

INSPECTION REPORT

HALL ORCHARD CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barrow-upon-Soar

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120112

Headteacher: Mr. R. Morley

Lead inspector: Mrs A E Kounnou

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 256315

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	425
School address:	Church Street Barrow-upon-Soar Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE12 8HP
Telephone number:	01509 412188
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. F. Acton
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hall Orchard is a large Church of England controlled Primary school serving the village of Barrow-upon-Soar. There are close links with the local church. The school is popular and many pupils attend from outside the catchment area. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average at about 14 per cent. Seven of these pupils have a statement of special need, a comparatively large proportion. Pupils' needs are mainly specific learning difficulties, but a few pupils have moderate learning difficulties, behaviour problems, speech or communication difficulties, physical or autistic needs. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is well below average at about eight per cent. Fewer pupils join or leave during the school year than is typical in most primary schools, but a high proportion, over 20 per cent, joined the year group that left school at the end of Year 6 in 2003. In most years, children starting school have about average abilities at the age five of years. Each year the spread of pupils' abilities range from those with higher capabilities to those who need a great deal of support. Pupils in the current Year 3 started school with lower than expected abilities overall, but the attainment of most pupils when they start school is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
30810	Liz Kounnou	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Information and communication technology
14141	Ernest Marshall	Lay inspector	
29688	Mike Brammer	Team inspector	English Personal social and health education
18703	Christine Canniff	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
20010	John Sangster	Team inspector	Science Religious education History Geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hall Orchard School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher and other senior staff provide good leadership. Together they have begun to address the issues that led to below average standards in the English and mathematics national tests in Year 6 in 2003. Pupils achieve well in science throughout the school, and achievement is now satisfactory in English and mathematics. This is because teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Parents have confidence in the headteacher and value the community ethos he has created. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the many rich experiences the school provides. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in science are above the national average throughout the school and pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Standards achieved in the national tests in English and mathematics are not high enough.
- Although assessment procedures are good, teachers do not consistently use the information from the assessments when planning their lessons.
- The time available during the teaching day is not used effectively.
- A very strong team ethos pervades the school.
- The curriculum is very rich and provides exciting and interesting activities that pupils enjoy.
- Pupils have limited knowledge of the contribution of other cultures to British society.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to their work because provision for their personal development is good and there is very good care for pupils.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Although standards are not as high as they were then, pupils' achievement is satisfactory because longer-term school planning has improved. There has been a good improvement in the quality of individual plans for pupils with special educational needs.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Although standards in science at the end of Year 6 are above average, standards in the national tests in English and mathematics have not kept pace with the national improvements in these subjects. They are below the national average and lower than could be expected given pupils' prior attainment. Raising these standards is the focus of all school improvement planning. The actions taken are making an impact. There are signs that standards are improving this year and pupils now make satisfactory progress. In Year 6, pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching in this year group is good. The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 2 is satisfactory. Although results of the Year 2 national tests in reading are below average, and those in writing and mathematics are well below average, pupils make satisfactory progress from the time they start school. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in ICT. Standards are above average because teaching is good in this subject.

There is good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The stimulating activities provided bring a lot of spirituality into pupils' lives. Very good relationships in the school and a very strong moral code contribute significantly to pupils' good behaviour. Pupils learn a great deal about their own culture, but opportunities to learn about other cultures in Great Britain are limited. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers manage pupils well, and there are good partnerships with teaching assistants that support pupils of all abilities. The pace of some lessons is too slow. The way that the school day is organised contributes to the slow pace of lessons, because some periods are too long. Teachers do not consistently plan work that will challenge all the pupils and help them to learn new skills because they do not use assessment well enough.

The school's commitment to projects such as 'Living History' ensures that pupils are motivated and have positive attitudes to their work in humanities. Pupils are cared for very well. They receive good support for academic achievement in Year 6, where teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and share information about the assessments with pupils. However, throughout the school pupils' individual targets for learning are not sufficiently accurate to help them make the best progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher delegates responsibility well so that the leadership team is effective. Management is satisfactory because the team has put into place a suitable system to check the work of the school and takes action to address any weaknesses found. The headteacher and governors used advice from the local education authority well, and planned steps to improve standards in English and mathematics. As a result, standards of work seen in these subjects are now satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory with good features in the way governors support and challenge the school, but some statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school. Pupils like the fact that they are trusted to do things on their own, for example they organise charity sales. Some parents say that pupils could make more progress, and inspectors agree with this view.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- Review the length of lesson periods within the school day.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons that match pupils' abilities.
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the contribution of all cultures to British society.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide all the required information for parents in the governors' annual report and the school's prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

