

INSPECTION REPORT

GARLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Burghfield Common, Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109858

Headteacher: Mrs Hazel Powell

Lead inspector: Mrs Carole Skinner

Dates of inspection: 7th-9th June 2004

Inspection number: 256193

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 205 |
| School address: | Clay Hill Road Burghfield Common Reading Berkshire |
| Postcode: | RG7 3HG |
| Telephone number: | 0118 9832776 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body, Garland Junior School |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Anne Packwood |
| Date of previous inspection: | September 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Garland Junior School is broadly average in size. There are 204 pupils on roll. The school has similar numbers of boys and girls overall, but there are 10 more boys than girls in Year 6. Approximately four per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is broadly average. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning the English language. The school has 42 pupils (20 per cent) on its register of special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. Two pupils (one per cent) have statements of special educational need, which is also broadly average. The turnover of pupils is fairly high: for example, 21 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 have joined the school after the usual time of entry. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Thirteen per cent of the pupils come from RAF families who are stationed nearby. Attainment on entry to the school is average, overall, but varies from year to year. The school achieved the Investors in People Award in 2002 and was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools Silver Award in 2003 and Active Mark Gold in 2004. There has been a very high turnover of teachers during the past two years: ten teachers left the school and ten have joined it. At the time of this inspection, two teachers were employed on a temporary basis.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| 23160 | Carole Skinner | Lead inspector | Science, information and communication technology (ICT), art, music. |
| 9977 | Fran Luke | Lay inspector | |
| 2913 | Sue Airey | Team inspector | English, history, religious education (RE), physical education (PE), special educational needs (SEN). |
| 14596 | Tony Fiddian-Green | Team inspector | Mathematics, design and technology (DT), geography, personal, social and health education and citizenship. |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good features. Overall, pupils' achievement is good because the quality of teaching is good. Good leadership and management provide clear direction for the school which gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and management team lead the school well and help to create a strong team spirit.
- Pupils achieve well in most subjects because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, but standards in writing are below average in Year 6.
- In some lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Good teaching and improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have raised standards significantly.
- The curriculum is varied and interesting and it is enriched by a very good range of additional activities.
- Governors are developing a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but their role in strategic management is at an early stage of development as many are new.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, which is reflected in their very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The quality of care, support and guidance for pupils is very good.
- The school works very well in partnership with parents.

The school has made a good improvement since it was inspected in 1998, despite having suffered from a very high turnover of teachers in the past two years. The provision for ICT has improved significantly and standards are much higher. Pupils make better progress in science because the teaching of investigative skills has improved. The quality of teaching and learning has improved and there are fewer variations between classes. The role of the senior management team is much clearer. There have also been improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has developed a stronger partnership with parents and the community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E - in the lowest 5% of schools.*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is good. Standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics, science and ICT and above average in history and physical education. This represents good achievement as many pupils entered school with below average attainment. Standards in writing are below average overall in Year 6 but some higher attaining pupils reach very good standards. In the 2003 national tests,

standards were lower because there was a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the year group. The high turnover of teachers has adversely affected some pupils' progress in the past.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They show interest and enthusiasm in lessons and other activities. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and form very good relationships. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of the pupils, who apply themselves well to their work. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, there is insufficient challenge for some pupils and they work too slowly. Most lessons are lively and interesting and engage pupils actively in learning. The well trained teaching assistants provide good support in lessons. Assessment procedures are good and are used well to track pupils' progress. The curriculum is well-planned and offers pupils a wide range of activities which they find interesting and enjoyable. Provision for pupils with SEN is good and ensures their good progress. The school works very well in partnership with parents and provides very good levels of care for all pupils. All of these factors contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Good leadership by the headteacher and management team provides clear direction for the school's development. The governors, many of whom are new to the role, are developing a good understanding of the school; their role in the strategic management of the school is at an early stage of development. Statutory requirements are fully met. The management team is effective in checking provision and evaluating the school's performance. Subject co-ordinators make an important contribution to developing and evaluating teaching and the curriculum. Financial management and administration are good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and find it welcoming. Pupils also have positive views of the school and enjoy all that it has to offer. Pupils' opinions are sought and represented effectively by the school council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue the work that is already in progress to raise standards in writing, especially through cross-curricular links.
- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching for all pupils, particularly in teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the level of challenge provided in lessons.
- Continue to develop the effectiveness of governors in the strategic management of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Standards are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in most subjects because work is interesting, well planned and suitably challenging for pupils of all capabilities.
- Standards in writing are below average in Year 6.
- Standards in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in history and PE.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve very well because there are good opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because their needs are identified and they receive good support.

Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.5 (28.0) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 26.1 (27.7) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 28.5 (28.8) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In the Year 6 national tests in 2003, the school's results in English and mathematics were below the national average and those in science were average. Compared with similar schools, based on pupils who performed similarly in Year 2, standards in English and science were well below average while those in mathematics were in the lowest five per cent of similar schools. Prior to 2003, standards had been above average in English for two years and in mathematics and science for four years. The main reason for the lower standards in 2003 was the very high proportion of pupils with SEN in that year group (47 per cent). In the past, there has been some underachievement, caused largely by weaknesses in teaching. The school has addressed the causes of this underachievement well. Although there has been a very high turnover of teachers in the past two years, which has inevitably disrupted some pupils' education, the headteacher and governors have made every effort to ensure that they deployed staff effectively to provide stability and consistency for the pupils.

2. The findings of the inspection are that standards in the current Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement for this group of pupils, many of whom entered the school at below average standards. In addition, about a third of the pupils have entered the school at different stages during Years 4, 5 and 6. Although standards are average, overall in English, they are below average in writing. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement and is currently implementing strategies to raise standards. These are having a very good impact for the most able pupils, but all pupils are not yet making consistent progress throughout the school. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop

literacy skills in other subjects. Overall literacy skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum, while numeracy skills are developed well.

