

INSPECTION REPORT

GREENMEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126251

Headteacher: Mrs D Pritchard

Lead inspector: Ms S Billington

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 256285

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	271
School address:	Pen Close Greenmeadow Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN25 3LW
Telephone number:	01793 521141
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Tyrrell
Date of previous inspection:	8 th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school with slightly more boys than girls on roll. The most noticeable difference is in both the reception year and year 2 where there are twice as many boys as girls. Most classes have children from two different year groups. There are very few children from minority ethnic groups and very few speaking English as an additional language.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Most have speech and communication or social and emotional difficulties. Three children have statements of special need.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (four per cent) is below average but the area served by the school is broadly average in socio-economic terms. The number of pupils that come and go each year other than at the usual times is broadly average. However, this affects some year groups more than others.

When they start school, children's skills in early aspects of literacy and number are above average.

The school is working towards the healthy schools award and Artsmark. It gained a school achievement award for the good results in year 6 national tests in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4343	Ms S Billington	Lead inspector	Science Art and design The Foundation Stage
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector	
30144	Mr E Hastings	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography Physical education English as an additional language
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Music Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Teaching is good and pupils do well. By the end of year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are generally above and sometimes well above the national average. Leadership and management are good and there is a strong commitment to providing the best for every pupil. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in years 4, 5 and 6
- Children in reception classes could achieve more, particularly in writing and mathematics
- Teaching is good overall and particularly strong at the upper end of the school
- The headteacher provides very good leadership with strong support from senior staff and governors
- Provision for personal development is very good and the vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning
- The curriculum is well planned and there is a good range of extra activities and special events
- The school has a strong commitment to ensuring that all children benefit from all that it offers

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved at a faster rate than in most schools nationally. The curriculum is now planned well and provision for religious education has improved. There has been very good improvement in provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and the equipment is very well used to support teaching and learning. Assessment arrangements are better and the information is used well in years 1 to 6 but could be used more effectively in the reception year. There has been significant improvement in the accommodation and the learning environment is attractive and well organised. There is now a systematic approach to managing teachers' performance.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve **well**. The overall picture is of standards that are well above average. The current year 6 pupils are working at broadly average levels, but this reflects the nature of the year group and the inspection found that these pupils are still doing well. In year 5, pupils are working at above average levels, showing that performance in national tests is set to rise again in 2005.

Year 2 pupils also generally reach above average levels in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics although the test results vary a bit more than those in year 6. The inspection found that the current year 2 pupils are achieving broadly average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics.

Children in the reception year are on course to achieve expected levels in all areas of learning by the start of year 1. They are getting a good start in reading and most have a good base of early reading

skills. However, a significant proportion could achieve more in writing and mathematics, given their good skills when they start school.

The inspection found no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well-targeted support and make good progress.

Provision for pupils' personal development is **very good**. They generally have good attitudes to learning and the vast majority behaves well. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall, although the quality varies through the school. The best teaching is seen in years 4, 5 and 6 where it is consistently good and at times very good. Teaching in the reception year is satisfactory, but there are some weaknesses in writing and mathematics that mean that children do not achieve as well as they should.

The curriculum in years 1 to 6 is good. There is a good range of activities, such as clubs, visits and special events that extend opportunities for learning. Pupils are well known and well cared for by staff and there are good systems for helping them to understand what they need to do to be successful.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher has a clear vision for the improvement of the school and has been instrumental in leading many of the developments since the last inspection. Senior staff are good role models and fulfil their responsibilities well. There are currently some temporary arrangements for subject management and no co-ordinator for the reception year, which is affecting the quality of planning and teaching. This should be resolved in September when experienced teachers take up post.

Governors provide strong support for the school and have good knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. Some of their statutory responsibilities are not fulfilled.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school and feel that their children are doing well. Pupils are also very positive and the older children in particular are very appreciative of what their teachers do for them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that children in the reception year achieve as well as they should in writing and that the more able achieve higher standards in mathematics

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Include all the required information in the prospectus and governors' annual report
- Report the outcomes of the race equality policy to parents

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall pupils achieve well but there is some variation in how well they are doing in different year groups. Standards in English, mathematics and science are generally above or well above national averages at the end of year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a good track record of performance in national tests at the end of year 6
- Pupils in years 4, 5 and 6 are achieving particularly well
- Children in the reception classes are not achieving as well as they should in some areas

Commentary

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of year 6

1. Results of national tests taken by pupils at the end of year 6 have improved over the past four years at a faster rate than in most schools nationally. Standards have risen since the last inspection as a result of good teaching at the upper end of the school. The inspection found that current year 6 pupils are attaining broadly average standards and this is likely to be reflected in the test results this year. This is because there are a few children with significant learning difficulties in the year group and, in addition, around a quarter of the pupils joined the school in the last two years. Most of these need some extra support, often to help them to improve their attitudes and behaviour. The work of year 5 pupils is of a good standard overall, showing that performance in national tests is set to rise again in 2005.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.1 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.6 (30.3)	29.6 (28.3)