In English and mathematics tests at the end of Year 6, standards are **below average** and pupils' achievement was **unsatisfactory**. In the Year 2 tests, although pupils achieved standards that are **well below the national average**, they made **satisfactory** progress from the time they started school. Standards seen during the inspection were **about average** throughout the school and pupils' achievement is now **satisfactory**. Pupils achieve **better than expected standards** throughout the school in science and ICT. Girls and boys achieve as well as each other. Pupils with special educational needs make **satisfactory** progress in relation to their ability.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics are not high enough because they are not keeping pace with national improvements.
- Pupils continue to achieve good standards in science, as they did at the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (26.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.4 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.6 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 93 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below the national average in English and mathematics, and lower in comparison with national results than they were at the last inspection. Pupils did not achieve the results that could have been predicted based on the standards they achieved in the national tests they took in Year 2 in 1999. The targets set for this group were very low. Pupils' progress was affected by a high proportion of pupils joining or leaving the year group, and long periods when this group were taught by a succession of supply teachers due to unavoidable long-term staff sickness. The trend in improvement is broadly in line with the national trend, indicating satisfactory achievement over the longer term. Nonetheless the higher standards achieved in these subjects in 1998, when the school was last inspected, have declined. This is because, at that time, the standards pupils achieved at Hall Orchard were higher than the national average. Although pupils' test results have been maintained at about the same level, there has been an improvement nationally so that in comparison standards are lower now.

School results in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores from 1998 to 2003

Standards in	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
English	26.3 (25.7)	25.9	27.0	26.1	26.6	26.2 (26.8)
mathematics	25.9 (25.2)	26.4	26.8	25.4	26.4	26.4 (26.8)
science	28.4 (26.0)	29.0	29.7	29.7	29.4	29.6 (28.6)

2. Standards of work seen in English and mathematics throughout the school during the inspection show that standards are about average for the pupils' age. In Year 6, pupils achieve well due to higher expectations and good teaching. Targets for Year 6 this year are much higher and reflect pupils' abilities. Most pupils begin school with attainment that is broadly as expected and their achievement in English and mathematics this term is satisfactory in all year groups. School data shows this is not always the case and that progress in these subjects is uneven from year to year. Some pupils do not improve their skills from one year to the next. Action has been taken to address the inconsistent rate of achievement, including much better management of the data available from pupils' annual assessments. Nonetheless, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop reading skills adequately in other subjects, and opportunities for writing are limited. This limits the progress that pupils make in English throughout the school. In mathematics, pupils' mental and oral skills are not well developed and this limits their achievement in mathematics overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.1 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.4 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In Year 2, standards in the national tests for reading are below average, and in writing and mathematics are well below average in 2003. Nevertheless, when this group of pupils began school their overall attainment was lower than expected, so that they achieved the standards expected of them in the tests. This cohort of pupils has an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, or lower than average abilities, than is the norm at Hall Orchard. The good support pupils receive from teaching assistants in lessons helps them to make the expected progress. This year the trend of improvement in the Year 2 national tests is lower than the national trend. The trend of improved achievement in reading and mathematics in Year 2 has been broadly average for a number of years, with pupils' achievement in writing being lower than expected. This reflects the standards seen during the inspection. In the reception year, children achieve satisfactory standards, reaching the goals that are expected at the end of the Foundation Stage in social, language and mathematical skills.
4. In science and ICT, pupils achieve well. In science, standards have been above the national average for some years. Pupils consistently achieve better than expected standards and more than half the pupils achieved the higher level in the Year 6 tests last year. However, the national improvement in science tests results means that the comparison with all schools is not quite as favourable as it was at the last inspection, even though pupils in Year 6 achieved well compared to those of the same ability. Standards are better than expected because a good curriculum is provided that motivates pupils, and the co-ordinator leads the subject well. The same features lead to above average achievement in ICT. Pupils cover a range of interesting work that they enjoy, and the co-ordinator is extremely supportive of staff who are improving their ICT skills at a good rate. Consequently, pupils work at challenging activities and achieve above the expected standards for their age throughout the school.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards. Although teaching assistants often support them well, lessons are not as well tailored to individual pupils' needs as they could be. The school identifies pupils who are gifted and talented, this is at an early stage. However, the school is part of a local project to improve provision for pupils in this group. They make satisfactory progress along with their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is **good** overall, with strengths in spiritual and moral development. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are **good** and are promoted well throughout the school. Attendance is **good**.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
425	0	0

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above the national average
- Behaviour is good, so that most pupils are attentive and ready to learn, with good attitudes to learning.
- Thought-provoking lessons contribute very well to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their awareness of the contribution of other cultures to British society.