3. Standards are also in line with the national average in ICT, art and design, DT and geography; they are higher than average in history and PE. History and PE have remained strengths of the school since the previous inspection as teachers have continued to build on and enhance pupils' learning. The strong features of this provision are the varied, interesting and challenging curriculum and the wide variety of additional activities that are provided outside of regular lessons. In RE, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. Standards are higher than those seen at the time of the last inspection in ICT. In other subjects they are similar. Standards in ICT have risen because the school has improved the facilities and resources for the subject and its development has been led very well. ICT skills are used satisfactorily to enhance learning in other subjects, and teachers are currently exploring ways to use and develop them more effectively across the curriculum.

4. All groups of pupils in this school achieve well by the time that they leave Year 6. Parents have positive views of how well their children are progressing. The school's results in the national tests over a three year period indicate that boys do better than girls. However, the findings of the inspection are that boys and girls achieve equally well. The school caters particularly well for more able pupils. Teachers prepare work that matches individual pupils' needs and ensure that tasks are sufficiently challenging for higher attainers. The school also identifies gifted and talented pupils and is taking steps to ensure that their needs are well met. For example, pupils take part in mathematics and literacy challenge groups and those with sporting talents have many opportunities to excel in a wide range of activities.

5. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity throughout the school and pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates because of the good support offered by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them because the targets in their individual education plans are specific to their needs, and challenging but achievable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- Pupils form very warm and supportive relationships with one another and with adults.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities.
- Pupils' attendance at school is very high compared to the national average.
- The provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good and that for spiritual development is good.

Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and personal development have all improved since the previous inspection, when they were good. They have been strengthened as a result of new initiatives and opportunities and a strong focus on the development of self-esteem and personal responsibility. In lessons pupils are keen to answer questions and are enthusiastic in their responses. They are interested and motivated and concentrate well on what they are doing. As a result, there is a positive atmosphere and they learn very well. They collaborate well with each other

and when working together listen to each other and take account of what each has to say. They are very capable when working independently.

7. Very good relationships between pupils and with staff ensure that there is a very harmonious atmosphere throughout the school and a high degree of racial harmony. Lunch and playtimes are well organised with lots for the pupils to do. Behaviour is very good at all times. In the best lessons, very good behaviour means that expectations are quickly established and no time is wasted, so that pupils learn well. Pupils are confident that little bullying takes place and that any problems are always dealt with very quickly by any member of staff. There were no exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection.

8. Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities given to them to take on additional responsibility with enthusiasm and enjoyment. These include the school council, playground squad, friendship stop, librarians and house captains. All of these contribute to their high levels of self-confidence and self esteem. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extracurricular activities available to them.

9. The level of attendance at the school is very high compared to the national median. The school works very hard to promote good attendance and punctuality and has very good strategies in place to monitor attendance. These strategies have had a good effect on pupils' attendance, which has steadily risen to its current level. Punctuality is very good; parents and carers work together with the school to ensure their children arrive on time which helps the school day to begin without disruption.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 2.8 | School data | 0.1 |
| 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.

10. Spiritual development is good. The school fosters spiritual development well and helps pupils to develop good attitudes to those around them, to the school and their learning. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship, which also contributes to their spiritual development. In a history lesson pupils were given the opportunity to think about how difficult life was for children in Victorian times, and in RE lessons some pupils considered big events in their lives and why these were important to them.

11. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Positive procedures for encouraging good behaviour and for working well together in pairs and groups also ensure that class rules and rewards for good work and behaviour are successful. Pupils develop a very good understanding of right and wrong which guides their conduct and relationships with others.

12. Very good provision for social development enables pupils to take responsibility and share their views and opinions, showing respect for each other. The good and very good teaching seen supports these developments, and teachers take every opportunity to ensure that pupils develop sensitivity towards others and respect each other. This has a positive impact upon pupils' sense of responsibility and citizenship.

13. Provision for cultural development is very good. The school has extended pupils' experiences through geography, English, dance and theatre visits. Teachers are using subjects such as English to teach a wide range of poetry and stories from different cultures, which extends pupils' understanding. In geography and RE, pupils are encouraged to value the customs and beliefs of

others and to respond well to different ways of living, and religious, cultural and artistic experiences. In addition the school ensures that the pupils' own culture and heritage are appreciated and valued.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, although not all teachers have consistently high expectations' of pupils' achievement. The curriculum is good and it is enriched by a very good range of additional activities. Assessment procedures are good. Good provision for pupils with SEN helps them to achieve well. There are very good arrangements to ensure pupils' care and welfare. The school works very well in partnership with parents. Its ethos is very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are good and assessment information is used well to guide planning and teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective planning underpins the good teaching.
- Teachers provide very good encouragement to pupils and engage them in learning very well.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and application to their work.
- Pupils work very well independently and collaboratively and have a clear understanding of how to make their work better.
- Most teaching is well paced and provides pupils with suitably challenging work but some lessons lack these good qualities.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teaching assistants are very professional, are used well and work effectively in partnership with teachers.
- Effective assessment procedures are used well to match work to pupils' needs and capabilities.

Commentary

14. The previous inspection judged teaching to be good. Overall, 11 per cent of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory and approximately half were judged to be good. Since that time, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching, as the table below illustrates. It is still good, overall, but only one lesson was less than satisfactory and just over sixty per cent of the lessons seen were good or better. The school has suffered a very high turnover of teachers during the past two years, and, at the time of this inspection, two teachers were employed on a temporary basis. Despite some changes of teacher during the current year, a detailed analysis of the work completed by a sample of pupils from all year groups shows that they have made good progress as a result of good teaching in most subjects. Strong leadership and rigorous evaluation of teaching by the headteacher and management team have contributed significantly to improving its quality. Parents express positive views about the quality of teaching in the school and most pupils say they find lessons interesting and are expected to work hard.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 5 (16%) | 14 (45%) | 11 (36%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (3%) | 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.

15. One of the key factors in the good teaching is the quality of curricular planning which helps teachers to ensure that pupils are acquiring knowledge and skills in appropriate progression. This also helps to ensure consistency when there are changes of teacher during the year. Teachers use these plans well to organise activities for lower, average and higher attaining pupils in each lesson, making modifications where necessary. In those lessons which were satisfactory, rather than good or very good, teachers did not always ensure that the activities planned for different groups of pupils were sufficiently challenging. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively. Pupils are taught in groups formed on the basis of their previous attainment in English and mathematics and work is planned well to provide appropriate challenge for the range of pupils within each group. As a result, higher attaining pupils achieve very well because teachers expect them to reach high standards, and pupils with SEN achieve well because they are taught in smaller groups and receive individual attention. Pupils of average and below average attainment also benefit from small group teaching which aims to raise their achievement.

