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are promoted well with very good guidance and advice for individual pupils. The school's links with parents are good and there are very good links with the community and other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good; those of the headteacher are very good and particularly effective in helping the school to use its new building imaginatively. Other members of staff make a good contribution to running the school and implementing improvements, especially senior teachers. In some of the subjects for which there are no national tests, the co-ordinators rely too heavily on informal methods to evaluate standards. The work of governors is good (despite some minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents) and helps to shape the school's development, challenging staff and gaining a good overview of developments. The school's self-evaluation is good. Finances are prudently managed with good attention to gaining best value. Staff development is good and the school makes a very good contribution to teacher training.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very positive. They parents feel the school is responsive to their views. Parents like the concern given to individual children's needs and the high standards. They feel that the children are expected to work hard and are treated fairly. Induction arrangements are very successful and the children are well prepared for the next stage of education. Pupils also have very positive opinions about the school and are happy and well motivated.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing, particularly spelling and punctuation in the middle years and increase opportunities for extended writing throughout;
- consistently use effective marking and checks on learning throughout the subjects;
- provide the means for co-ordinators of subjects for which there is no national testing to evaluate standards more accurately;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- for the annual governors' report to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. They are currently average by the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics and above average in science. Achievement varies between subjects. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good and occasionally very good in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, the national test results in science and mathematics are very high and they are above average in English.
- At the end of Year 2, the 2003 national test results were well above average.
- Achievement is well above average in art and design; standards have risen significantly, particularly by the end of Year 6.
- The national test results in Year 2 are consistently above average but not rising as fast as the national trend.
- At the end of Year 6, results are also above or well above average and rising broadly in line with the national trend.

Commentary

1. The effective teaching has helped to maintain high standards and, in the case of art and design, history and religious education, to raise the level of attainment. In the current Year 2, standards in science, art and design and physical education are above average and in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) they are average. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, ICT, history, religious education and physical education, and well above average in art and design. It was not possible to make any judgements about standards in history, or religious education by the end of Year 2, or in geography, music and design and technology by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Although there is evidence of differences between the performance of boys and girls, they tend to alternate: in some years boys outperform girls and in others, girls do better. During the inspection, there was little evidence of any differences.
2. Children enter school with attainment that is typical for their age. However, this varies year by year, partly because most year groups are small in number and partly because the number of children who have special educational needs varies. Because of good provision for speaking and listening, these skills develop well and children are encouraged to become articulate, confident speakers. Currently, most will exceed the expected level in these aspects by the end of their reception year. Similarly, the majority of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in the artistic element of creative development. However, in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development they will achieve the expected levels. Good progress is made in the areas of learning where children will exceed the expected levels and satisfactory progress in the other areas. Overall, achievement in the reception class is satisfactory.
3. The table of results below, for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2003, shows an improving picture in national test results. Standards in all subjects were well above the national average. However, when compared with similar schools (based on the number of pupils receiving free school meals) reading and mathematics remain well above average but writing is above average. Since the last inspection standards have risen slowly, after a dramatic fall in 2000,

from being well above average to average in reading and writing. Despite this rise, the school trend for improvement is below the national trend. The performance of boys exceeded that of girls in the 2003 national tests but in 2002 the girls out-performed the boys. This difference was not evident in the present Year 2 pupils. Inspection evidence suggests that results will be closer to average rather than above it in 2004. This is particularly so in writing, where fewer pupils are expected to achieve the higher level, and also in mathematics. Capability is not as high and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is greater.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.4 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.5 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 for 2003 were very high in comparison to the national averages for mathematics and science and above average in English. Since the last inspection, standards have varied year to year, with results in English, mathematics and science varying but always being above average. When the 2003 results are compared with similar schools, the results for mathematics and science remain very high but for English they are only average. However, when considering the pupils' prior attainment, based on the scores from the year-group's results in Year 2, science and mathematics are very high but English is below average. This shows that the gains, or progress, from Year 2 to Year 6 in English were significantly lower. The 2003 test results show that the boys out-performed the girls in all subjects, whereas the girls had out-performed the boys in the previous year. It was not evident from observations during the inspection that there were any differences. From inspection evidence, standards in all three subjects are above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics and science and achievement in English is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (28.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	30.0 (29.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	32.1 (31.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- By the end of Year 6, standards in ICT are above average because teachers are knowledgeable and give the pupils challenging tasks. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to use their skills in other subjects. For example, pupils used computers in a literacy lesson to produce a heading for their booklets about the school. Standards in both history and art and design have improved since the last inspection. A specialist teacher provides very well for art and design. The emphasis is on developing good techniques and building on skills. Consequently, standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are very well motivated, interested and keen to succeed. Attractive displays show pupils' work to good advantage and illustrate the range and variety of media used. Pupils enjoy history and religious education and as a result of good teaching achieve standards that are above expectations. They demonstrate a good standard in gymnastics, but no judgements could be made about other aspects of physical education because they were not taught during the week of

inspection. No judgements about standards could be made in design and technology, music or geography either because there was insufficient evidence or because these subjects were not taught during the inspection.

This table summarises the findings for Year 2 and Year 6		
Subject	Standard by end of Year 2	Standard by end of Year 6
English	Average	Above average
Mathematics	Average	Above average
Science	Above average	Above average
*ICT	Average	Above average
*Art & design	Above average	Well above average
*Design & technology	No judgement	No judgement
*Geography	No judgement	No judgement
*History	No judgement	Above
*Music	No judgement	No judgement
*Physical education	Above average	Above average
Religious education	No judgement	Above average

* These are the non-core subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

As in the last inspection these aspects are very good. Pupils continue to behave well and have very good relationships. These qualities, together with pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development, have a positive impact on learning. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' behaviour is good, and they have very good attitudes to their work.
- Relationships are very good, and the school is a harmonious community where pupils get on purposefully together.
- Very good attendance and punctuality contribute to sustained learning, although the procedures to monitor attendance are informal.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good.
- Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, although there are few opportunities for pupils to learn about Britain's multi-cultural society.

Commentary

6. The pupils' very good attitudes reported in the last inspection have been maintained. They continue to make a valuable contribution to their learning. In the questionnaires, almost all parents confirm that the children enjoy school. Pupils are highly motivated to learn and want to do well. They are enthusiastic in lessons, maintain high levels of concentration and follow instructions. They respond quickly and confidently to questions, engaging in discussion and developing their ideas. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They settle quickly and get on with the task given often without direct supervision.
7. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good because the headteacher and staff expect good behaviour and have a consistent approach. The school builds effectively on the values that pupils bring from home. Pupils clearly understand the principles of the school's code of

conduct and contribute to the formation of classroom rules. Consequently, teachers rarely have to spend time establishing order. No pupils have been excluded for several years. Although pupils and parents are happy with standards of behaviour, a small number of parents raised concerns about bullying. However, pupils feel that bullying or other forms of harassment are not an issue, and are equally confident that any occurrences are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school promotes moral values well through all aspects of its life. Teachers act as good role models. Pupils have a good understanding of the differences between right and wrong and they show respect for people and property.