Commentary

6. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above that found in similar schools and there is very little unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually. Regular monitoring of attendance and punctuality ensures that pupils maintain the good level of attendance.
7. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, because teachers have high expectations and the school's behaviour policy is constantly reinforced. Pupils are clearly aware of the difference between right and wrong and try hard to comply with teachers' expectations. They work hard and show interest in their lessons and other activities. Teachers make sure that all pupils understand their expectations. Consequently, pupils pay attention to both teachers and teaching assistants and concentrate on their work. They are particularly enthusiastic about the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them, and happily give up their own time to take part in sporting and musical clubs. Pupils are quick to recognise and celebrate the success of others. This was seen in the spontaneous applause for pupils being presented with an achievement award in assembly.
8. Pupils develop a strong sense of concern and compassion for others in some thought-provoking lessons in religious education. In Year 5, these have included challenging discussions on the impact of Nazi Germany on Jewish citizens. This work has also contributed very well to pupils' moral development, because pupils talked together about the difficult issues

and applied the moral arguments to their own lives, and other current world events. The moral case for and against war was a strong theme in their responses. The very good opportunities for pupils to take part in the performing arts enable pupils to flourish. This very good provision means that most pupils are developing self-confidence and are growing in maturity. Opportunities to take on responsibility are willingly accepted. For example, representatives of each class from Year 3 to Year 6 meet together monthly to discuss the views of classmates as members of the new Key Stage 2 Circle Group. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in lessons. Pupils develop a good insight into their own culture through the arts and history and geography topics. However, their knowledge of the contribution of other cultures to British society is not well developed, because this does not have a high enough priority in the curriculum.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. The curriculum is enriched very well by extra activities during and after the school day.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers insist on good standards of behaviour so that pupils are attentive in most lessons.
- Teachers work well in partnership with teaching assistants so that pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- Teachers try to make lessons interesting for pupils in the foundation subjects¹ by planning rich experiences for them.
- Teachers do not use assessment well enough to plan activities that match pupils' abilities.
- Teachers do not use the time within lessons well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (14%)	20 (40%)	21 (42%)	2 (4%)	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.

- There are signs that due to good leadership the quality of teaching is improving this year; during the inspection more than half of lessons seen were good or very good. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching in any stage of the school, or in most subjects. However, teaching and learning in both science and ICT are good and lead to above average standards in these subjects.
- Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well, using a calm management style that encourages pupils to develop self-confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, pupils listen well to their teachers and behave well in almost all lessons. The very best lessons provide activities that highly motivate pupils because they are interesting. In science, pupils in Year 6 are completely involved in learning the practical skills of filtration. This good level of concentration

¹ The foundation subjects are: history, geography, design and technology, art and design, music and physical education.

starts at the beginning of the lesson when pupils take part in a lively discussion with the teacher, putting forward plenty of ideas about how they could separate a mixture of sand and water. This lively discussion improves pupils' scientific vocabulary in addition to setting them a challenge for the lesson.

11. In the foundation subjects teachers plan lessons that are likely to gain the pupils' interest. This is particularly evident in history, where pupils have regular opportunities to take part in 'Living History' sessions, dressing up and acting out the lives of people in the past. In other history lessons, pupils take on the role of characters from the past through their work; for example, they interview King Henry VIII to find out about life in Tudor times. In these very good lessons, pupils increase their skills in note-taking and questioning as well as improving their knowledge of the Tudors. In religious education pupils in Year 5 tackle difficult and thought-provoking topics, such as the life of Anne Frank. The lesson seen was very well constructed and sensitively handled so that pupils thought deeply about the effect of the actions of some people on others, and then began to relate this to their own lives. Lessons in English and mathematics are not as well designed, and about a quarter of pupils say that lessons are sometimes not very interesting.
12. In too many lessons, particularly in English and mathematics, teachers do not make full use of the good amount of information they have gained from assessing pupils' work. Consequently, some lessons are not challenging enough for pupils of all abilities to make the best progress. Pupils' English books show that they do not have enough opportunities to write at length, mainly because too many activities lack sufficient challenge and do not provide pupils with the opportunity to develop their writing skills well enough. The quality of teachers' marking is variable across the school. Work is marked regularly and teachers' comments are often supportive. However, the comments do not usually refer to the aim of the lesson, or the pupils' targets, and rarely provide pupils with information about how to improve their work. The pace of too many lessons is unexciting, mainly because teachers talk for too long at the beginning of lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The length of school sessions contributes to this leisurely pace. In these slower lessons pupils often become bored and listless; however, they do not misbehave. The lack of challenge for all pupils in these lessons limits the rate of learning.
13. A strong team of well-trained teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well; they work in close partnership with teachers and know the pupils very well. However, teachers' weekly plans, particularly for English, do not usually show how this small group of pupils will be able to achieve the targets on their individual education plans in English or other lessons. Consequently, despite the good support provided, pupils make only satisfactory progress.