16. A strong feature of the teaching throughout the school is the way teachers engage pupils in learning and give them encouragement and praise, which motivates them to do well. Most lessons were lively and interesting. Teachers provide a wide range of activities that appeal to boys and girls equally and there is a good emphasis on learning through enquiry and practical investigation so that pupils are actively engaged in learning rather than passive listeners or observers, although these qualities are also developed well.

17. In addition, teachers expect pupils to behave well in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously to their work. Most pupils respond to these expectations very well and show self-discipline in the classroom and around school, although a few present teachers with some challenging behaviour, which they handle well. As a result, pupils generally work productively during lessons and require few reminders about their behaviour. This is reflected in the quality of the work seen in pupils' books, which shows that they have covered a great deal during the year and have taken care and pride in what they have achieved.

18. Pupils work independently, in pairs and in groups and they respond positively to all of these opportunities, which provide them with a good balance of experiences. A good example of collaborative work was seen in a Year 6 science lesson, where pupils worked in groups to discuss and plan an investigation. They collaborated sensibly and discussed in detail how to ensure their investigation was a fair test, debating the different variables that must be considered. Pupils also know what they have to do to make their work better, particularly in English, where most refer to their individual targets to guide them.

19. Where there are variations in the quality of teaching, these are mostly due to differences in the pace and challenge of individual lessons and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. In the very good lessons, teachers set a very brisk pace which moves learning along very well. For example, in a Year 6 ICT lesson, pupils made rapid progress as the teacher demonstrated new skills and techniques, gave pupils time to practise these and then introduced a further idea which took pupils on to the next level of complexity. In the satisfactory lessons, the pace was slower and pupils did not make such rapid progress. Also in these lessons, the level of challenge presented to the pupils is often lower, and this, too, does not promote good progress. In the one poor lesson, the activity that was given to the pupils was far too easy for most and there was insufficient awareness of the different levels that pupils were capable of attaining.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are given work that is appropriate for their needs and levels of attainment, and they receive good support from teachers and assistants, who work well together as a team. In addition small groups and individuals are taught for short sessions and take part in specialist work provided by the Local Education Authority's Special Needs Support Team. Teaching assistants are well trained and work closely with teachers to plan and support pupils in lessons. In a Year 6 science lesson for a lower attaining group of pupils, the teaching assistant

guided and supported a group of pupils very well as they discussed and planned how to carry out an investigation.

21. A key factor in the good teaching is the consistent and well organised assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. Effective systems are in place to keep track of pupils' achievement as they move through the school. These are well established in English, mathematics, science and ICT, and are developing well in all other subjects according to a common format, which is effective in its simplicity. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Careful assessments of pupils' progress in English and mathematics enable teachers to set meaningful individual targets for pupils to achieve in these subjects. Teachers' marking is generally helpful and constructive, and the school has recently taken part in a Local Education Authority initiative to improve the quality of marking, which is already having an impact on pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided throughout the school is good. It is enriched by the very good provision of additional activities. Staffing and accommodation are good and resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is varied, interesting and well planned.
- Provision for ICT is greatly improved since the last inspection.
- Links between subjects are developing appropriately but are not yet fully exploited across the curriculum, although there are some good examples.
- The school offers a very good range of extracurricular activities.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- Staffing is good, and previous problems have been overcome.
- Outside accommodation is particularly good
- Resources are satisfactory, but the school has noted this as an area for improvement.

Commentary

22. The curriculum provides a well balanced and broad base for pupils' learning and is securely anchored on the National Curriculum, and the locally agreed syllabus for RE. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are applied well. The school has successfully developed setting in English and mathematics so that pupils of both higher and lower attainment are well provided for. Planning in other subjects follows national guidelines but is adapted well to meet pupils' needs and capabilities. A common planning format and the availability of every year group's plans on the school computer network enable all staff to have instant access to the plans they need for every week of the term. This is also an invaluable tool for temporary teachers who have very clear guidance about what is to be taught. There is a strong commitment to equality of access for all pupils and pupils of differing abilities are fully included in all that the school does.

23. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in the provision for ICT. The creative use of available space has enabled the installation of a larger computer suite with a data projector and 15 computers, which allows for whole class teaching of skills and techniques. Very good leadership in the subject has driven its development and increased the knowledge and expertise of all staff. All pupils now use the ICT suite regularly and this is helping their progress in acquiring new skills.

24. Skills in literacy and numeracy are being developed well in other subjects, but, overall, links between subjects are not planned for in a sufficiently structured way. Instances of good links across

the curriculum were to be found, for example, when pupils were seen designing clocks in Year 6. This needed the use of a protractor and they used this mathematical skill well. Year 5 pupils were given mathematics homework which used geographical skills to conduct a traffic survey and produce a graph. This aspect of provision has been highlighted as the next step in the school's development of curricular planning.

25. Very good provision for out of school clubs and activities, together with visits and visitors help to bring the curriculum alive. Pupils have the chance to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities when they are older, and a good variety of music and drama groups visit the school to perform for the pupils. There are good links with the infants' school and there are joint activities both before and after school, open to children of both schools. The school has the silver award for Healthy Schools. Visitors include police liaison officers, the school nurse and recently, a scientist who talked about the passage of Venus across the sun, which was happening on the day of his visit.

26. Pupils with SEN are taught in targeted groups for literacy and make good progress. In addition care is taken to ensure that pupils are in a range of groupings for a variety of subjects in order to be able to contribute in different ways. Pupils also change groups when good progress is made. Individual education plans are of good quality and have clear, specific targets, which address pupils' needs very well.