8. Provision for social development is good. As a result, the school is a harmonious community where pupils have very good relationships with each other, teachers and other adults. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils are integrated fully into the school community and accepted by others. Pupils show respect for people and show interest in other traditions and beliefs. Teachers expect pupils to work together and as a result they co-operate and share resources sensibly. They enjoy the lessons that allow them to learn independently and collaboratively. Pupils gain an increasing sense of responsibility and maturity as they move through the school. Many contribute to the community by having regular duties. For example, they act as 'buddies', serve younger pupils with their lunch and share reading books with younger pupils. The school council offers pupils a structure through which they can share their ideas, express their opinions about the school and become involved in decision-making. It also provides a way in which pupils' opinions can be taken into account.

9. Pupils' spiritual development is good and promoted well throughout the curriculum. The school is a place where pupils can flourish, respect others and be respected. Pupils' efforts are acknowledged and praised and the many displays of work celebrate their achievements. Pupils are given the opportunities to consider the beliefs and practices of world faiths in religious education. Acts of collective worship allow pupils to have time for reflection.

10. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils learn to respect religious beliefs other than their own, and assemblies offer the chance to celebrate some of the major world faith festivals. The recent 'diversity day' enabled pupils to learn about another cultural heritage, the focus being on Jamaica. Pupils develop their knowledge of British culture through visits to places of cultural interest. Art, music and literature contribute to other aspects of their cultural knowledge. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wide cultural and ethnic diversity that exists in Britain today.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	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.

11. Levels of attendance are very good. Parents ensure that their children attend regularly although a few do take their children on holiday during term time. Unauthorised absence is low because most parents contact the school when their child is absent. As a result, the school has very informal, yet effective systems to follow up absence. There are very few incidents of pupils arriving late.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good because the curriculum is good and it is well taught. The school provides a very good climate for learning with a strong attention to individual pupils' learning needs.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall in each part of the school, helping the pupils to learn well in the large majority of lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection; a quarter of lessons are very well taught and none is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers are successful in supporting and challenging pupils whatever their capability.
- Support assistants and other helpers are used well, and are very effective.
- Marking is inconsistent and seldom provides suggestions for improvements.
- Checks on what the pupils have learned are not used enough in some non-core subjects.
- Planning identifies good teaching methods and activities that engage the pupils well, capturing their interest.
- Teachers have generally good knowledge of the subjects they teach.

Commentary

12. Teachers and other staff show a high level of commitment. Teaching is more effective than it was at the last inspection and this has led to rising standards. Weaknesses identified then have been largely overcome. For example, homework is now much more systematic and sometimes tailored to pupils' capability, and there is no longer a part of the school with weaker teaching. A considerable strength in teaching is the way in which individual pupils are supported in their needs, for example, those arising from a learning difficulty or from a particular talent or capability. The work of classroom and learning assistants is very effective in this and they are used well, although in a small minority of lessons, they are not used enough to record pupils' responses to questions in whole-class discussions.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (26 %)	14 (45%)	9 (29%)	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.

13. This profile of teaching is slightly better than that found in most primary schools, and is good overall. The class teachers' generally good subject knowledge is complemented by some part-time specialist teaching in art and design of very good quality. Throughout the school, members of staff encourage the pupils to acquire good speaking and listening skills well and they learn quickly, extending their ability to communicate. This is because they answer questions at length and staff and other pupils listen and respect their views.

14. Teaching and learning in subjects where judgements were possible:

	English	Mathem-atics	Science	ICT	Art and Design	History	Music	Physical Education	Religious Education
Years 1 & 2	Satis-factory	good	good	Satis-factory	very good	no judgement	Satis-factory	good	no judgement
Years 3 to 6	Good	good	good	good	very good	good	Satis-factory	good	good

15. The teaching of the reception children is good overall. There are strengths in the good relationships that are quickly promoted, the questioning that helps the children to gain confidence in speaking and the way in which classroom support is used. Planning is satisfactory but not related securely enough to the incremental steps of the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals.
16. The teaching in Years 1 to 6 is also good overall. It provides individual support where needed and a good degree of challenge for more capable pupils and for those in the older age group in each class. In a good number of lessons, tasks are planned for different levels of difficulty and extra activities help to provide the correct level of challenge. However, in under a quarter of lessons, teachers did not know enough about the pupils' past knowledge because previous checks on learning were not used. Consequently, there was a small degree of under-challenge for some pupils in these lessons, which were mainly in non-core subjects. Throughout the school, marking is inconsistent and the school is considering the development of a stronger policy. Currently, teachers emphasise the oral feedback they give to pupils about their work. Nevertheless, marking suggests too few ways to improve and often lacks encouragement. Homework is set regularly and complements the pupils' learning at school. Teachers sometimes amend it to meet the learning needs of particular groups of pupils.
17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and often very well supported by learning assistants. Individual education plans are written by teachers and are usually of satisfactory quality, although some pay too little attention to the details of how it will be known that targets have been met. Support staff record in detail the progress of these pupils and some are withdrawn only at appropriate times for extra teaching. At other times they are included in lessons fully and sometimes prompted by support staff to make contributions in class discussions. These features help the pupils to learn well. Their progress towards their own targets and National Curriculum ones is tracked by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. There is also a list of pupils for whom the school has some concern on particular aspects of their learning and these too are offered additional support.
18. The school has a good number of pupils of high capability, for whom extra challenge is given, sometimes by working with pupils in another class or group. In class discussions, teachers often ask these pupils harder questions requiring more complex responses and they set additional tasks. As a result, the pupils learn well and their progress is tracked and reported to parents. Pupils are helped to be aware of their own learning through a range of strategies such as shared lesson objectives, personal targets, some self-evaluation and the writing of a weekly journal. These are effective in helping the pupils to know how to succeed, especially in Years 3 to 6.

The curriculum

The range of learning opportunities provided has improved and is good, with a good degree of enrichment through visits, visitors, special events, homework and extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and helps pupils to understand the links between different subjects.
- Learning is enriched well through a range of activities and topics that enable the pupils to use and enhance their learning in different subjects.
- Special programmes are available for individual pupils, where needed, which help all of the pupils to learn from the main curriculum and have equal opportunities.
- There are now schemes of work providing guidance for teachers about what should be taught in all subjects, although in some non-core subjects the guidance about progression in skills is weak.