There were 37pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of year 2

2. Results of national tests taken by pupils at the end of year 2 have been more erratic than those of year 6. At times, results of reading and writing tests have been well above the national average. Test results in mathematics have been broadly average. In 2002, test results dipped to below average levels because of staffing problems that meant that these children underachieved. Good teaching in years 3 and 4 has helped them to make up lost ground. Year 4 pupils are achieving well and now generally attaining at least average levels. Standards for this year group should be above average levels by the time they reach year 6. Results in 2003 improved considerably on those in 2002 and current year 3 pupils are maintaining good standards. The inspection found that standards in the current year 2 are broadly average in English and science. Standards are above average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (15.7)	16.8 (15.8)
writing	17.3 (14.1)	14.1 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards and achievement in the reception year

3. The school's assessment data shows that reception children did not achieve as well as they should have done in 2002-3. This is still the case with the current year group. While the vast majority of children are on course to reach expected levels in all areas of learning by the start of year 1, a significant number should be doing better given their skills on entry. Children are doing well in developing early reading skills and most have made a good start on reading simple books independently. Their skills in early writing are much weaker, because they do not have enough opportunity to write independently. The programme for teaching mathematics follows national guidance for the year group but this does not adequately extend the learning of the significant proportion of children that start school with good number skills.

Other subjects

4. Standards in other subjects are at broadly average levels. This represents an improvement in religious education (RE) since the last inspection – the subject is now taught regularly and there is a good programme for planning and teaching. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and standards are rising, although this is not yet reflected in the work of year 6 because pupils are still making up some lost ground.

The achievement of different groups

5. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well-targeted support. They are achieving well in relation to the targets on their individual education plans (IEPs). The children learning English as an additional language have only just started school and are integrated well and benefiting from some extra support and practical experiences. National test results show some variation in the performance of boys and girls in different year groups but there is no specific trend. The inspection did not find any significant differences. The school is very aware of the need to accommodate the interests and learning styles of both boys and girls and has worked hard to ensure that resources and the structure of lessons are designed to engage all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This is a strength of the school. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they behave well. Provision for their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils behave well and are positive about the school; they are occasionally unresponsive when teaching is not effective
- Personal development is promoted very well
- Attendance is well above the national average and pupils get to school on time

Commentary

6. Most pupils are keen to learn and behave well around the school. They are determined to benefit from their lessons and respond positively when teachers have high expectations of them. This was clearly shown in a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson with years 4 and 5, during which pupils made very good progress. Because of the teachers very good guidance, pupils talked sensibly about how to make and keep friends, shared ideas and extended the 'hand of friendship' to someone in their class to whom they were not particularly close. Occasionally, because activities are not well chosen to meet pupils' needs, they lose concentration and this affects their learning.
7. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their school. They particularly like the friendliness but recognise there are some children who do not behave as well as they should. Some of the older pupils commented that those who misbehave are missing out on the good opportunities given to them, saying "they don't appreciate the help they are getting". Pupils are confident that any unacceptable behaviour or bullying will be sorted out quickly. There have been no recent exclusions.
8. Pupils respond very well to the strong emphasis that is placed on supporting their personal development. They like being rewarded for hard work with house points and 'golden time', a session during which they are able to choose an activity for a short time on Friday afternoon. Work in the arts, for example, singing, dancing or helping to prepare props and costumes for the annual productions, makes a particularly strong contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Parents really like this aspect of provision for their children. Leaders from local churches help pupils to reflect on the spiritual side of life by, for example, encouraging them to make connections between the natural world and the creation story in the Bible.
9. There has been very good improvement in the way pupils are taught about cultural diversity since the last inspection. Classroom displays show that pupils are benefiting from a wide range of cultural experiences such as reading Caribbean poetry, studying art from Thailand and learning about Islam. Children in reception and year 1 are following Barnaby Bear's travels through China and using Chinese accessories while playing in the home corner.
10. Attendance is very good and makes a significant impact on pupils' good achievements. Absence is closely monitored and every effort is made to make parents aware of the importance of regular attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and the organisation of the curriculum are good in years 1 to 6 but there are some weaknesses in the reception year.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good but there is some variation in different parts of the school. Teaching in the reception year is satisfactory but there are some weaknesses. Teaching in

years 1 and 2 is good overall. Teaching in years 3 to 6 is almost always good and there is some very good teaching in years 4, 5 and 6. Assessment arrangements are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
- Resources are used well to support teaching and learning
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and good efforts are made to help children to benefit from their lessons
- Some activities in the reception year are inappropriate
- Marking and target-setting are used particularly well in years 3 to 6