27. Staffing levels and qualifications are good and the problems associated with movement of staff have largely been overcome. The headteacher has made every effort to ensure that teachers are deployed well in order to make up for any shortcomings in pupils' experiences in the past. The accommodation is good and the school is well kept and tidy with attractive displays in the corridors and the hall which celebrate pupils' achievements. Outside, much effort has been made and the sports and play areas are very spacious and well resourced with play equipment. Resources are satisfactory, overall. The school has identified where they need improvement, largely in the foundation subjects, and has plans to address this. The most significant improvement in resources is the provision of computers and equipment for ICT. The library is also well stocked and organised.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Adults know pupils well and provide very good levels of care.
- Good systems are in place for tracking pupils' academic progress.
- Very good informal systems to monitor pupils' personal development as they progress through the school ensure that pupils feel very well supported.
- Very good induction arrangements help children to settle in quickly.
- There are very good systems to seek pupils' views about school development.

Commentary

28. The school has very good health and safety procedures in place. Governors and staff undertake termly health and safety checks and regular risk assessments are carried out. Issues are identified and dealt with quickly. Regular checks are made to the grounds, buildings and equipment so that they are safe for the pupils. Child protection procedures are secure. The Headteacher is the nominated officer and she has ensured that all staff have received appropriate training and are aware

of the need to inform her immediately should they have any concerns. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of children who are unwell are very effective.

29. Pupils are very well supported and cared for. Staff provide good role models for behaviour. All adults working in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils, they know the pupils very well and are able to cater for their individual needs. This adds to the very good informal monitoring of pupils' personal development. Pupils are confident that they can seek help or advice from any adult in the school, should they need it. Pupils' are able to express their views of the school, through membership of the school council.

30. Good assessment procedures produce a considerable amount of information about each pupil. This is used well to plan work for them and to track their progress through the levels of the National Curriculum as they move through the school. These procedures are effective in quickly identifying the needs of the high proportion of pupils who enter the school part way through a school year and help teachers to provide work that is of a suitable level of difficulty for them.

31. Very good induction arrangements help pupils to feel welcome and to settle into school quickly. There are several opportunities for Year 2 pupils from the nearby infant school to visit the school in the summer term prior to transfer. These visits, together with visits made with their parents, help to establish good relationships with both parents and prospective pupils, and help them to feel confident about the transfer to a new school.

32. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to express their views and to have a say on specific issues. Pupils are proud of their role and are able to talk about suggestions they have made which have influenced decisions by the school, for example planting around the pagoda and the provision of new play equipment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school works hard to involve parents and to deal with any concerns
- Parents are given very good information about what is happening in school, and how to help their children at home.
- Written annual reports are very clear and inform parents how their children are progressing.
- Very good links with other schools assist with the transfer to and from the school.
- Curriculum links with other schools provide many benefits for pupils.
- Very good links with the community support pupils' learning.

Commentary

33. The school works very well with parents, who respond by supporting the school through the School Association. Parents feel welcome in the school and are happy that they can always approach staff and raise concerns. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the school's partnership with parents was satisfactory.

34. A very good range of information tells parents what is happening in school and how they can help their children at home. There are very good opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and informally to discuss their children's progress. Written annual reports for parents are very good; they give detailed information about what pupils know, understand and can do, they clearly show how

pupils are progressing and give information about what pupils can do to improve further. Details of the areas the pupils will be covering each term are sent out termly and this assists parents in helping their children at home. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. Half-termly sharing assemblies also enable parents to share the work their children are involved in.

35. The school has very good links with the local community; a number of visitors come into school, including local church leaders and youth groups. Visits within the community include a geography project where pupils are looking in detail at their village and considering ways in which improvements might be made. An environmental project is also being undertaken to clean up Omers Gully Wood. The children are involved in sporting events with other local schools and the junior music festival.

36. Very effective links with the local infant school support pupils well when they transfer at the end of Year 2. Liaison with the local secondary school also supports pupils very well, and includes visits and planned work for the pupils before they transfer at the end of Year 6. These close links help them to settle in more easily.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The management of the school is good. The school's governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's high aspirations and clear vision for the school provide a strong sense of purpose that guides and motivates staff, governors and pupils.
- Team leaders and subject leaders share the headteacher's vision and commitment and help to provide good leadership of the curriculum and teaching.
- The leadership and management for the provision of SEN are good.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses; their involvement in strategic planning is satisfactory, as is their role as a critical friend.
- Self-evaluation is effective in helping staff and governors to identify appropriate priorities for improvement.
- Performance management and professional development are well organised and effective in raising standards.
- Good financial management ensures that the school uses its resources well to achieve its educational priorities.

Commentary

37. The headteacher has had many challenging situations to deal with since she came to the school three years ago, most of which have been concerned with the very high turnover of teachers. Her clear vision for the school and high aspirations for its success have enabled her to maintain a positive outlook and to deal successfully with these potential barriers to improvement. She has kept a clear focus on achievement and has worked hard to establish a stable staff team, making the most of individual teachers' talents and developing their leadership roles. As a result, there is a strong team spirit throughout the school and all members of staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

38. The management team provides effective support to the headteacher and makes a good contribution to the strategic management of the school. Team leaders in the lower and upper school guide and support colleagues and help to maintain the school's very good ethos, ensuring that there is a consistent approach to issues such as behaviour management and curricular planning between

classes and year groups. Subject co-ordinators also provide good leadership of the curriculum. All teachers with management responsibilities play an important part in checking standards, the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of the curriculum. The school's effective leadership and management systems were recognised in its achievement of the Investors in People award 18 months ago.

39. The co-ordinator for SEN and the headteacher work closely together to manage the good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The policy for SEN has been reviewed and is now in line with the revised Code of Practice. The school is well supported by a strong team of assistants who are well trained and provide clearly focused and appropriate work for pupils who have special educational needs. The recently appointed co-ordinator is developing the role appropriately and is working closely with teaching and support staff for SEN. There is a link governor for SEN who meets with the co-ordinator on a regular basis and also reviews pupils' individual education plans and the school's provision.

40. Many governors are relatively new and inexperienced in the role and are still reliant on the headteacher and chair of governors for information and guidance. The headteacher keeps them well informed about all aspects of the school and, under the leadership of their more experienced and knowledgeable chair, they have formed a good understanding of its strengths and the priorities for improvement. Governors are also beginning to ask challenging questions in their critical friend role. Their contribution to the strategic management of the school is satisfactory, and increasing as they become more familiar with their areas of responsibility. Governors fully meet their statutory obligations.