The curriculum

The curriculum offered by the school is **satisfactory** and meets all legal requirements. There is **very good** enrichment of the curriculum. The school makes **satisfactory** use of the national literacy and numeracy strategies to raise standards. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **good** and has improved since the last inspection. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school offers pupils a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors, which enriches the curriculum and greatly enhances pupils' learning.
- There are good individual plans to support pupils with special educational needs.
- The school makes good use of its well-trained support staff.
- Better use could be made of the time within the school day, and the length of the day for junior pupils is below the nationally recommended minimum.

Commentary

14. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sporting ones. For example, the school takes part successfully in inter-school competition, winning the team trophy in the county sports for the last three years. Good use is made of coaching from the professional football and rugby clubs in Leicester. Nearly half the pupils in Year 6 attend the science club, increasing their interest and motivation and contributing to the high standards achieved in this subject. Visits to local places of interest greatly add to pupils' understanding of history and geography. The school enlivens the whole curriculum in these subjects by providing very rich experiences that deepen pupils' understanding, particularly of life in the past. Pupils often learn history through acting out the lives of people in the past, or through interviewing other 'actors'. There are also good opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments and take part in school performances.
15. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. This is because there has been a good improvement in the quality of pupils' individual education plans. Staff use a special software program to write detailed plans that contain clear and achievable targets for individual pupils. Teachers identify pupils needing support at an early stage and review their progress regularly. The school integrates pupils with physical impairments or emotional or behavioural problems into the life of the school well. Good use is made of the skills of a number of outside agencies so that teachers receive good advice in their support for all pupils.
16. The school has a good number of support staff. They are well trained in supporting pupils with special needs in lessons, and work well with teachers throughout the school in supporting individual pupils as well as groups and within the class generally. Teaching assistants are involved with teachers in planning work. A notable feature is that they often move through the school with a group of pupils, which greatly enhances their value to those pupils and to the class teachers in supporting them.
17. Many literacy and numeracy lessons extend for over an hour, which is longer than the time recommended in the national strategies and leads to the pace in some lessons slackening and pupils finding it difficult to maintain their concentration. This is because the 70-minute length of some sessions within the school day is too long for the one lesson timetabled. In the afternoon, some lessons in Years 1 and 2 are interrupted by playtime, which is timetabled in the middle of a lesson rather than at the beginning. The length of the school week for junior pupils is about one hour less than the recommended time. The school is not using the time available during the teaching day as effectively as it could to raise standards in English and mathematics, or to provide enhanced opportunities for learning in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **very effective** procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. Support for pupils with special educational needs is **good**. The school has **satisfactory** arrangements to seek the opinions of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a systematic and effective approach to health and safety issues, and well-planned and implemented induction procedures.
- The school develops very good trusting relationships between staff and pupils.
- The targets set for pupils are not helping them to achieve their academic potential.