Commentary

11. Just before the inspection, two experienced teachers left the school and three temporary teachers had been in post for a week. Judgements on the quality of teaching and learning were therefore made partly on the basis of lessons seen, but also through looking at pupils' work and records of their progress over time.
12. In the majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations and provide a good level of challenge to which pupils respond well. This is particularly evident in years 4, 5 and 6 and is one of the key factors that leads to the good standards achieved at the end of year 6. In almost all lessons in these year groups, teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of accurate subject vocabulary, encouraging pupils to also use this in responses to questions and in their written work.
13. Throughout the school, resources are used well. Particularly effective use is being made of the new interactive whiteboards that have been installed in all classrooms. Teachers use these to highlight lesson objectives, to illustrate teaching points and to draw attention to specific subject vocabulary. Pupils are also involved well in using this technology to demonstrate their understanding or ways of working to the rest of the class. In mathematics lessons, for example, year 5 and 6 pupils are encouraged to show the range of strategies that can be used to tackle a number problem and to consider the most effective methods to use. In literacy lessons with younger pupils, good use is made of enlarged texts (big books) to demonstrate key reading skills and to discuss features such as punctuation and the author's use of language.
14. Good relationships are evident in lessons throughout the school. Most teachers know their pupils well and use a range of approaches to get the best out of them. Humour, encouragement, a competitive element and good opportunities to work collaboratively see pupils keen to respond and to meet their learning targets. A good deal of work has been done on different ways of learning; older pupils are very aware of these and are gaining a good understanding of how best to learn new skills. Teachers are generally very aware of the need to keep pupils involved and alert throughout lessons and use quick activities such as 'brain breaks' to refresh thinking – as one pupil explained "it pumps oxygen to the brain". Teaching assistants provide good support in many lessons, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties, so that they benefit from additional explanations or help with their work. Good attention is paid to pupils' individual targets and good planning links classroom activities with their different levels of attainment. Just occasionally, support staff could play a greater role in whole class sessions, for example, by sharing the teaching or by assessing pupils' responses.
15. There are some aspects of teaching in the reception year that mean that children do not achieve as well as they should. In part, these relate to some weaknesses in behaviour management and the structure of lessons; sometimes children are static for too long and find it difficult to concentrate. However, the main weakness is that some activities are low level and do not build on the good skills that many children have when they start school. Children spend a long time on activities such as practising letter formation and writing their names or on matching numbers to the right numbers of objects on a worksheet. While some need these sorts of practice tasks,

there are a significant number who mark time because often all children do the same type of activity whether they need it or not.

16. In most classes, assessment is used well to check pupils' understanding and to set targets for their learning. In years 3 to 6, work is marked particularly well. Pupils are usually given a view of what they have achieved and where there are areas for improvement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	6 (14%)	22 (52%)	12 (29%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a good range and quality of experiences in years 1 to 6. Pupils also benefit from a good programme of enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and much improved since the last inspection.
- There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- The school has been innovative in developing the curriculum.
- There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities.
- The accommodation is used well and good quality resources are provided.

17. The weaknesses identified in the last inspection have all been resolved. Teaching time for pupils in years 3 to 6 is now above the nationally recommended level. The school has ensured that there is continuity in learning across the curriculum through revised planning procedures. The literacy and numeracy strategies are being used well to develop pupils' learning in English and mathematics, and skills in these areas are applied effectively in subjects such as geography, history and science. ICT is making a significant impact across all subjects. Geography and religious education are both now fully integrated into the curriculum and taught throughout the school. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. There is a good and comprehensive programme of personal, social, health education (PSHE) and citizenship that includes due attention to drug use and abuse, as well as sex education. A satisfactory curriculum is provided for children in the reception year, but more effective use could be made of the national guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy to extend children's skills.

18. The school shows good commitment to equality of access and opportunity through good planning that takes account of pupils in mixed age classes. Potentially higher attaining pupils receive suitable challenge, whilst effective 'early morning' provision¹ for pupils with special educational needs is a daily feature.

19. Good curriculum development and innovation has ensured that links are made between subjects. Annual productions involve all pupils in dance, drama, art and music with themes linked to history, geography or PSHE. The curriculum is made accessible to pupils through a specific initiative to develop their thinking skills and raise their awareness of different ways of learning.

¹ A small group of pupils come early to school for thirty minutes of intensive support working with three teaching assistants.

20. A good range of enrichment opportunities is provided through several clubs that enable pupils to develop their interests in areas such as sport, art, dance, and singing. A programme of visits and visitors includes drama, history and music workshops, museum, theatre and field study trips provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding. Links with Swindon Football Club have been fruitful in developing pupils' ICT skills, for example, through recording performance in sporting activities.
21. Accommodation is good overall. A spacious hall and well-developed school grounds serve the school well. The outdoor classroom is an especially useful feature, particularly during the summer term. All classrooms are stimulating areas because of the bright displays of work and visual aids. Good quality resources support teaching and learning in all subjects. However, some classrooms, particularly those for the oldest pupils, are cramped and can be unpleasantly hot and stuffy in warm weather. There is a sufficient number of teaching staff who are well deployed.