41. The strong commitment to self-evaluation, led by the headteacher, is a key factor in the school's success. Teachers with management responsibilities observe lessons, check pupils' work and ensure that the curriculum is being implemented successfully. These monitoring activities, together with a detailed analysis of the pupils' performance in national and internal tests, provide staff and governors with important information which enables them to put together an effective school improvement plan. This sets out clearly the main priorities for each year and sets deadlines for their completion. In addition, teachers with management responsibilities produce their own action plans which show the key areas for development within their subjects and aspects. For example, the assessment co-ordinator has set out very clearly the next stages in the ongoing development of assessment procedures across the curriculum, and this is having a good impact on bringing about improvement.

42. There are also effective links between the school improvement plan, performance management procedures and the arrangements for the continuing professional development of all staff. Teachers and assistants have very clear objectives for their own performance each year which are directly related to whole school priorities for improvement. Teachers have measurable targets to meet for the performance of groups of pupils within their class in order to raise pupils' achievement. Teachers and assistants have good opportunities to extend and enhance their professional development through attending courses and participating in well-planned school based in-service training.

43. The Finance Officer works closely with the headteacher and governors to ensure that the school's resources are managed efficiently and used effectively to fund identified developments. Spending is carefully planned and checked on a monthly basis and modifications are made when unexpected circumstances arise. Good arrangements are in place to evaluate the cost effectiveness of expenditure. For example, teachers and governors have observed and discussed the impact of the ICT suite on raising pupils' achievement and there is much evidence to show that it has had a good effect. The headteacher has taken every available opportunity to apply for additional funding to support improvements to the school buildings and grounds, and this, too, has had a

beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Teachers also take responsibility for a budget for their subject areas and ensure that funds are spent wisely to improve curricular provision.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 471620 |
| Total expenditure | 486154 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2455 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Balance from previous year | 19080 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 4546 |

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall.
- More able pupils achieve high standards in writing
- Pupils with SEN make good and sometimes very good progress supported by good teaching and effective support from teaching assistants
- Detailed analysis and evaluation of pupils' achievement have led to a clear focus on raising standards in reading and are supporting improvements writing.
- There is a good emphasis on developing literacy skills in English lessons and across some subjects.
- There are insufficient opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum

Commentary

44. In national tests in 2003, standards in English were below average. However standards are rising due to the school's good focus on improving reading and writing and improved use of assessment data to pinpoint where support is needed. The majority of pupils make good progress in reading and speaking and listening. Inspection findings show that standards are in line with the national average. The school is addressing previous under-achievement in boys' writing and the setting of individual targets for writing is supporting improvements, but currently, and in spite of a number of very good achievements in writing by a significant number of pupils, the overall standard in writing in Year 6 is still below average. This is because there is also a significant minority of pupils who are achieving below average standards. Pupils with SEN are well supported in English lessons and they make good progress.

45. Reading is developing well. A number of teachers provide stimulating and attractive environments with useful displays and resource areas to support work in English. Well stocked book corners in classrooms provide pupils with a range of fiction for all abilities and a good selection of texts is used in lessons for shared and guided reading. Their enjoyment of, and interest in, books develops well and, by Years 5 and 6, pupils achieve well, read with fluency and accuracy, and are able to evaluate the texts they read with growing competence. The school has placed great value on reading and is planning to invest in more reading books, both within classrooms, corridors and in the school library. Pupils with SEN also achieve well supported by focused work and individual help from teaching assistants.

46. Speaking and listening skills also develop well as pupils progress through the school, supported by opportunities for pupils to discuss their views, describe their work, and more formal opportunities to speak in front of and to the class. Pupils also speak to larger audiences at the half-termly sharing assemblies.

47. Current work on display from Year 6 pupils shows that a good number of pupils are working to higher levels in writing and achieving very well. However, overall in Year 6, writing is still below the national average. Progress in writing is not consistent across all year groups and older pupils of lower ability do not always write clearly and legibly. They are often inconsistent in their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation. By Year 6, pupils can write interesting openings to narrative and

use words effectively to describe characters and events in ways that engage the reader and action and interaction between characters is a strong feature of most writing, but a number of pupils still find complex sentence structure and paragraphing more difficult. Most pupils understand and identify the use of techniques such as personification in writing and poetry and some very able pupils in Years 5 and 6 use it skilfully in classwork and when working in the upper school literacy challenge group. Some teachers also offer their pupils a good range of writing opportunities within other lessons such as science, history and geography but more could be done to encourage pupils to write at length, creatively and in a variety of forms in other subjects. Pupils also use ICT in word processing to support their work during lessons

48. The quality of teaching across the school is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. In a Year 6 lesson the work was very well planned to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils although it was a top set. The teaching was stimulating and enthusiastic stemming from very good subject knowledge, and pupils responded well to the questioning. In a very good Year 5 lesson pupils were constantly challenged to remember their targets, be aware of time constraints and to remember the viewpoint of the writer. Lessons across the school are generally well planned and incorporate all aspects of the subject and the National Literacy Strategy. In the good or better lessons the text used is challenging and there are high expectations of good written work being produced. In addition the pace of the lesson is good and pupils are encouraged to complete as much as they can in the time available. In the satisfactory lessons some opportunities are missed to promote progress, the pace is slower and expectations are lower. There are also good arrangements to provide support for individuals and groups of pupils with SEN and good use of “catch-up” and booster sessions.

49. The subject leader manages the subject well and has carried out a detailed analysis of pupils’ achievements, which has led to a clear focus for support and specific strategies for grouping pupils by ability in each year group. Teaching has been observed throughout the key stage, which has led to improvements particularly in reading. The school has introduced a good system for tracking pupils’ progress in reading and writing, and the process of setting targets for individual pupils to achieve is secure and well established. Marking of English work is also very informative in most groups. Pupils are clear how to improve on their work and, supported by informed comments, most can articulate how they will do this.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. The use of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory and developing well. Teachers’ planning shows that effective links are being made in reading and writing across the curriculum, as in the lessons about the Victorians in history and the Kenya project in geography. Teachers also develop and consolidate aspects of literacy taught in English lessons through lessons such as ICT and science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher attaining pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- By Year 6, all aspects of the curriculum are addressed well.
- Pupils behave and concentrate well. They enjoy mathematics.
- The use of ICT in mathematics is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, but the range is from poor to very good.
- In Year 3 there is too much reliance on a commercial scheme, which impairs the balance of the required topics.