- The new school building provides an environment of high quality, although the outdoor areas have yet to be completed.
- Resources are generally good, for example, each classroom is provided with an interactive whiteboard.

Commentary

19. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good with a good balance between subjects and good links provided through topics that combine parts of subjects. There are now schemes of work for all subjects, including religious education and personal, social and health education. However, in some non-core subjects, these schemes of work provide little guidance for teachers about progression in skills. Class lessons are complemented with some specialist teaching of mathematics, art and design and music. Statutory requirements are met fully and there is satisfactory provision for collective worship, at which the pupils' personal development and sense of community are promoted by assembly leaders, who are often visitors from the community.
20. The school's attention to individual pupils' needs promotes a good ethos in which every pupil counts and is included fully. Although a few parents wish for more, links with other schools provide good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport, arts and other activities. Together with the good provision of extra-curricular activities and the many parents and others who provide extra learning for the pupils, the curriculum is enhanced well. Furthermore, visits and special events, such as 'diversity day' provide good enrichment. Instrumental tuition is provided for pupils learning to play brass instruments.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with particular gifts and talents is good and often supported well by the learning assistants who help these pupils to work towards targets set by the class teachers. The school tracks the progress of these pupils as it does for all the pupils through Years 3 to 6. Specific checks are made on the progress of boys and girls but not of other groups of pupils.
22. Staffing is relatively settled with a good provision of teachers. The support staff are very effective. While some classrooms are small, there is sufficient space overall to provide a good environment for learning. The outdoor space is ample in size but as yet plans for provision, importantly for reception children, are incomplete and this has been identified as an urgent priority in the school's strategic development plan.

Care, guidance and support

The school continues to care for its pupils well and has good arrangements to promote their health, safety and well-being.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers, especially the headteacher, know pupils well and respond sympathetically to each individual child.
- Pupils have confidence in, and very positive views about, their school.
- There are very good arrangements for the induction and transfer of pupils to the next stage of education.
- Arrangements for training staff about child protection matters are not regular enough.

Commentary

23. The school has maintained the high levels of support and guidance identified in the last inspection. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and provide a caring, supportive

atmosphere that contributes to learning and enables all the pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered.

24. The school successfully promotes the pupils' health and safety. The arrangements for dealing with minor day-to-day injuries are good. Accidents are appropriately recorded and parents are kept well-informed. Members of staff are made aware of pupils with medical conditions. Regular checks of the premises and equipment are carried out and the health and safety policy is reviewed - the current version being in draft form. Local procedures concerning child protection are followed. Last year staff received training, but a regular pattern of training to heighten staff awareness is not in place.
25. The school offers very good support, advice and guidance for its pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils well. They understand their individual needs and recognise those experiencing personal difficulties that may affect their learning and well being. Any concerns are shared with the headteacher. Pupils' achievements are recognised and rewarded in the weekly celebration assembly. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were very clear about whom to turn to for advice and they were confident they would be helped.
26. Pupils' involvement in the school's work and development is good. In discussions with inspectors they spoke very positively about their school. A recent school questionnaire reflects the high value pupils put on their school. The school council allows some pupils to share ideas about how to improve school facilities.
27. Very good arrangements give a smooth introduction for children about to enter school. Very few pupils start the school other than at the beginning of term but appropriate arrangements are in place to make these pupils welcome and settle into the school routines.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The good links the school has established with parents and the very good links with the community and other schools enrich the school's work and significantly aid the pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school continues to promote good links with parents, who are very satisfied with the school and give good support to their children's learning.
- Information on pupils' progress is good but more information could be provided about what pupils are learning.
- The annual governors' report for parents omits some required information.
- The Friends' Association is supportive and contributes significantly through its activities.
- There are very good links with the community and other educational institutions, especially a local university teacher training college.

Commentary

28. Parents have a very positive view of the school. Those who attended the meeting, together with those who responded to the questionnaire are happy with what the school provides. They are very supportive of the school and value the good educational opportunities it offers their children. The good partnership has been maintained well since the last inspection.
29. Parents make a valuable contribution to learning through their consistent support for homework and their commitment to the work of the school. Parents have high expectations of the school and the school values their involvement. Some help in lessons, others assist with school visits and a large number support the Friends' Association and its successful fund-raising events. On the occasions that important issues arise, parents' views are sought. The headteacher and staff are available on an informal basis to meet parents.

30. Overall, the information parents receive about the school and their children's progress is satisfactory. A well-produced prospectus contains useful information about the school but the governors' annual report has a number of omissions. Occasional newsletters supplemented by additional letters give parents information about school matters. A small number of parents were not entirely happy with the amount of information they receive on how to support learning at home and homework. Inspection evidence found that meetings are held each year to explain either literacy or numeracy, but other meetings for parents about the curriculum are not a regular feature. A yearly booklet provides useful information, although details of the curriculum are confined to brief topic headings. More details can be found on leaflets posted on classroom windows. In their questionnaire responses, a small number of parents felt that they were not well-informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence found that the information that parents receive is similar to that offered in most schools. Parents are able to discuss their children's progress twice each year at consultations and have the opportunity to discuss reports at a third meeting. In addition, they can attend a celebration evening. The annual written reports are satisfactory. They indicate areas for improvement, although some parents wanted to know more about how their child's performance compares with what is expected for the age.
31. Some of the amenities on the new site are shared with the community. Regular school visits and visitors to the school, including local clergy holding assemblies, make a valuable contribution towards the curriculum and enrich pupils' learning. Good use is made of local resources to support class work, for example younger pupils visited the local war memorial as part of celebrating Remembrance Day. Pupils contribute to the local and wider community. Their involvement in raising funds for local and national charities enhances their understanding of society.
32. Very good links have been established with other educational institutions including nearby primary schools and the local village pre-school that most pupils attend prior to entry. Close links, including occasional joint training and meetings between co-ordinators, have been developed with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Very good arrangements prepare pupils for the next phase of their education. The school is actively involved in supporting trainee teachers and has close and very productive links with a local university college.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management in the school are good. The leadership and the management of the headteacher are very good. The leadership and management of other staff are good as is the governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very good leadership and management have enabled the school to benefit quickly from the new building and continue to improve its performance.
- Senior members of staff promote a strong sense of the importance of learning and of meeting the individual needs of each pupil.
- Strategic planning identifies the school's main areas for improvement well.
- Governors both challenge and support the school and its developments with a good sense of direction.
- Systems to check that the school is financially effective and efficient are embedded in the school's use of resources and governors' financial decisions.
- The school has improved well since the last inspection, although a few elements of key issues for improvement are not yet fully effective.
- The roles of co-ordinators of some non-core subjects are not fully effective in evaluating standards.