Commentary

18. The headteacher and governors give health and safety matters high priority to ensure all pupils can work in a safe environment that contributes positively to their learning. The school is fortunate to have a fire-fighter and a policeman as members of the governing body and makes full use of their expert knowledge to support the staff. Good procedures to ensure the protection of children, including Internet security, are fully implemented. There are carefully planned and very well-organised procedures to help new children and their parents when they start school in the reception class. For example, the school maintains continuous contact with the pre-school group on the school's site, and staff from the reception class pay frequent visits to ensure the young children become familiar with them. All parents of the new children are invited into the school for an initial open day where they are welcomed by the headteacher and as many of the staff as possible. Further individual interviews take place during the following two-day period. At these interviews, parents can discuss how well they feel their children are prepared for school and any confidential matters they wish to raise. Children join the reception class for afternoon sessions and take part in school or class assemblies. This early and frequent contact means that children are comfortable with staff and work in surroundings that are familiar to them.
19. There are very good relationships throughout the school. Teaching staff and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well. This is partly because teaching assistants often stay with the same group as they progress through school. This means they fully understand the individual needs of each pupil and provide tailored support to help pupils make satisfactory progress. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils with special educational needs well and show real concern for their welfare.
20. Although staff set targets for most pupils, the targets are not used effectively throughout the school to help pupils understand how they could improve their achievements. In Year 6, teachers make a good early assessment of pupils' abilities in English and mathematics at the beginning of the year and share the information with pupils. However, few higher attaining pupils are aware of the target they could achieve by the end of the year, or what they need to improve to achieve this. In some classes, pupils have English and mathematics targets prominently placed in their workbooks. However, some higher attaining pupils already successfully achieve these targets and do not know when they will be reviewed. Targets are rarely referred to in teachers' marking or during lessons. Consequently, the school does not provide pupils with access to sufficient support and guidance to help them achieve their academic potential as they move through the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are **very good** community links that contribute well to pupils' learning, and **good** links with parents. Links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The information provided for parents is good and encourages their participation in school life.
- There is a very effective parents' and teachers' association.
- There is good provision for the community to use outdoor facilities.
- There are well-planned and well-organised transfer arrangements due to good links with local schools.

Commentary

21. The school is held in high regard by parents and by the community. Parents are kept very well informed about the topics taught each term and there are evening sessions to explain the detail of the literacy and numeracy strategies to parents, and how they can help their children. Parents of children entering the reception class attend a separate open evening giving guidance on how they can help their children with reading. The prospectus and annual report of the governing body are comprehensive and presented in a 'reader-friendly' style, but some

elements require review, as they do not contain all the information required. Parents most appreciate the ready availability of the staff at the beginning and end of the school day to meet parents and listen to any concerns they may have about their children's learning.

22. The parent teacher association has a regular membership of sixteen parents and four staff. The group work very effectively, with wide support from other parents and the community, in both promoting the school and raising significant amounts of funds that are used to enhance pupils' learning. For example, the association runs Saturday and Monday swimming sessions. The school positively encourages parents to become involved in the life and work of the school. Parent helpers are welcomed into the classrooms where they help; for instance, by listening to pupils read or providing practical tuition in cooking and sewing.
23. The school allows the community free use of the sports field out of school hours. This has resulted in the elimination of almost all vandalism of the school premises. The school's external grounds are maintained by a local volunteer 'ground force' team. Businesses and other organisations in the community are successfully encouraged to support the school:
 - a national bank is preparing a video featuring Year 4 pupils;
 - financial support from other local industries has provided sports and computer equipment;
 - players from a national football league premiership division have taken part in a reading promotion, primarily aimed at improving boys' attitudes to this aspect of learning.

In addition to this support, staff make effective use of the local area and facilities to enhance the curriculum.

24. The good link with the secondary school is important in helping Year 6 pupils transfer smoothly from one school to the next. Contact with a secondary school tutor commences in the autumn term and continues throughout the school year, so that pupils are very familiar with staff when they move on. Year 6 teachers use their autumn term contacts with secondary school staff productively to discuss how the leavers have settled in.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher and other senior staff provide **good** leadership. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**. School management is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership with a distinctive collegiate style.
- The leadership team works well together.
- The school's improvement plan does not focus sharply enough on raising standards.
- The school's self-evaluation is not rigorous enough.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	791294	Balance from previous year	-35482
Total expenditure	822581	Balance carried forward to the next	-31287
Expenditure per pupil	1696		

Commentary

Leadership

25. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has the support of parents, staff and governors in working towards this. The very rich curriculum experiences provided for pupils are a direct result of this vision, which the headteacher has worked towards consistently for many years. His supportive leadership style motivates staff well, and has continued since the last inspection. A result of his influence is that the leadership team is known as TWEST – The Wednesday Education Support Team – emphasising the support expected from all leaders in the school. The team work well together and use their skills effectively to bring about improvement; consequently standards of pupils' work seen during the inspection are about average and pupils' achievement satisfactory. They use their individual strengths well. One member is particularly capable at managing data using ICT, and provides the team with clear charts and tables showing pupils' progress. Other members have particular subject specialisms. In English and mathematics, the subject leaders have carried out rigorous analyses of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provided clear support and guidance to staff to improve the standards that pupils achieve. Raising these standards has been the focus of school improvement strategies since 2001. The special educational needs co-ordinator has improved the quality of pupils' individual education plans, so that pupils work towards clear and achievable targets now. Working together with the headteacher, the team have provided support to all staff to address particular weaknesses in teaching that led to pupils making uneven progress as they moved through the school. They have wisely drawn upon the support of the local education authority, seeking two formal reviews of English and mathematics to provide the school with better information about achievement in these core subjects² where standards are below average.