- Although assessment procedures are good, they are not applied consistently in all classes.

Commentary

51. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are average. This matches the findings of the last inspection, and is an improvement since the results of the national tests in 2003. This difference is explained by the school's previous staffing difficulties, and the high percentage of pupils having special educational needs at the time of the 2003 tests.

52. Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress. This includes pupils who have special educational needs who receive good support from teachers and assistants. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress. The use of setting provides for different abilities and extends more able pupils well. There is usually a high level of challenge for these pupils and this is especially reflected in the Level 5 attainment seen in Year 6.

53. There has been a strong focus on mathematics since the last inspection, and in particular the full-class sessions at the end of each lesson. This gives the teachers opportunity to review, with pupils, what they have learnt and understood. Most pupils are being given increasing opportunities to solve mathematical word problems, and teachers ask them to explain how they did their calculations. Good use is made of the ICT suite. Each class has time reserved for using the computers to extend their mathematical skills, especially in the presentation and interpretation of data.

54. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, although it ranges from poor to very good. Where teaching is successful, lessons move at a brisk pace and there is a high level of challenge for the pupils. For example, in both Year 5 lessons seen, which were good, there was a business-like start which captured pupils' attention well. Pupils were fully engaged in their work and concentrated very well in both lessons. Pupils were asked to explain their workings and show the class how they had arrived at their answers. In less successful lessons, there was a lack of challenge for both higher and lower attaining pupils. The range of abilities of the pupils was not successfully addressed. Sometimes only the more able were asked to answer, and sometimes pupils did not really grasp the concept of the work. Teachers have, generally, established high expectations for work and behaviour and as a result, the majority of pupils enjoy mathematics and rise to the challenges well. Less challenging activities, such as colouring work, resulted in pupils becoming disinterested and not enjoying the lessons so much.

55. The curriculum is good and covers all the aspects required fully. Where there is much reliance on the commercial scheme, the balance between the various parts required is less effective. For example, problem solving and data handling, although addressed, are not well balanced in Year 3 books. This is because teachers follow too closely the published scheme which is not being adequately supplemented by their own wider view of the curriculum.

56. Assessment is generally good and pupils' progress and attainment are tracked carefully. Most books have clear targets for each pupil and these have references to National Curriculum levels. However, in a few books, this is not complete and pupils cannot readily see what they must do to move on.

57. The temporary curriculum leader is relatively new in post but has made a satisfactory start, building on a good foundation from previous leadership. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. In particular, the overall standard of teaching has risen. The school's focus on aspects of mathematics teaching is having a good impact on pupils' progress and achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Pupils often use mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, in science much emphasis is placed on the accuracy of measuring. There are good links with ICT, using graphs and frequency tables. For example, Year 5 pupils conduct a traffic survey and present the findings in chart or graph form.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in experimental and investigative science.
- There is good teaching of scientific vocabulary and enquiry skills.
- The curriculum is well planned to build on pupils' learning from year to year.
- The school provides pupils with a variety of additional experiences which enrich their learning.

Commentary

59. The previous inspection found that, although pupils made satisfactory progress, there were too few opportunities for them to devise and record their own investigations. Since that time, there has been a strong emphasis on improving the teaching of experimental and investigative science. Teachers have had training to raise the level of their own expertise in the subject. Assessment procedures have also improved and teachers make effective use of these to ensure that work is suitably challenging for all groups of pupils. As a result, pupils of all capabilities now achieve well. The school's results in the Year 6 national tests were average in 2003 because of the high proportion of pupils with SEN. However, 47 per cent of the pupils reached Level 5 which was higher than the national average. Standards are average in the current Year 6: although, as in 2003, a high proportion of pupils is attaining Level 5, there is also a higher than average proportion of lower attaining pupils in the year group.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. All teachers place strong emphasis on scientific enquiry when planning their lessons, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A detailed analysis of the work of pupils in each year group shows that pupils have numerous opportunities to devise, plan and carry out investigations into many different aspects of the subject. Pupils acquire scientific knowledge and understanding through making predictions, devising fair tests, making observations and measuring what happens, and drawing conclusions from their investigations. For example, pupils in Year 5 test different materials to see which muffles sound the most effectively, while Year 6 pupils find ways to separate solids and liquids and investigate how to increase the speed with which sugar dissolves in water. Another strong feature of the teaching is the development of scientific vocabulary. Year 3 pupils use the terms 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque' when testing whether light will travel through different materials and Year 4 pupils learn about air resistance. Overall, pupils enjoy science because lessons are lively and interesting and involve them productively in practical work.

61. One of the main reasons for pupils' good achievement is the well-planned and structured curriculum which ensures that the work that is planned for pupils builds successfully on what they already know and can do. Good assessment procedures and the effective use of assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' needs and capabilities, further enhance this provision. This shows good improvement since the last inspection. These improvements have come about because the subject has been led and managed well. Although the science co-ordinator left the

school recently, the senior management team continues to ensure that it remains a focus for further improvement. Careful monitoring of teaching and the curriculum has identified where improvements need to be made and a subject action plan ensures that these are addressed.

62. In addition, pupils benefit from a wide range of additional activities which enhance their learning. Good links with the local secondary school provide Year 6 pupils with the opportunity to carry out challenges set by the Year 7 teachers, as when Year 6 pupils had to devise and carry out an investigation to test whether the children with the longest legs jumped the furthest. A visiting theatre group has helped pupils to learn more about electricity and forces in interesting and imaginative ways. Pupils make effective use of the school environment to investigate habitats and some gain further insights by participating in the Environmental Club. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils learned about the transit of Venus from a visitor.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are rising throughout the school.
- Good teaching and effective assessment procedures enable pupils to achieve well.
- The curriculum is planned and resourced well.
- Very good leadership provides very clear direction for the development of ICT across the curriculum.