- Professional development is good, and the school makes a very good contribution to initial teacher training.

Commentary

33. The headteacher's very good leadership and management have been particularly effective in making improvements and establishing the school well in its new premises and within the community. With few teaching commitments, the headteacher is able to become very involved in all aspects of the school at every level and responds well to the individual and group needs of pupils and others. Consequently, she gains a good knowledge of the school and supports the accurate self-evaluations which lead to the school's good strategic management plan. There are satisfactory systems for tracking individual pupils' progress to evaluate the school's performance and to contrast the attainment of boys and girls. However, the progress of other groups, such as pupils of high and low capability, is not compared. Consequently, the impact of the school's strong policies to include all pupils equally is not evaluated. Nevertheless, the strategic management plan draws on a wide range of evaluations and the views of staff, governors, parents and others; it mainly identifies the areas for improvement most needed.
34. The roles of other senior teachers are also good in establishing and leading successful teamwork that promotes a strong sense of the importance of each pupil's learning and emotional security. The roles of subject co-ordinators are defined, including the need to evaluate standards, strengths and weaknesses in subjects. This improvement is most effective for co-ordination of the core subjects. However, in several non-core subjects, the lack of recorded checks on learning means that standards cannot be evaluated accurately. In this respect the key issue has not been effective enough. While most of the other key issues have significantly aided the school's improvement, those concerning marking and assessment have still to be implemented fully. The curriculum has been improved with schemes of work for all subjects, although some of those for non-core subjects provide too little guidance about the progression of skills.
35. Systems for staff development are good and well integrated with the school's procedures for performance management. The headteacher plays a leading role in evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and this has supported the improvements in the effectiveness of teaching. The school also plays a very good part in aiding initial teacher training, being a leading member of a school partnership with a higher education institution. Learning support assistants have also had training for their roles and improved the effectiveness of their work.
36. The governors make a good contribution to the school's development; they both support and challenge the headteacher and staff. Together with the staff, the governors have a clear vision for the school, which encompasses both the maintenance of high standards and the provision of a holistic education, in which the pupils gain a rich education and are well prepared for the next stage of education and life in the community. They have analysed their own work and gain a satisfactory view of the school's development from the headteacher's reports and their own visits and involvement. There are a small number of committees that provide recommendations to the full governing body. Governors have not managed to accelerate the completion of plans for the outdoor areas and their annual report to parents omits some minor statutory information. However, the finance committee ensures the best value for expenditure and is prudent, while at the same time allowing appropriate finance for the strategic management plan. The high expenditure per pupil represents, in part, the set up costs in the school's new building. Because of the good standards and achievement of pupils, the school represents good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	310,570
Total expenditure	327,164
Expenditure per pupil	3,086

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	48,322
Balance carried forward to the next	31,728

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Members of the learning support staff are used very effectively to promote good learning, particularly for children with special educational needs.
- Relationships are very good, helping the children to become confident to talk and respond to questions.
- The outdoor area is under-developed and does not provide for activities in all the areas of learning.
- Lesson objectives do not relate closely enough to the Early Learning Goals in order to maximise the systematic learning of skills.

Commentary

37. Children are admitted to the Reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. Currently, there are nine children attending full time and one part-time. They are taught in a mixed aged class with nine Year 1 pupils. The majority of the children have had pre-school experience. . Links between this and the school are very good. They help to provide an easy transfer to the Reception class so that it is smooth and free from trauma. Consequently, the children settle quickly into the Reception class and feel safe, secure and ready to learn.
38. The Reception classroom has some displays but would benefit from a greater range. Space is limited in the classroom and it is difficult for the teacher to provide a wide and readily available range of activities to promote learning. However, there is a role-play area, presently an "office", and a writing area. Children use the sand and water activities outside but only when the weather is fine. Members of staff are keen to improve the outdoor area and this is a priority in the strategic management plan.
39. The attainment of the current Reception children on entry to the school is broadly typical of that found in children at this age. However, this varies from year to year and there is often a good sized group of pupils with good capability. The majority of children are on course to reach the expected Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and creative development and to achieve above these in physical development and personal, social and emotional development. No judgement could be made about the children's knowledge and understanding of the world because there was insufficient evidence.
40. The quality of teaching is good overall. Planning is undertaken in conjunction with the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. This promotes continuity and progression between the Reception year and Years 1 and 2. Planning is based on the National Curriculum for the Year 1 children and on Guidance for the Foundation Stage for the Reception children. However, the lesson objectives for the Reception children are not related closely enough to the learning steps of the Early Learning Goals to maximise the children's acquisition of skills. Questioning is used effectively to encourage children to gain confidence and extend their learning. Very good relationships also give children confidence to respond to teachers' questions and to share their thoughts and opinions. The support provided for children with special educational needs has a positive impact on their learning and helps them to understand and engage in the tasks. Well-designed assessment sheets for adults supporting groups of children are used to

note their problems and successes. These assist the teacher in amending future plans, helping to match activities well to the needs of all the children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance the children's development and the majority of children are on course to reach, or exceed, the expected levels by the end of the reception year.
- The children achieve well because of good teaching.
- Very good relationships are being established, so the children feel happy and secure.

Commentary

41. The personal, social and emotional development of the current Reception children is already good and, for a few, better than generally expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year, nearly all will have reached or exceeded the Early Learning Goals. Most children find it easy to conform to the high standards of behaviour set by the staff. Children know the routines well, settle to tasks quickly and behave sensibly with the minimum of fuss. The very good teamwork of the adults gives children good role models for co-operation, and helps maintain a calm working atmosphere. Most children are interested in their tasks and concentrate well even when not directly supervised. They are eager to learn. In group sessions, the children are encouraged to wait patiently for their turn. The majority can do this, but occasionally they get excited and call out. Teachers expect the children to listen carefully to each other and to share their thoughts. All the children are keen to respond to the teachers' questions. Because of the supportive relationships, the children feel secure and confident to ask for help. Consequently, they enjoy coming to school and are happy and settled.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop and extend their vocabulary.
- There is great encouragement to share books and listen to stories.
- There are too few varied opportunities to help the children develop writing skills through making marks and emergent writing.