Care, guidance and support

Care for pupils is good and they are given very good guidance about their academic and personal development. They have satisfactory opportunities to be involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure pupils are safe are very effective
- Adults know pupils well and are very aware of their personal needs
- Parents are happy with the arrangements made for their children when they first start school
- Lunchtime supervisors have not been trained in child protection procedures
- There are no formal systems to listen to pupils' views

Commentary

22. The school takes good care of pupils. Regular checks are carried out to ensure they are working in a safe environment. The building is well maintained, cleaned to a high standard and made attractive for pupils and parents alike by interesting displays. There are, however, problems with ventilation in hot weather, particularly in one of the upstairs classrooms, which neither the use of fans nor an air conditioner improves. This impacts on pupils' ability to work and maintain concentration.
23. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and teachers are readily accessible to parents. Home visits before children start in the reception classes ensure that staff can get to know as much as possible about children's needs. Teachers support pupils with very good advice about how to improve both their academic and personal development and there is a good focus on their personal, social and health education. Pupils feel confident that adults will help them if they get stuck on tasks or need help with personal issues. For pupils with special educational needs, good individual education plans (IEPs) ensure that work is well-targeted and their progress is regularly monitored and assessed.
24. Lunchtime supervisors have good relationships with both the pupils and teachers, ensuring that the children are well cared for. However, they have not yet had child protection training and this is a weakness.
25. Pupils are very positive about the school and like being asked about their views on improvements. When making the decision to turn the kitchen into a creative arts studio, pupils appreciated that the school took their views into account. However, because there are no regular procedures in place to get their views, pupils really only get the opportunity to respond to issues raised by the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is good and contributes positively to pupils' achievements. Links with the community and other local schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents get regular, well presented information about the school but there are some gaps in what is reported to them
- Parents are very supportive of activities involving their children
- Parents have been consulted about specific issues
- There are some gaps in the information provided for parents

Commentary

26. The school is keen to work in partnership with parents and keeps them well informed about school life through regular newsletters. Parents get a good number of opportunities to consult with teachers about how well their children are doing and are given satisfactory information in the year-end reports. However, these do not meet requirements because design and technology (DT) and ICT are not reported as separate subjects. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative but both are missing national test results for years 2 and 6. Additionally, parents have not been informed about the results of monitoring the impact of the race equality policy. Parents of children with special educational needs are regularly informed of meetings and reviews that concern their child. Parents of those pupils who attend early morning activities are appreciative of the work being carried out and the progress being made.
27. Parents are highly supportive of any activities involving their children such as school productions, which are attended by large numbers. Functions arranged by the parent teacher association (PTA) are also well supported. However, the numbers attending curriculum evenings, during which parents can get detailed information about subjects and how they can help their children at home, are disappointingly low. However, those that do attend appreciate the information that they get, for example, about the national tests taken at the ends of year 2 and year 6. Parents at the meeting held before the inspection said that they were keen to know more about the school's work on different ways of learning.
28. A good feature of the school's links with parents is the importance placed on getting their views and opinions and the action that is taken as a result. For example, parents were asked their views about parking problems and about the conversion of the kitchen to a creative arts studio. As a result of being consulted about how they might support their child's reading at home, a new approach to sharing books was introduced. This is having a good impact on standards in reading.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and is a strength of the school. Management and governance are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has high aspirations for all pupils and is well supported by a strong, well established management team
- The governors are well organised to fulfill their responsibilities but do not meet all of their statutory duties
- There is a strong focus on improvement which is clearly linked to spending

Commentary

29. The headteacher remains highly committed to the school and is pivotal to its success. She reflects carefully about the provision made for all pupils and has high expectations of them, feeling strongly that each child has strengths that will be 'unlocked when teachers find the magic key'. She has created an effective and loyal team of governors and staff who share her vision and conscientiously evaluate the school's performance in order to bring about improvement. Her monitoring of planning, teaching and the curriculum is very good and ensures that, overall, pupils benefit from a broad range of learning experiences.
30. The role of the deputy headteacher has improved since the last inspection. A new deputy has been appointed. In addition to his teaching and subject leadership commitments, he now has responsibility for aspects of care for pupils, such as health and safety and lunchtime supervision, as well as premises development. He is fully involved in strategic management as a member of the senior management team as well as having a role on the governing body. The role of subject leaders, which was highlighted as a minor area for improvement at the time of the last inspection, has improved and key co-ordinators are now providing good leadership in their subjects. However, staff turnover has slowed development in this area to an extent, as, for example, there are currently no co-ordinators for science or design and technology. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well co-ordinated. Training for all involved in supporting these pupils has had a positive impact. Class teachers have recently taken on a more active role in formulating targets in IEPs and have developed their skills in planning for, and monitoring, pupils' progress.
31. The governors are well organised to help the school meet its responsibilities, although they do not meet all of their statutory reporting requirements (see paragraph 26) Their understanding of the school's strengths and where it might do better is very good because they keep themselves well informed. One of the ways they do this is by individual governors being linked with a year group from their time in reception through to year 6. From this they are able to gain good insights into the impact of the quality of education provided. At the time of the last inspection, they did not meet their statutory duty for the appraisal of teachers and this was very quickly rectified. Performance management has overtaken this requirement and is fully in place. It is used well to plan in-service training, improve provision and help push up standards. For example, recent staff development has focused on improving writing, because pupils' work showed that they needed extra support in this area, particularly with grammar.
32. The school monitors its performance very carefully. All staff and governors are involved in planning and evaluating development and this ensures there is a clear, shared vision of where the school is going. This is evident in the way the success of the substantial spending on ICT resources has been assessed. Both staff and governors have a clear view of the impact these improved resources have had on standards, pupils' attitudes in lessons and the management of their workloads by teachers.
33. A very large financial rollover of about 20 per cent has accumulated because of careful spending, in light of local education authority (LEA) predictions that pupil numbers would fall. However, because of its success, the school has attracted pupils from outside of the immediate area and, as a result, the fall in numbers has not happened. The underspend has already been reduced significantly by purchasing equipment to improve provision in ICT and will be further reduced by the appointment of experienced staff to take on teaching positions in September, which are currently being filled by temporary teachers.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	508,041.71
Total expenditure	514,943.94
Expenditure per pupil	2,172.76