Management

26. Although management is satisfactory overall there are some good features. Senior managers have used data available from pupils' annual test results to identify where groups of pupils were not making enough progress. The most significant improvement has been in the use of data to track pupils' progress. This has meant that targets set for pupils in the current Year 6 are more closely linked to their prior attainment than the targets that were set for pupils last year. Recently the school has produced tables and charts that show the rate of progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science as they move through the school. In response to the information gained from this work, the leadership team put into place a comprehensive system of staff training to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in English and mathematics, so as to raise standards. For example, all staff in Years 3 to 6 have either attended or are due to attend a five-day course to improve their skills in teaching mathematics. Subject leaders in English and mathematics have provided good quality feedback to teachers about their teaching, the quality of pupils' work, and errors that pupils made in the tests. These actions are making a difference to the quality of teaching and learning, and the standards that pupils achieve. However, the analysis made of data is not readily available to all staff and governors in a format that shows clearly which groups of pupils are achieving well, and where pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Consequently, staff do not make good use of the data when planning work for their pupils each term, so that the work planned is not always well tailored to pupils' needs and abilities.

27. The school's improvement plan is a concise document with clear priorities for improvement. For example, the improvement in data analysis is a priority for the current two-year cycle that is already having an impact. Nonetheless, the current priorities are not sufficiently focused on raising standards of attainment where these are below average and lower than pupils could be expected to achieve. Although data is available about pupils' prior attainment in both Year 2 and Year 6, the information is not used to set challenging targets for achievement in the plan. The

² The core subjects are: English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, and religious education.

school attainment strategy “to sustain our rising levels of school improvement from below average intake” does not accurately reflect the facts. Standards pupils achieve in the national tests are not rising and the data available shows that attainment when pupils start school is broadly average. Only in one year was pupils’ attainment significantly lower than expected when they started school. This positive emphasis maintains staff morale at a high level but does not help staff and governors focus urgently on bringing about an improvement in standards. These weaknesses limit the impact of the good work that takes place. Overall, management is satisfactory because the recent more rigorous focus on raising standards in English and mathematics is beginning to improve the quality of pupils’ work in these subjects throughout the school.

Governance

28. Governance is satisfactory because, despite many other good features, not all statutory requirements in the information provided to parents are met. Governors demand high standards from each other and senior staff, and are determined to raise standards in English and mathematics. They have great confidence in the headteacher who is very experienced and has the full support of both parents and the local community. They receive good quality information, particularly from senior staff who regularly present reports to governors about their subjects. Nonetheless, governors do not receive clear reports that show precisely the rate of progress in all year groups. They are fully aware of the difficulties presented by staff absence and the high proportion of pupils joining one year group. They know the effect of this on the achievements of pupils in Year 6 in 2003, but are less clear where pupils lag behind in other year groups. They have designed a system to review their own work that provides good information to prioritise improvement plans.
29. The school falls into the lowest funded band of schools nationally, receiving considerably less money per pupil than most schools. This has presented some challenges for governors in managing the school budget. Governors have remodelled the way that classes are organised to make savings in staff costs but have accrued a budget deficit of around four per cent. They have agreed a strategy with the local education authority to repay the deficit as quickly as possible. However, although the school is generally satisfactorily resourced and well maintained, this means that there is not enough money available to replace library books, some of which are more than 30 years old. Pupils’ limited use of the school library has a direct effect on the standards they achieve in reading.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30. Provision is satisfactory overall because teaching and learning are satisfactory. Very little work was seen except in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development. There are two classes this term with a third classroom available from January when more children will join the school. About ten pupils from Year 1 work with children in the Foundation Stage in the morning. During the afternoon, these pupils work with friends in the Year 1 classes. The two teachers in the Foundation Stage plan their work together and teaching assistants make suitable notes of assessment for teachers to use. The teaching assistants support children well, particularly those with special educational needs. As a result, some children with more severe needs are fully involved in all the activities. The Foundation Stage teaching area is spacious and well organised, so that children know exactly where to find the resources they need. The small enclosed outdoor area is used during afternoon sessions, but is underdeveloped and not used effectively to promote all areas of learning throughout the day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high level of pastoral care for children.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to organise their own work and play.