Commentary

42. Early indications suggest that most children are on course to reach the expected Early Learning Goals in writing and reading and the majority will exceed them in speaking and listening. Already children are making good progress developing their language skills as a result of the many opportunities provided for speaking and listening. Many are already articulate, confident speakers replying to the teachers' questions in long sentences. Children enjoy sharing stories and are beginning to make good progress towards learning to read. The more capable readers are beginning to recognise familiar words and use clues to help read new words. Other children are beginning to sound out unfamiliar words and to recognise some words and letter sounds. The less capable readers are aware that print conveys meaning and are using the pictures to help them to retell a story. Once a week, pupils in Year 6, including some with special educational needs, visit the class to share books with them.

The relationships between the children and the older pupils are very special and give the older pupils a strong sense of responsibility.

43. Although Reception children have many opportunities to copy the teacher's writing, few are developing their writing skills through making marks to communicate meaning and then beginning to make recognisable letter shapes. Consequently, children's letter formation is developing slowly, although a few children can already write their own name. Children have too few opportunities to try writing more freely for themselves.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff use questions effectively to enhance the children's learning and understanding.
- Appropriate vocabulary is taught and is expected to be used.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good features and some missed opportunities.

Commentary

44. Children are aware of the days of the week and each day during registration they consider what day it is, including the date and the year. They also discuss the weather. During one lesson observed, children explored the days of the week using words like 'yesterday', 'today' and 'tomorrow' and related this idea to different days of the week. Some children found the task quite difficult but by the end of the session were more secure in knowing how to use the words. There was no opportunity for the children to practise counting. However, most children can count to ten, a few only to five but the more capable ones can count above ten. This group of children can add three more to a number, whereas the less capable ones struggle to understand the idea of 'one more'. Children know the names of the basic two-dimensional shapes but are not yet sure of the names of three dimensional ones: they will say "square" for a cube, failing to realise that every face is a square. However, most children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of visits and visitors are planned to promote the learning in this area.
- Children have opportunities to explore and use computers.

Commentary

45. As there was no opportunity to observe lessons covering this area of learning, judgements were made from talking to staff and looking at photographs and planning. No judgement can be made about whether or not children will reach the expected level by the end of the Reception year. Children experience a range of activities designed to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world, and to satisfy their curiosity. They enjoy using the computers and many have good control of the mouse as they move the cursor around the screen to fill in the missing piece of a jigsaw. As part of their religious education, they heard the story of Noah and then produced a large, very effective collage depicting the ark and the animals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in physical development are good.
- Planning for the use of the outside area is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning.

Commentary

46. The outside area is not sufficiently developed to provide experiences in all the areas of learning. Currently it does not provide enough variety of activities for the children's physical development. The teacher is aware of this and has highlighted it as a priority. The quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory overall.
47. The majority of children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. During a lesson in the hall they demonstrated how well they can control their movements. For example, a good number can "bunny hop" around the hall. The pace of teaching can be a little slow, but the children benefit from emulating the Year 1 pupils. The correct way to carry and set out apparatus is instilled into the children, although their help makes it a slow process. In the classroom, the children hold pencils correctly and a few manage to write recognisable letters. They colour carefully, trying to keep within the lines but a few find using scissors and cutting along the lines more difficult. During art lessons, they learn how to use a brush and apply paint to paper correctly and show some good skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **good** and for art it is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in art lessons is very good.
- Children are taught the relevant skills and techniques.

Commentary

48. Most children are on course to reach the expected Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. However, in art and design lessons, most will exceed them. Art is taught by a specialist teacher and the quality of teaching is very good. Children are well motivated and very responsive. They use their brushes with a skill rarely seen in a Reception class. Despite the formality of this learning, there are many opportunities for children to explore different media: painting, pastels, printing, collage and using thread to sew. These pictures are very effective. Role-play is encouraged in the "office". Here children answer the phone, "write" down information and learn to play together. Although children participated in a singing lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2, practising songs for Christmas, it was not possible to judge how well the Reception children sang.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are good.
- Standards in Year 2 are satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching is good and occasionally very good.
- Literacy skills are used effectively across the curriculum.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- The punctuation and spelling of some 6 to 9 year old pupils are less accurate than they should be.

Commentary

49. In the national tests, results for 2003 were well above average for Year 6 pupils. For Year 2 pupils they were well above average in reading and above average in writing. Most pupils enter Year 1 with average attainment and these results represent good achievement for pupils particularly in Years 3 to 6. Most teachers plan carefully and effectively to teach the basic skills in English having sufficiently high expectations. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach average standards in both reading and writing and Year 6 pupils above average. Standards at Year 6 have been maintained since the last inspection and in some cases have improved, but this has varied with the different year groups. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they often out-perform those in similar schools. In Years 3 to 6 achievement and progress are good and many pupils make up for any spelling and punctuation weaknesses. Pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress as some reach the expected levels for their age.
50. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are good and by the time the pupils are in Year 6, they are very good. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to talk for a range of purposes. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils pretended to be the "two grannies" in a "Katie Morag" story having close links with a geography topic. Most pupils are confident and keen to perform for their peers and enjoy the challenge. Older pupils give lengthy explanations knowing how to explain their opinions and ideas in interesting ways. Drama sessions and debates are planned as an extension for speaking and listening, enhancing the pupils' experiences and developing their vocabulary. These are having a positive effect on their willingness and confidence to speak in class.
51. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are average. Pupils enjoy reading and know about book conventions, citing where to find the author's name, the illustrator's name and the book's title. The more capable pupils are reading independently and like talking about the characters in their book, their favourite stories and authors. Other pupils are developing the appropriate skills to read unfamiliar words but less capable pupils find this more difficult, especially in putting the sounds together to form words. Many pupils share books at home with their parents and enjoy listening to stories. This has a positive effect on their appreciation of books and their desire to read.
52. The range of reading material is extended appropriately as pupils move through the school. They become more independent, choosing the books they read and explaining their choices. Standards in reading are above average by Year 6. The more capable pupils read fluently and accurately. Some pupils lack expression in reading aloud while others have very good

expression. Many correct their own mistakes and use a variety of skills to help them read unfamiliar words, although less capable readers lack the confidence to do this. Because of the emphasis on reading, pupils have a very positive attitude towards books and are enthusiastic. Pupils know how to use reference books and regularly research information for other subjects. This has improved since the last inspection, when the use of research skills was judged to be weak.

53. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 are average. Most pupils are on course to reach the expected level, but less than last year are likely to achieve above this. The use of language is often good but pupils' spelling and punctuation are insufficiently accurate and lower the overall standards of writing. The school is aware of pupils' spelling problems and is presently trying out a system to improve it. The pupils have limited opportunities for extended writing or for writing designed to suite a wide range of communication purposes. These aspects need further development.
54. In Years 3 to 6, many pupils are well on course to reach standards above those expected. They use ambitious and imaginative language that makes their writing interesting and exciting. Sentence construction is good with many examples of complex sentences. However, the unaided writing of some younger pupils in this age group is marred by inaccurate spelling or weak use of punctuation. Pupils write for many different purposes, including recording findings in other subjects. Despite this, they have few opportunities to write at length. The school is aware of this weakness and consequently writing is a priority in the school's strategic management plan. Handwriting and layout are often good. Most older pupils now use a joined handwriting style.
55. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All teachers have very good relationships with their classes and give pupils confidence to respond to questions and share their thoughts and opinions with their peers. Teachers use questions effectively to extend or reinforce the pupils' learning and to develop very good speaking and listening skills. Very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and this helps to promote good learning as the tasks are made more accessible. Tasks are generally matched to pupils' needs, allowing the pupils to achieve at different levels depending on their capability. Teachers' knowledge, enthusiasm and imaginative teaching methods motivate the pupils to learn and help sustain their concentration. For example, when writing instructional texts, the teacher devised a task that required the pupils in Years 5 and 6 to write the 'do's and don'ts' for an alien coming to England. The pupils responded with some often ingenious ideas.
56. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has addressed the weakness arising from the lack of a comprehensive scheme of work. Pupils now make at least satisfactory progress as they develop and build on skills learnt previously, although this is weaker, for some years, in punctuation and spelling. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning, particularly in the presentation of the pupils' work. In one lesson, pupils demonstrated good skills and knowledge of how to insert a table for a heading into their booklet.
57. Assessment is used well, particularly by the support staff. They record daily how the pupils in their groups respond to their tasks and any problem they encounter. Liaison between support staff and class teachers is very good and has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Marking is not used consistently across the school to guide pupils, for example, towards the next step in the development of their writing. In the best examples, teachers make constructive comments and give suitable guidance.
58. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a clear idea about future developments. She has been responsible for setting up the new library and for ensuring a good choice of books, although there is a need for more reference books.

The new library is well furnished and attractive to use. Test results are analysed and weaknesses highlighted.

59. Pupils have opportunities to perform for parents in school productions. Theatre groups visit, 'book weeks' are held and the older pupils were involved in a production at a nearby school. There is good liaison with the local secondary school and occasionally drama workshops are provided jointly. All these activities enhance pupils' understanding and experiences of using language as a media.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Literacy is being used well in other subjects. This is helping to widen the range of writing tasks, for example as pupils report a science experiment, evaluate a painting or their own art work, or list the good or bad things about Henry VIII.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are above average with good levels of high attainment.
- Teaching is good with generally high expectations and a good focus on learning in each lesson.
- Individual pupils are given support and challenge appropriate to their own level of learning.
- Lessons provide a good degree of challenge overall.
- Pupils are keen to learn and are engaged well in their tasks.
- Marking seldom indicates how pupils can improve.

Commentary

61. Standards of the current pupils in Year 6 are above average and in Year 2, they are average. The results of the Year 6 national tests in 2003 were well above average and in the top five per cent of standards nationally. Results of the 2003 national tests for Year 2 were also well above average. All the pupils achieved the expected standard and 50 per cent achieved a level above it. There is some variation in the pupils' capability from year to year but this is ameliorated by strong provision to support and challenge individual pupils. The general picture is of about twice the national proportion of high attainment, with very few pupils not achieving the expected level at Year 2 and 6.
62. Standards in Year 6 are currently similar to those described in the last inspection. However, the national test results have been rising at least in line with the national trend and have been well above national averages. In several respects there are improvements, with greater proportions of high attainment and fewer pupils not achieving the expected level. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced providing better progression and there is now a strong emphasis on the pupils' learning and the provision of individual support and challenge for pupils of very different prior attainment. Current standards in Year 2 are slightly lower than those at the time of the last inspection. However, the test results have been rising and are mainly well above average even against the average of similar schools.
63. Throughout the school, there is strong emphasis on learning about numbers. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils' work shows good progress with even the work of the less capable pupils being good in quantity and showing the impact of good support and well-matched tasks. The provision of extra tasks that are individually set for pupils of high and low capability is providing a good level of challenge for pupils at different levels of attainment. The pupils often start the school with

overall standards that are a little above average but they achieve well and measures of their relative improvement are well above average, as are comparisons with similar schools. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is satisfactory in the current Years 1 and 2. National test results show that the pupils usually perform much better than pupils in similar schools. They make good efforts, are keen to learn and become fully engaged in their learning. There is insufficient challenge for some pupils occasionally but the tasks set are different for pupils of different capabilities.

64. In a good Year 6 lesson, the pupils, including a few higher attaining Year 5 pupils, the teacher related percentages well to everyday situations and extended the pupils' knowledge of calculating and comparing bargains advertised in papers and magazines. In lessons throughout the school, teachers plan the tasks to be interesting and challenge pupils. Consequently, they behave well and engage in learning productively. In many lessons, there is also a good level of discussion in which challenging questions are answered at length and teachers extend the pupils' thinking. This is often at a higher level than the work they complete. For example, in a very well taught lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the pupils' comments were perceptive and extended well by the teacher in comparing the merits of different types of graphs. Their work, though, involved forming only one type of graphical representation of data.
65. Most pupils in Year 2 can recall the pairs of numbers that make ten or 20 quickly. Many can work out simple calculations involving numbers above 100, such as doubling 150. Some can halve larger numbers. In one lesson, those with least capability learnt to halve a length by folding a strip of paper but were not challenged in their understanding of numbers by this task. There are more pupils this year identified as having special educational needs and three have specific numeracy targets. The work in the pupils' books is not as advanced as their oral contributions. For example, the more capable pupils work out multiples by counting squares in the same way as other pupils. Nevertheless, most pupils are on course to achieve the standards expected, with a good number exceeding them.
66. Teaching is good overall and some lessons are very well taught. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and very keen that pupils will learn well in each lesson. Consequently, the interesting lessons promote the pupils' engagement and the challenging questions extend their thinking well. There is good support provided at an individual level for less capable pupils, often by the very effective classroom assistants, and for those needing further challenge. Homework is effective and often amended for the more capable pupils to extend their learning. While teachers check up on what the pupils have learnt and use this to help plan future lessons, the quality of marking is variable and only in some cases does it provide pupils with suggestions for improvements.
67. Improvements in the school's provision since the last inspection have been effectively led by the co-ordinator and the school now knows the strength of this subject through a variety of checks and evaluations. Every pupil's progress is checked through Years 3 to 6 by tests at the end of each year and this helps the school make individual provision for any child if needed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. While there are good links with ICT, only a little evidence was seen of how skills are used in other subjects. In science, for example, experiments often involve the collection of data and occasionally the use of graphs to represent findings. The counting skills of the younger pupils are practised on occasions such as lining up and registration.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is particularly effective in achieving very high test results.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very high standards are shown through the national test results.
- Teaching is good and teachers have a strong knowledge and understanding of the subject, but sometimes do not provide work at different levels of difficulty.
- A scheme of work has improved the curriculum and linked it to topics, which span several subjects.
- The subject is enriched well with visitors and special events.