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	108,132.23
Balance carried forward to the next	101,230

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children in the reception year are taught in two classes, the older ones being in a mixed age class with the younger year 1 pupils. The teachers of the two classes plan together to try to ensure that the children have a similar range of experiences. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are some areas of weakness. The majority of children are on course to attain expected levels in all areas of learning at the start of year 1, but a significant proportion should be expected to exceed these given their good skills on entry. There is currently no co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage and this is having an impact on the quality of provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are developing a good level of independence and social skills
- Children have good awareness of expectations of behaviour but some are still adjusting to being part of a large group

Commentary

34. Good routines and systems help children to feel secure in school and to develop a degree of independence. They are confident in selecting activities at the start of the day and most work with good concentration and application. Several collaborate successfully, for example, taking turns on the computer and sharing ideas for making models with the construction equipment. Their response in whole class sessions is not as good. Whilst the teachers' regularly praise good behaviour and there are clear visual reminders of the need for 'good listening', several, particularly boys, have real difficulty in concentrating at these times. There is not always a teaching assistant present at the start of sessions and this also has an impact on behaviour because the teacher has no additional support to reinforce expectations.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical and imaginative activities extend children's skills in speaking
- Children's reading skills develop well and they have good knowledge of sounds
- Progress in writing is too slow and children do not achieve as well as they should

Commentary

35. The majority of children listen carefully and show understanding of questions and instructions. Their speaking skills develop well as they participate in activities such as role play in the 'garden centre' or plan and act out a story using puppets. Many children are able to formulate questions and to explain their activities, sometimes using complex sentences. Whole class and small group activities, such as reading a 'big book' are successful in encouraging children to comment on pictures and events in the stories and to develop early reading skills.

36. There is a strong emphasis on teaching letter sounds and word building skills and this is successful for the majority of children. However, not enough account is taken of those children who have good knowledge of sounds on entry and they go through the same programme of learning whether they need to or not. Written work is largely on worksheets and there is a lot of emphasis on activities such as matching sounds and pictures or practising letter formation. There is not enough opportunity for children to write independently and to develop their skills in expressing ideas in a written form. Adults miss opportunities to write with, and for, the children and to demonstrate how writing can be used for different purposes. There are some good examples of provision, for instance, where children write orders in the 'garden centre', but overall the approach to teaching writing is unsystematic and unambitious.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children have a good knowledge of early number
- More able children are not sufficiently challenged and their skills are not extended

Commentary

37. Routine activities such as singing counting songs and changing the date on the calendar are used well to reinforce children's skills in recognising numbers. Most are competent with ordering and matching groups up to 10 and are moving on to working with numbers to 20. Children have started work in early addition and working out 'one more' or 'one less'. However, given the good base of skills that a significant proportion of children have on entry to school, they should be further advanced than this. Some are working on activities where they are marking time; for instance, some children who were ordering numbers to 25 were very competent in recognising random numbers such as 22 and could say what number came next and count on from there.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of experiences extends children's early skills in science, history and geography
- ICT is used well to support learning and children's computer skills are well advanced

Commentary

38. Very little direct teaching was seen in this area so evidence was drawn from displays, teachers' planning and incidental observations. A variety of topics is planned to extend children's knowledge and experience of the wider world, for example, 'myself' and 'growth and change'. Current work in role play areas is supporting learning in science, as children think about what plants need to grow. In the 'Chinese restaurant' children are learning about different types of food and the way that these are cooked and eaten.

39. Children have good access to computers, both in the classrooms and in the ICT suite. Most are confident users of technology, knowing, for example, how to click and drag an image to complete a picture and how to use the mouse to display the next part of a story on screen. In a lesson in the ICT suite, most children showed awareness of terms such as 'log on' and could use the space bar and caps lock.

PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

40. Very little direct teaching was seen in these areas and it is not possible to judge the quality of provision. Regular access to activities such as drawing, cutting and using playdough means that children's finer skills and control develop well. The majority are skilled in writing their names legibly and drawings often show recognisable form. The outside play area has a range of climbing equipment, but this was under-used during the inspection. There are regular PE lessons in the hall; in the one that was seen (in the mixed year 1/reception class) reception children showed good awareness of space and reasonably good control in moving and balancing.
41. Role play and smaller scale activities extend children's imagination and ability to create stories and scenarios. Children in the 'garden centre' took on roles confidently as they put on gardening gloves, tidied plants and flowers and even swept the floor! With support from a teaching assistant, a group of children created an impressive woodland trail using tiny logs and were able to explain how you might make your way along it using a variety of movements. Children have some experiences of representing their ideas and observations using a variety of media such as paint but there is limited provision for them to experiment and explore a range of techniques. Planning shows that work in art and design is often over-directed or at a level that is inappropriate for reception children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are generally above average
- Teaching and learning are good
- The curriculum offers a good range of opportunities to support pupils' personal development
- Provision for pupils with literacy difficulties is good
- The subject is very well led and there has been good improvement since the last inspection

Commentary

42. Standards by the end of year 2 have generally been above average since the time of the last inspection. Standards in year 6 have shown good improvement. The inspection found standards in years 2 and 6 to be at broadly average levels. The picture is much stronger in years 3 to 5 where pupils are achieving at above average levels. Speaking and listening skills are broadly average overall. However, a significant proportion of pupils speak confidently and use a good range of vocabulary to express their ideas and views. The majority of pupils develop good reading skills, learning to read with expression and understanding. Pupils' written work is generally well structured.
43. The quality of the teaching is generally good. The strongest teaching is seen in the classes of older pupils where teachers have high expectations of pupil performance and provide challenging work. Teachers are very familiar with the national literacy strategy and have good subject knowledge. They enjoy good relationships with pupils who are fully engaged during lessons and very effectively kept on task. Behaviour is generally very good as a consequence. Most teachers use good quality resources effectively to support their lessons. Homework is used well to reinforce learning and a recent initiative is especially successful in helping to improve reading comprehension skills. Assessment is used very effectively, and teachers' marking is very helpful

in informing pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils have clear targets to work towards and teachers make reference to them in their marking. Pupils work hard and acquire knowledge, skills and understanding at a very good rate. They work well independently and collaboratively. They discuss ideas together, for example, when composing poetry, and this helps them to make good progress. Word processing is used effectively to support the presentation of pupils' written work.

44. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of activities that extends pupils' experiences in language and literacy. These include theatre workshops such as 'Shakespeare for Kids', followed by visits to a theatre; visits from a puppeteer on an Egyptian theme; play writing; science drama workshop; and pupils devising and performing their own puppet plays. Activities such as these extend pupils' literacy skills and some good work has resulted, for example, where pupils have written their own playscripts.
45. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and receive good quality support from the teaching assistants. Systematic programmes of work have been devised to meet pupils' individual targets and are the focus of regular early morning sessions. The teaching assistants' time is used well to support pupils in class at specific times. This is well organised to fit in with small group work in literacy lessons. The good provision ensures these pupils make good progress in their learning.
46. The co-ordinator has introduced effective initiatives to raise standards. She is a very experienced manager and is continually looking at new ways of making improvements through her monitoring activities. To support the drive to raise standards further, she has introduced systems to set specific targets for each year group. Currently, the school is working to improve pupils' presentation skills.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Language and literacy skills are used well in other areas. In mathematics, for example, pupils learn the correct technical vocabulary of the subject and use their presentation skills to good effect in their written work. In science, pupils read with good expression and understanding. Through their history project on the Victorians, writing skills are developed well when pupils write in the first person as children at work. Others make confident presentations on their research into life in the second half of the twentieth century.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards generally exceed national averages as the result of good teaching and high expectations
- The subject is very well led and good use is made of assessment data to identify pupils and topics which require more attention
- The subject is well resourced and this adds to the impact of teaching

Commentary

48. By the end of year 2, pupils' skills are generally above average. More able pupils use a range of strategies for addition and subtraction. They have a good grasp of the value of thousands, hundreds, tens and units. They can interpret information in tables and graphs and measure accurately using standard units. Less able pupils add and subtract two digit numbers and are developing an awareness of the four operations. Progress from year 3 onwards continues to be

good and, by year 6, standards are usually well above average. While current year 6 pupils are working at broadly average levels, standards in years 4 and 5 are above average. The oldest pupils can apply the four operations to four digit numbers and understand how to apply their skills to solve problems, for example, in working out journey times from timetables.