Commentary

63. The previous inspection found that standards in ICT were below average. Since that time the installation of a new computer suite with 15 up-to-date computers, well planned training for staff, improvements in curricular planning and the introduction of effective assessment procedures have combined to bring about very good improvement. Standards have improved and are now at least in line with national expectations, and, in some aspects of the subject, above average. Standards are rising as pupils are learning quite advanced skills at an earlier age than they have previously. For example, Pupils in Year 3 have created a database about monsters and are able to search the database for specific information. They understand the concept of 'fields' and know how to identify monsters according to one or two criteria. Year 6 pupils know that household devices can be controlled by sensors and, in a simulation program, write a procedure to switch on a fan when the temperature reaches a certain level.

64. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and sometimes very good. As a result, pupils achieve well. In all of the lessons seen, the teacher made very effective use of a data projector to demonstrate new learning to the whole class. Following this, pupils were given plenty of opportunity to try out programs for themselves. Activities are well planned and structured to build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Lessons are fast paced, lively and interesting. Teachers engage pupils very well from the outset and motivate them effectively. As a result, pupils acquire knowledge and skills at a good rate, apply themselves productively to learning and work well both independently and with a partner. Where teaching is very good, as in a Year 6 lesson taken by the co-ordinator, the teacher's own considerable expertise enables her to introduce new levels of challenge as the lesson progresses and to generate excitement and enthusiasm among all pupils as they discover what they can achieve.

65. The scheme of work is detailed and shows how skills and knowledge will be taught in progression from year to year. Termly planning provides very good guidance for teachers and effective assessment procedures enable them to adapt their planning to meet the needs of the pupils

in their class. Pupils are also involved in assessing their own achievements and have a good understanding of how they can improve.

66. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership in the subject and has a clear vision for its future development. She provides excellent support for colleagues by sharing her own extensive subject knowledge and ensures that ICT enjoys a high profile throughout the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Pupils make satisfactory use of ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 create graphs from spreadsheets and Year 6 pupils use the Internet for research and prepare a Power Point presentation to support their work on mountains in geography. The school has acknowledged the need to extend opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the curriculum and subject co-ordinators are due to review curricular planning to ensure these links are exploited to the full.

HUMANITIES

68. History was sampled during the inspection. One history lesson was observed in Year 4 and samples of pupils' work were examined in books and on display. Standards are above expectations. In the history lesson teaching was very good. There were good opportunities to extend vocabulary, very good planning and the tasks were well differentiated. All groups of pupils concentrated well and were able to make very good contributions and achievements. They learned many things about the employment of children in Victorian times and were given opportunities to imagine and discuss what it would be like to be a child of those times. Pupils were also given the opportunity to research for further information. Analysis of work showed that pupils enjoy a broad and interesting curriculum with good opportunities to extend their knowledge by using the Internet, and the library. Good use is made of resources and artefacts which have improved since the previous inspection. Analysis of the co-ordinator's file showed that there is a good scheme of work, visits to museums and exhibitions take place to support pupils' learning, clear teacher assessments are made and teachers' work is monitored.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills in geography are being taught well.
- Curricular provision is good.
- Children's involvement in environmental issues is good.

Commentary

69. Pupils generally achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. However, there are some instances where their work is above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, pupils in Year 6 used Power Point to present their findings from an investigation about mountains. These presentations were often very full, colourful and well designed. Others presented their study in booklet form and again produced some work that was above average. They wrote about animals, plants and weather in the mountains. They understand rain shadows, and many wrote well and at some length about what they had learned.

70. Geographical skills are being taught well. For example, pupils learn about the place where they live. They compare it to other places in the world, such as North Wales. They are beginning to

understand about settlements and teachers make good links to history in this work. For example, pupils consider which geographical attributes the Romans would have looked for before settling in a place. These included water, defences and communications, such as rivers or the sea. Mapping skills are used well and pupils are being given some perspective about the world, its climates and places.

71. No lessons were seen, so that no judgement could be made about teaching. However, there was sufficient evidence in pupils' books and teachers' planning to indicate that teaching and learning are good. Good planning and coverage of the curriculum are helping to widen pupils' geographical knowledge and skills. Year 3 have studied settlements, used four figure grid references and made a field trip locally. Year 4 pupils have compared Llandudno to Burghfield Common. They wrote about housing and employment and added maps and facts to illustrate their work. Pupils in Year 5 have learned about the water cycle and rivers. They have carried out a locally based study of the river Pang and they understand about meanders, width and depth. Year 6 pupils have also studied aspects of Kenya and the Rift Valley. They understand aspects such as currency, the capital, the landscape and the land use.

72. Indications are that leadership and management in geography are good. Good schemes of work provide pupils with plenty of variety and opportunities to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. Among the other geographical topics and skills addressed, pupils in Year 4 have been involved well in a local environmental study. They have considered how to improve the area known as Omer's Gully Wood. There is a good display about this and there are photographs of the site. Pupils have written their suggestions for improvement. These include clearing the area of rubbish, putting in seats and bird feeders and also litter bins. Geography is adding well to pupils' personal education, teaching them about their own locality and environment and how they can have a direct impact on it.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 pupils are developing satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major religions.
- Religious education is supportive of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education
- There are few educational visits or visitors to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

73. Pupils reach standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Three lessons were seen and the overall quality of teaching in these was satisfactory. Further evidence has been gleaned from an analysis of pupils' work and displays and from discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. This indicates that there is satisfactory provision and pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEN, get a range of opportunities to explore the customs and beliefs of a number of different faiths, with emphasis on Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism. The school is working to the agreed syllabus and has reviewed the scheme of work and assessment in order to maintain the profile and relevance of religious education across the school.

74. During observations it was clear that pupils enjoy the subject, particularly the opportunity to talk about religion and what it means in everyday life. They were also beginning to understand about what is involved in following a religion and why religious people make pilgrimages. In a Year 3 lesson pupils were also getting to grips with understanding what worship means and what it means to give

up worldly goods for the sake of religion. Pupils enjoyed a role-play situation where one pupil pretended to be Buddha after he had given up his riches and the rest of the class had to ask him questions. This provided good opportunities for speaking and listening to others. The lesson also benefited from extra support for pupils with significant special educational needs. However parts of the lesson and other lessons seen lacked pace and challenge, with the result that some pupils became restless at times and lost concentration.