Commentary

69. Standards are well above average throughout the school. Results of the Year 6 national tests in 2003 were well above average and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The results of the teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2003 were also in the top five per cent nationally. The proportion of pupils gaining standards above those expected was well above average and well above the average for similar schools. Compared with schools having similar results when the pupils were in Year 2 in 1999, the 2003 Year 6 results were in the top five per cent. Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now very high. The girls' performance is usually better than the boys' but this was reversed in 2003.
70. A strong feature is the way that teachers encourage pupils of all ages to make generalisations following observations or experiments, for example, "the tighter the string the higher the note". Another is the balance promoted between pupils making choices and teachers guiding them. A third strength is the good links that are formed with learning in other subjects through the programme of topics.
71. Weaknesses are very few. The way in which experiments are recorded lacks variety and there are few opportunities for older pupils to clarify their thinking by choosing how to record their findings. The work in topics often means that pupils' previous work cannot be compared easily to assess pupils' progress in investigation skills. The school recognises this difficulty and is considering ways to check the pupils' progress in such skills.
72. Teaching is good and teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are designed well to provide a variety of interesting activities that help the pupils to be engaged in their tasks fully. In a minority of lessons, there is not enough difference planned in the difficulty of tasks set for pupils of different age or capability. From an early age, pupils are taught to make predictions and to test them, using their findings to make generalisations. The teachers' challenging questions promote a spirit of enquiry and learning. Members of staff promote a high quality of presentation in the pupils' 'Year Books' and when it is displayed in the classroom. The pupils are encouraged to keep journals that help them to recall what they have been learning, for example, "results show the position in the room affects the rate of evaporation".
73. The effective co-ordinator carries out many informal checks to see that the curriculum is taught fully. Class teachers record the results of checks on the pupils' learning at the end of each topic, although there is no whole school format and little to identify each child's National Curriculum Level. However, little is done to moderate the assessments carried out at the end of Year 2 or to chart the progress pupils make in skills of investigation. Consequently, the school is involved in an externally funded research project concerning checks made on this aspect. The subject enjoys a high profile and is enriched well by visitors and special events such as 'Science Week'.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain good skills and capability in Years 3 to 6.
- Hardware, such as laptop computers and interactive white-boards, are used flexibly.
- Systems to record pupils' use of ICT and gains in skills are not consistent throughout the school.
- Provision for the use of ICT in other subjects is not developed fully but there are plans for improvement in the school's strategic management plan.

Commentary

74. Standards are average in Years 1 and 2 and above average in Years 3 and 4. Little evidence was seen in Years 5 and 6. However, the work produced in recording pupils' learning in topics and other subjects suggests good capability for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Extra provision is made for pupils who do not have access to computers at home.
75. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, there was clear evidence of systematic teaching that has helped the pupils to gain skills bit by bit. The teacher's questions helped to check pupils' understanding and to extend their use of skills to new situations. The pupils were able to compare different forms of graphical representation and to interpret and question the data.
76. Teachers are generally confident and have all had training. Teaching varies between satisfactory and very good and is good overall. Classroom support assistants often effectively help pupils in difficulties.
77. The programme of study is planned fully and the school has sound resources to enable it to be taught. There is a good provision of computers (mainly laptops) and each classroom is provided with an interactive white-board and these are generally used well. Some lessons are taught well, particularly when introducing pupils to new skills and knowledge. Information and communication technology is also used as a form of recording linked well with learning in some other subjects. The pupils' work is stored electronically, so that teachers can check what has been learnt. However, the pupils' attainment is not compared with National Curriculum levels and so standards are not known overall. Improving this aspect has been identified as a priority in the strategic management plan. The co-ordinator has carefully provided resources to meet the needs of the programme of study, but systems for checking the pupils' use of equipment and acquisition of skills are not yet consistent throughout the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. There are regular ICT lessons and much time is also given to extending ICT skills as a support for learning in other subjects. The work seen was largely in support of recording learning in other subjects through topics such as rainforests. There are plans to improve further the use of ICT in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

79. Provision in the humanities was not a focus of the inspection. Work was sampled in history and geography, with only one lesson seen in history and none in geography. Work on display and in the pupils' books was also seen. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in either of these subjects. Pupils benefit from being taken on a range of educational visits, including some further afield as well as to the local area, for first-hand experiences.

These effectively enhance the pupils' understanding and promote a good level of interest. There are no whole-school systems for checking and recording the pupils' levels of understanding. Their work is stored in topics that enable evaluation of their knowledge and understanding but not their skills.

80. The **history** lesson observed was for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Standards seen are above average by Year 6 and show that the pupils are able to research and evaluate different sources of evidence well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the standards in history in Year 2. Teaching is good because it promotes a good level of interest and historical deduction. Pupils are interested and become engaged in their tasks well. There is an appropriate scheme of work that identifies topics for study and teachers promote the pupils' historical understanding through the tasks set. The pupils' work indicates a good range of topics and a good understanding of the key elements of the subject by Year 6.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to explore religions and faiths of the world.
- There are good links with local churches. The Methodist minister and the Anglican vicar often lead assemblies.
- New artefacts have been purchased.
- The scheme of work is implemented well and follows the guidance of the locally agreed syllabus.

Commentary

81. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress developing the relevant skills and understanding of other faiths. Pupils show a depth of appreciation of the problems facing the world and how they might be overcome. They are aware of how important religion is to those who practise it. Other faiths have been studied and compared to Christianity. These include Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards by the end of Year 2. There were few displays around the school focusing on religions but in Years 5 and 6 there was a "tree" where pupils had written on its leaves their thoughts and hopes.
82. The small amount of teaching seen was good. Teachers have a very good relationship with their classes so pupils are keen to respond to questions and to share their thoughts and opinions with their peers. Questions are used effectively to reinforce or extend pupils' understanding. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together. The pupils do this very successfully, listening carefully to each other. There is limited evidence of pupils recording their thoughts or for extended writing. This is an area for further development.
83. There are good links with the local churches and pupils visit them to study Christian places of worship. The ministers and church members visit school and often lead assemblies, taking a Christian theme and extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of the life of Jesus. Pupils use the Internet for research and to visit "virtual" places of worship from other religions so they can compare them. People occasionally visit the school to share their faiths with the pupils. This is an area the school is looking to develop further, so that pupils can gain a deeper insight into different faiths and cultures.