49. There is good teaching throughout the school with the best teaching seen with the older pupils. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and has resulted in a rise in standards. The good teaching is characterised by detailed planning, tasks that are well matched to pupils' levels of understanding and a generally high level of expectation. Improving mental mathematics skills and the manipulation of number are current targets for the school and inspection evidence indicated that good work is going on in these areas. For example, pupils are challenged to find as many ways as possible to add, subtract, divide and multiply a set of two digit numbers. The 'monster maths'² programme excites pupils of all abilities and is a very good vehicle for targeting areas of mathematics that need improvement. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics. Their attention in lessons is generally good and they are keen to improve their skills.
50. The improvement in standards and teaching arises from very good leadership and good resourcing. The co-ordinator is a very good role model, maintaining an expert oversight of planning and staff training. He collates and analyses test data well, as is shown in the current focus on improving aspects of number work. He has also ensured that there is a rich pool of resources, including software for the new interactive whiteboards, which stimulates pupils throughout the school. He has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and therefore is not able to share the best practices across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. All staff reinforce mathematics skills well in other subjects. In science, for example, there is good use of data collection and calculation. In history, pupils show a good understanding of time. Thus, in a good history lesson pupils were regularly challenged to assess how long ago a census had taken place and the interval between one census and another.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to learn from practical experiences
- There is a strong emphasis on teaching scientific vocabulary and systematic ways of working
- The curriculum is well planned to cover all aspects of the subject

Commentary

52. By the end of year 2 almost all pupils have attained at least average standards. Pupils show good understanding of basic aspects of science, such as the properties of different materials and the impact of different forces. Most pupils give simple, but clear, explanations of their observations, often making good use of simple diagrams and lists to record these. More able pupils are beginning to predict the outcomes of tests and have some understanding of how these should be set up to give a reliable outcome. As they move through years 3 to 6, these skills are effectively built on so that, for example, year 4 pupils devise some clear definitions of scientific terms and set out experiments well, showing good understanding of fair testing. Teachers place strong emphasis on learning scientific vocabulary and pupils themselves begin to use it accurately as

² An imaginative assessment programme, devised by the co-ordinator, that encourages pupils to develop their mental maths skills.

they record their findings. In years 5 and 6, pupils' work is at a similar level, showing good standards for year 5 and broadly average standards for year 6. The majority of pupils in these year groups set out their work clearly making good use of lists and diagrams. They are encouraged to interpret results and to make predictions and explain their conclusions, justifying these by using scientific terminology.

53. Only one lesson was seen in years 1 and 2 and it is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching in these year groups. Pupils' work indicates that it is at least satisfactory. An appropriate range of topics is planned and taught, but much of pupils' recorded work is on loose sheets that are not always dated or annotated so progress and achievement are difficult to track. Teaching in years 3 to 6 is good. Lessons are characterised by clear introductions followed by well organised activities using good resources. This engages pupils' interest and they are usually keen to succeed. In a lesson with years 5 and 6 on micro-organisms, the pupils worked enthusiastically in small groups trying to match terms and definitions. They listened well to each other as they read out the definitions and debated, for example, the difference between *bacteria* and *virus*. Teachers give clear feedback to pupils both in lessons and when marking their written work so that they are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to work on to improve their skills.
54. The co-ordinator has recently left and the deputy head is overseeing the subject until a new co-ordinator takes up appointment in September. Good work has gone on to improve provision since the last inspection. There is stronger emphasis on the practical and investigative elements of the subject, with pupils' skills in this area being tracked as they move through the school. There is better provision to ensure continuity in pupils' learning and to cater for mixed age classes. These improvements have resulted in the rise in standards at the end of year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are making good progress and developing a good range of skills
 - Teaching and learning are good
 - The use of ICT across a range of subjects is good and often very good indeed
 - The subject is well resourced with good plans for further development.
55. Pupils are benefiting from recent improvements in provision. They have good access to computers both in classrooms and in the ICT suite. Standards in year 2 are in line with national expectations and pupils show good knowledge of how to log on, open files, word process and amend text. They understand the value of ICT and how it can enhance the presentation of work. They are also beginning to understand its use in numeracy, science and art. They talk about technology in an informed and excited way. Pupils in year 6 also display the skills that are expected for their age. They use computers to control events and are good at processing data in mathematics and science. Skills in multi-media presentations are developing well.
56. Teaching seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good. Planning throughout the school is good. Teachers' confidence has improved since the last inspection and lessons provide a good degree of challenge for pupils with different levels of skills. There is a high level of enjoyment in ICT throughout the school. Pupils of all ages enjoy using the suite, older ones are comfortable and enthusiastic about using laptops in class and all enjoy performing on the new interactive whiteboards.
57. Leadership is good. A good training programme has been provided, an excellent range of hardware has been installed and teachers are encouraged to identify where and how ICT can be

used across a range of subjects. There are strong signs that standards are well set to exceed national expectations in all areas in the near future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good and developing well. ICT is used to enrich and reinforce learning in English, mathematics, geography, science and PSHE. Pupils show great confidence in accessing the Internet and this is becoming a useful skill in many subject areas. The introduction of interactive whiteboards has had a very strong impact on approaches to teaching and learning throughout the school. The school has plans for purchasing more interactive hardware and control equipment which should make valuable contributions to the development of advanced ICT skills.

HUMANITIES

59. Work was sampled in history and geography. One **history** lesson was seen and discussions were held with small groups of pupils in years 4 and 5 about their work. In addition, work was scrutinised from a number of classes across the school, together with the co-ordinator's file and some class teachers' planning. The youngest pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of the past using sources of information such as artefacts, photographs and stories. Older pupils show confidence in handling primary source material such as census records and making acute observations, relating, for example, to the nature of society in Victorian times. Comprehensive guidance for planning is in place that indicates that the full curriculum is covered.