Commentary

31. Children are cared for very well by all staff right from the start. The good procedures that take place before children start school mean that they are already comfortable with staff and know their way around when they start. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour in lessons and manage children in a calm way that encourages them to take part in lessons and develop confidence.
32. In a good many lessons there are several adults. The way that adults are deployed means that children are often over-directed, following instructions or seeking support from adults most of the time. As a result, children do not have enough opportunities to learn to negotiate with one another, or to select their own activities. This limits their achievement. Nonetheless, most children should reach the goals for learning in this area by the time they leave the reception year, and a good proportion could exceed these goals.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good development of children's reading skills.
- There are not enough opportunities to use writing through play.

Commentary

33. Most children are on course to achieve the goals for communication, language and literacy by the time they leave the reception year. There is a good focus on developing reading skills; children have regular opportunities to read big books together as a class, and to read in small groups with their teacher. This means that they are beginning to recognise some letters and words, and already enjoy the stories that are read to them. Children enjoy playing a 'treasure hunt' word game. Teaching assistants take them outside in small groups to find toys placed on the playground and match the words that are written on their sheets to those attached to the toys. Almost all the children succeed in matching the labels.
34. Writing skills are less well developed, mainly because the style of lessons planned is more suitable for older pupils in Years 1 and 2, and does not follow the guidance of the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. As a result, children do not have enough opportunities to develop writing skills through play. They sometimes find it difficult to maintain their attention for the long periods that are expected in literacy lessons, so that they are not making as much progress as they could. Most children do not yet form letters correctly, although teaching assistants work alongside children every day to help them practise writing their name correctly. However, in lessons, there are not enough games to help children learn to write letters correctly, or to learn both the name and sound of each letter.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The resources used are of good quality.
- There are not enough opportunities to learn mathematics through play.

Commentary

35. Children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics by the time they leave the reception class. Teachers use imaginative resources to help children remember numbers. For example, a talking puppet called 'Mr. Crow' takes children up and down a washing line of numbers from 1 to 20. Following Mr. Crow's lead, children count forwards and backwards and try to guess the number that Mr. Crow has taken out of the line. Children who are more able play a game with teacher using a beautifully made ladybird pouch, filled with smaller ladybirds. Each soft toy has a combination of spots on each side to help children see how to combine numbers for addition. The skilful way that the teacher leads the group in this very good lesson means that by the end some can record a few sums on a whiteboard.
36. Children have some opportunities to play in mathematics lessons, using the well-resourced play areas such as the café. Nonetheless, there are not enough opportunities for children to learn mathematics as they play, because children work mainly with adults. This limits the opportunities for children to consolidate and practise the skills they learn when working together as a class or in a small group. As with literacy activities, the numeracy lessons planned are more suited to pupils in Years 1 and 2 than children working towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

There is not enough evidence to make a judgement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

37. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning or the provision in this area. Children regularly take part in gymnastics lessons in the school hall. They use

apparatus that has been set out for them by adults. The teacher managed the lesson seen well, so that children worked safely; she gave clear instructions to children about how to jump and land safely. Plans show that lessons always begin and end with warm-up and cool-down sessions. However, sometimes children have to queue at each piece of apparatus so that the time they spend moving in the lesson is limited.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

There is not enough evidence to make a judgement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The overall provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain better than expected standards in speaking and listening.
- Standards in reading and writing are not high enough.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write in English lessons.
- The leadership of the subject manager is good.
- Teachers do not use assessment effectively, so that pupils do not understand what they need to do to improve, and lessons are not challenging enough for pupils.

Commentary

38. Although standards in the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average, and lower than at the last inspection, standards of work seen show that pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory now throughout the school, and standards are likely to be higher at the end of this academic year. This is because the subject is led well and senior managers have put into place a comprehensive action plan to raise standards. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the learning support assistants. Their progress is satisfactory because despite this good support, lessons are not planned well enough to meet their needs.
39. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are good. Pupils usually listen well to their teachers and to what other pupils say. This reflects their good attitudes and behaviour. Even where teaching lacks challenge pupils respond appropriately by listening quietly. The good standards of speaking are evident in the detailed explanations pupils give. Pupils are confident to express their ideas; for instance, in a poetry lesson one pupil in Year 4 thought about what it would be like to be a cat and said, "If your friend has left you, you might put your nose in the air and walk off." These skills and pupils' confidence help their learning in English and in other subjects. In a Year 3 science lesson, they recall key words like 'transparent' and 'absorbent' to explain the properties of materials.
40. Standards in reading and writing are below average and could be higher. The school uses several national strategies to improve the pupils' performance in reading. In Year 4, higher attaining pupils achieve broadly average skills as they read good quality fiction. However, pupils' progress is variable throughout the school, so that by the end of Year 5 a significant number do not read as well as they should for their age. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use the library to develop reading skills such as scanning books for information. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher's brisk and lively manner encouraged a very good response from the pupils and so helped their learning. They persevered well and tackled difficult material with enthusiasm,

achieving well when they completed a challenging reading task based on a scene from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