84. Although the subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen, the monitoring role is undeveloped. A scheme of work, based on the locally agreed syllabus is in place, and a range of artefacts purchased. These were both highlighted as weaknesses in the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. The arts subjects were sampled but, apart from art and design and physical education, were not a focus of the inspection. Only two music lessons were observed and in both, pupils were practising songs for a Christmas performance. Consequently, there was insufficient evidence to judge provision overall. In design and technology, very little evidence was collected that would support any judgements.
86. The teaching of **music** is supported by the employment of a part-time specialist teacher. The quality of teaching seen in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Pupils are taught to sit correctly and understand appropriate techniques, such as holding on the long notes for the right number of beats. However, the pupils' singing lacks enthusiasm, despite the tunefulness of the chosen music. Some pupils do not participate fully, although the singing tone produced overall is a good sound with clearly enunciated words. The pupils have opportunities to play and sing with others and to perform to audiences. Although only singing was observed, all elements of the music curriculum are planned to be taught during the year. There are also opportunities to learn to play recorders or brass instruments.
87. In **design and technology**, there were some completed products available. Sometimes these are used in other subjects. For example, in a science lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were investigating how different sounds are produced and used musical instruments they had made for this. The pupils' books have evidence of their plans for making objects and there are examples of pupils' activities displayed around the school. For example, there are animal masks with instructions for making them by pupils in Years 3 and 4. Such examples suggest the curriculum is taught and that pupils have some pride in what they produce.

Art and design

The provision for art and design is **very good** and, as a result, standards have improved considerably since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is consistently very good.
- There is a comprehensive scheme of work that develops pupils' skills and techniques.
- Pupils are very well motivated and keen, contributing to good displays and the presentation of their own work.

Commentary

88. The standards of work seen in Year 2 are above average and by the end of Year 6 they are well above average. Pupils' skills are well developed and each session builds on the techniques learnt in the previous lesson, culminating in imaginative work using these skills. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 class, pupils practised painting designs on a small piece of fabric, using a variety of brush strokes and overlaying colours before transferring it to a larger piece of material. A wide range of opportunities to explore different media are presented to the pupils: clay, stone, wire, textiles, chalk, oil pastels, paint and charcoal. Examples of the outcomes can be seen around the school. The work is beautifully displayed and pupils are very proud of their achievements. Pupils also paint in the style of different artists: for example Klee, Warhol,

Seurat and Dali. Because they have been taught the skills, the end results, although the pupils' own designs, bear a good resemblance to the artist's style. All pupils have sketch-books that demonstrate how, from Reception through to Year 6, various techniques have been practised, developed and extended. Periodically, pupils evaluate their own work and those of well-known artists.

89. All pupils enjoy the subject and are very well motivated to succeed. They make good progress particularly in Years 3 to 6 as they build on and improve their skills. Pupils with special educational needs often make very good progress and some examples of their work show artistic flare.
90. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. A specialist teacher works with all classes except Years 3 and 4. This helps to ensure continuity and progression in the development of skills, especially as liaison between the two teachers is very good. Both teachers are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Their enthusiasm motivates the pupils and they are inspired to produce high quality work. The lessons are very well organised and teachers expect a very high degree of self-control from their pupils, as the process of learning the correct techniques is slow. Pupils rise to this challenge and are very well behaved. They listen carefully and remain focused on the task. Support staff and parent helpers provide very good support in the classroom and this benefits all the pupils.
91. The co-ordinator promotes the use of the comprehensive assessment sheet for helpers to record how the pupils in their group have worked. This has a positive effect on learning as the teacher can see immediately where there are difficulties and can amend the lesson plans accordingly.
92. A range of extra experiences is provided for the pupils. For example, a visiting sculptor enabled the pupils to produce a large sculpture now resting in the school's courtyard. Another visitor showed them how to create large paper sculptures and photographs show an array of beautiful paper flowers planted in the garden. Pupils also explore aboriginal art, African masks and mendhi patterns. All these experiences help to enrich and enhance the pupils' understanding and appreciation of art as well as their cultural awareness. There is a very good quality of presentation in displays around the school, which all teachers help to present.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**. Only lessons in gymnastics were seen but in these, standards and teaching were good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and promotes a good quality of movement.
- Pupils gain a good awareness of safety issues and what constitutes high quality movement.
- Pupils make very good efforts and are keen to improve.
- All pupils are supported well and helped to take part fully.
- Teaching sometimes misses opportunities for pupils to demonstrate and evaluate the quality of their performance.
- The school has joined a sports co-ordination project to extend sporting opportunities.

Commentary

93. Standards in gymnastics are above average at Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils are well aware of the implications of exercise for their health and of the need for safe practices. Throughout the school, the pupils have good control of their movement and enjoy extending their capability. They usually make good efforts and take advice in improving their performance.
94. The teaching of gymnastics is good throughout the school and pupils are taught to be aware of the space in which they can move and how to extend their repertoire. Occasionally, opportunities for appraising others' movement are missed or the details of high quality performance are not made explicit. However, lessons are all pacy and pupils are expected to be energetic and to work hard. Class organisation is generally good and teachers use a good range of techniques to maintain order. The pupils are well trained in preparing with appropriate attire and in getting out and putting away any apparatus used.
95. The school's scheme of work plans for all the programme of study and includes adventurous activities such as residential trips. Swimming is also successfully taught and nearly all the pupils gain the expected standard. A sports co-ordination project has been joined to extend the school's provision. A number of team games are played with other local schools, often resulting in good successes. Extra-curricular sports are also offered.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. Only one lesson was seen in this aspect of the curriculum and no judgement can be made about overall provision. However, the school and its governors believe that this area is central to the pupils' development and a scheme of work is followed in lessons, which includes learning about health, sex, drugs and personal development. When needed, individual or small group teaching is provided, sometimes by visiting specialists. 'Circle time' lessons, in which class discussions allow for individual and personal views to be expressed, help the pupils to explore their relationships with others and to develop their ideas about society. For example, in the very good lesson seen, pupils in Year 2 explored generalisations about the differences that others see in the jobs that men and women do. This open discussion exposed and challenged prejudices and helped the pupils to be more aware and open-minded. The level of discussion was very high for the age group. The school council also enables pupils to learn about responsibility and citizenship. Older pupils write weekly journals with personal thoughts about their learning at school. These and other activities strongly support the pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).