60. Although it was only possible to observe one **geography** lesson, it is clear that the position of the subject is much improved since the time of the last inspection. It is now taught regularly throughout the school. Pupils' work indicates that they are generally acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding at the expected level. Year 6 work on mountain environments is well-presented using tables, notes and diagrams to impart detailed information on the topic.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved since the last inspection
- Pupils demonstrate interest in learning about different faiths

Commentary

61. The previous inspection found that pupils made unsatisfactory progress in religious education. Progress is now satisfactory in all years and this represents a significant improvement.

62. The locally agreed syllabus has been used to develop a comprehensive programme of work for year groups throughout the school. The full range of topics is covered, with good reference to both knowledge of religions and sensitive responses to them. There is breadth to the curriculum, with Christianity, Islam and Judaism being covered in depth. Care is taken to relate celebrations, ceremonies and festivals to individual pupils where this is relevant. Thus, in a very good year 5 lesson on Islam, a pupil gave a detailed talk to the class on her experience of attending the mosque and reading the Koran. Both she and the rest of the class showed good skills in discussion afterwards.

63. Teaching was good in the two lessons observed. In year 2 pupils were encouraged to discuss which books meant most to them. This was conducted well and led effectively to an outline of the Torah and its place in Judaism. Pupils showed considerable respect for an actual Torah; an element of role play allowed them to understand how the experience related to what they already knew of Christianity.

64. The headteacher, as temporary subject leader, has been keen to improve pupils' experience and understanding of the full range of religions. This has been backed by the development of resources in the form of artefacts and posters. The knowledge and empathy demonstrated by the pupils demonstrates that these initiatives have been successful. There is still more work to be done with regard to visiting places of worship and the involvement in school of representatives of faith communities other than Christianity.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. In art and design, design and technology (DT) and physical education (PE), one lesson was seen in each subject and it is not possible to make secure judgements on the quality of teaching or overall provision.

66. In **art and design**, work on display and photographic evidence was scrutinised and this indicates that standards are broadly average, but with some good work in drawing and painting. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to learn a variety of techniques to represent their ideas and observations and to study the work of famous artists. Art is used well to support work in other subjects. Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, have studied symbols in Ancient Egyptian art as part of their history work and used these in illustrations and for monoprinting. Special events have raised the status of the subject; during the creative arts year in 2001, all pupils had a picture framed and exhibited in the school's 'art gallery'. More recent work has involved the whole school in a collaborative project in which the work of a range of modern artists, such as Warhol and Goldsworthy, was studied. Visiting artists used this experience as the stimulus for producing large colourful panels on display in the hall.

67. In **design and technology**, a scrutiny of work and displays indicates average standards throughout the school. Pupils are taught techniques for joining materials and safe use of tools and equipment. They produce carefully drawn designs and diagrams and completing evaluations of their work showing reflection on the process and quality.

68. In **physical education**, a gymnastics lesson was of good quality, showing pupils developing a sequence of movements and achieving well. They showed precision, control and accuracy in performance, skillfully linking ideas together and applying them well. A strong feature of the lesson was the confident way in which they compared and evaluated the work of other pupils. Standards are clearly in line with the national average by year 6. Curriculum planning shows coverage of all aspects of the subject, well supported by a good range of extra curricular sporting activities and dance opportunities. By year 6, most pupils achieve the standard expected in swimming.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school enjoy music and the standard of singing is good
- A range of musical activities enriches the curriculum

Commentary

69. Two lessons were observed in years 2 and 5. In each, imaginative teaching led to enthusiasm in the pupils. They enjoyed the sessions, were keen to participate and showed a good understanding of both musical technique and how music can be used to create different effects.

Pupils' enthusiasm for music is also apparent in the photographic evidence of recent performances.

70. Music is an integral part of school life. Music representing a wide range of styles is used as background in the reception area of the school and in classrooms. Singing is good in assemblies and practices. Older pupils sing with gusto, good phrasing and a real attention to dynamics and articulation. Younger pupils really enjoy the use of song at the start and end of many lessons. In addition, song is used well to back up some basic literacy and numeracy skills.

71. A number of initiatives enrich opportunities for music-making in the school. During the three days of the inspection, musical activities included a large choir of older pupils, a samba class and a number of optional instrumental lessons. In addition there is an infant choir, after-school clubs for higher attaining musicians and a 'boomwhacker club'³ all of which enthuse and stimulate pupils of all ages.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is well planned, using guidance that ensures progression of skills
- The school is working towards a 'healthy schools award'

Commentary

72. Only a small number of lessons was seen during the inspection so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning. However, teachers plan regular sessions to support pupils' needs and help them build on their skills from year to year.

73. The school is currently working towards a healthy schools award with emphasis on emotional health and physical well-being. This has resulted in improved school security and the training of some staff to support both pupils and colleagues in times of crisis. As part of the programme, pupils are becoming involved in a scheme to recycle the school's paper waste.

³ A club that develops performance skills through using plastic tubes which create a musical note when swung.

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	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	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).