75. The subject is supportive of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education as pupils think about and explore customs and beliefs of others in addition to discussing wider moral issues. They also have opportunities to think about and compare different points of view.

76. The subject co-ordinator has only been responsible for the subject during the past year. She works well with the staff team and is committed to improving her own subject knowledge in order to help other staff to become more confident and knowledgeable about the subject. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and there are plans to improve ICT resources, but there are too few educational visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and further developments are planned. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning and of work covered against the scheme of work. Since the previous inspection resources have been increased and the time allowance for the subject has been extended.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. Inspectors did not obtain sufficient evidence to make judgements about provision in DT and music. Where possible, teachers' planning and pupils' work were examined, including that on display around the school. In **design and technology** displays and discussions show that pupils are gaining experience of a good range of materials and techniques. They are developing the expected skills through designing, making and evaluating their work. Younger pupils have used pneumatics, such as syringes and balloons, to make moving parts on a model monster. Year 4 pupils have created pop-up books and incorporated science knowledge into their work by using electrical circuits when making a board game. Year 5 pupils have used cams and pivots and made musical instruments. Pupils in Year 6 have designed and made shelters and are currently designing and making clocks. Evaluation of work is clearly a strong point and pupils all use this to decide how they would improve their work if they began the project again.

78. In **music**, the school has purchased a scheme of work that provides effective support for teachers, most of whom are non-specialists. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to and appreciate a variety of musical styles, to sing, play instruments and compose their own music. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting musicians, such as string and brass ensembles. During the school's Arts Week, pupils enjoyed listening to an African group and had a further opportunity to appreciate African music in assemblies during the inspection. The choir performs at local events and is led well by the temporary music co-ordinator.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and organised
- Pupils learn a wide range of skills and techniques.
- Good leadership provides a clear focus for the development of the subject.
- Cross curricular links are developing well.

Commentary

79. The previous inspection found that the absence of a detailed scheme of work in art limited pupils' progress. This was because there was no clear plan for the systematic teaching of skills throughout the school. This weakness has been addressed effectively. Curricular planning is detailed and shows clearly how pupils will learn skills and techniques in progression from year to year. Teachers' planning, pupils' completed work and the lesson observed in Year 6 all provide evidence of good teaching, which helps pupils to achieve well. Standards are at least in line with national expectations, and in some cases, higher. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 6 have completed good sketches of hands which reveal close observation, good drawing skills and effective use of shading. They are developing a good awareness of perspective in their drawings of roads and buildings.

80. As they progress through the school, pupils learn drawing, painting, printing, sculpture and collage techniques. They are given the opportunity to use an interesting range of media as they explore colour, texture, form, space and pattern. Teachers build in valuable opportunities for pupils to learn from the work of famous artists and different cultures as they study different techniques and apply them creatively to their own work. For example, pupils in Year 4 study examples of art from Victorian times, including that of William Morris, as they learn about different ways of printing.

81. Good leadership in the subject ensures that it retains a high profile throughout the school. The co-ordinator focuses on the main areas that need development and a useful action plan shows that the subject is identified as a priority for the coming school year, when the co-ordinator plans to check on how well the scheme of work is being implemented in each year group. A recent Arts Week provided very good opportunities for pupils to experience an even wider variety of art and design activities, which included weaving that was inspired by wall hangings in Reading Museum.

82. Teachers are developing effective links with other subjects, which enhance pupils' learning and enable them to use the skills and techniques they have acquired in a meaningful context. For example, Year 4 pupils created their own colour pallet, based on the natural world, after a visit to Omer's Gully Wood. Year 5 pupils created a wall hanging to represent the parting of the Red Sea and Year 6 pupils used textiles to good effect to create pictures of the Easter story.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers' control of lessons and their emphasis on safety are good.
- Lessons are structured and developed effectively.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular and sporting activities

Commentary

83. Three PE lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are also based on the school and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. From this evidence and the lessons observed pupils reach standards which are above average compared to those found in most schools. This represents good achievement, which is promoted by the good quality of leadership and teaching and learning in the subject. The school also gives pupils the opportunity to learn to swim. Records indicate that many pupils achieve well and reach the required standard for safety. The school continues to uphold the good standard achieved in the previous inspection.

84. In Year 6 pupils show good skills in ways of gripping and throwing a ball and understand the need for accuracy in their throwing. They can also run with precision and speed in athletics lessons and show good co-ordination. They also understand the need to work co-operatively to meet challenges.

85. In all of the lessons seen, there was much discussion about the reasons for safety when handling equipment and the need to warm up muscles before exercise. Pupils also understand the effects of exercise on the body. Initially, the teachers directed the pupils' work, but later pupils had opportunity to apply their skills individually or to use their imagination in games. The teachers also varied activities to maintain pupils' attention and interest and totally involved those pupils with special educational needs. Strengths in the teaching include good control of the pupils, a strong commitment to safe practice and well-structured lessons. All lessons began with suitable activities followed by development of the main objective of the lesson and a suitable cooling down session. The pupils' evaluative skills were also used to help them to find strengths and weaknesses for improvement in their work. The co-ordinator's file also showed good evidence of assessment and pupils also made good assessments about each other's achievements in the lessons seen.

86. The management of the subject is good, as evidenced by the good work that has taken place in planning the curriculum, monitoring the subject and providing training. There is also a very good range of extra-curricular activities and competitive events for pupils to take part in. This has also resulted in the school achieving the Activemark Gold.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Only one lesson was seen in **personal, social and health education**. No judgements are made about teaching and learning.

88. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. There is a good programme, which includes awareness of drugs misuse, sex education and topics such as anti-bullying. The programme helps pupils to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle. It also helps in their relationships and understanding of other people's points of view. Pupils spend time thinking about putting themselves in 'other people's shoes'. They consider rules, relationships and feelings both of themselves and others. They are also learning that people have a wide variety of lifestyles and that these should be respected.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