41. Standards in writing are not high enough because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in literacy lessons. This is sometimes because the pace of lessons is too slow and teachers spend too long at the beginning of lessons talking to pupils. Writing is of a higher quality in some history books. However, pupils' English work shows that the range of writing tasks they are given is too narrow to allow them to achieve the national literacy strategy objectives for writing each year. For example, most writing in the English books of Year 2 pupils is a numbered response to a task. This limits pupils' opportunities to develop skills in choosing appropriate language to set out their ideas, or to write a story with some consistency of the tense and genre of the writing. Pupils follow this pattern of writing, completing textbook exercises, throughout the school. Not enough use is made of ICT for pupils to draft and to edit their work, although there are some good examples of pupils using ICT to edit poetry. In Year 6, pupils make better progress in writing because the range of work is more likely to allow pupils to achieve the expected standards. In response to a review of writing skills by the local education authority adviser, the school introduced a 'Write Away' session in Years 5 and 6, when pupils write down ideas for ten minutes at the beginning of each day. The impact of this is variable because the way the session is used varies between classes.
42. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is good and contributes well to the improvement in standards seen during the inspection. The co-ordinator monitors planning and gives good feedback to teachers after observing lessons. Thorough analysis of the results of national and school tests means that she is aware of the inconsistent progress that pupils make through the school and is taking steps to address this. Good advice and support have been sought from the local education authority, which carried out a comprehensive review of literacy standards. The co-ordinator quickly implemented actions recommended by the review, so that standards are beginning to rise.
43. Nevertheless, teachers are not using the information they gain from this thorough analysis of data, and from other assessments they make, to plan lessons that will help pupils to make the best progress. Lessons are not tailored well enough to match the needs of all the pupils. For example, teachers do not routinely include detail in their plans about how pupils with special educational needs will achieve their individual targets each week. Higher attaining pupils sometimes work at tasks that are not sufficiently demanding. Teachers' marking is satisfactory, and often supports pupils but does not consistently provide them with information about how to improve their work. Discussion with pupils shows that they do not have a clear enough view of what they should do to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Literacy skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. There are good opportunities for pupils to write at length in history, but fewer examples in other subjects. The library is underused and this limits the contribution of other subjects to developing pupils' skills in reading. The link with the local public library encourages Year 6 pupils to read.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and support for staff.
- Lessons have a clear focus so that pupils have positive attitudes to their work and respond well to their teachers.

- The recommended oral and mental start to mathematics lessons is not brisk or rigorous enough, so that pupils' recall of number facts is too slow.
- Teachers do not make enough use of information gained from assessment to set pupils targets for improvement.

Commentary

45. Although standards were below average in the Year 6 and Year 2 national tests last year, mathematics standards seen during the inspection are broadly as expected and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. These are lower standards than those achieved at the time of the last inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Where teaching is very good, teachers set a brisk pace, which is sustained throughout the lesson. Teachers' thorough questioning challenges pupils' thinking, engages them well and encourages them to do their best. Subject leadership is good because the co-ordinator is focused on raising standards. Thorough analysis of test results and an extensive programme of lesson observations have identified the strengths and weaknesses in teaching mathematics. The co-ordinator uses the information gained to target areas for improvement effectively. The steps taken to improve standards are beginning to have a positive impact, so that in Year 6 and Year 2 standards are improving and are similar to those achieved at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. Teaching assistants are well trained and build good relationships with the pupils. They are effectively deployed and are well briefed, ensuring that they have a good understanding of what pupils are to do and learn. They encourage pupils and help to build their confidence, so that pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils in the school.
46. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very good. This reflects the good relationships between pupils and adults and the effective support provided. Pupils are well behaved in mathematics lessons and most of them work hard and concentrate well. Pupils make satisfactory progress because teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn each week and, for the most part, explain new work well. Teachers set tasks that help pupils to learn new skills and apply them in problem solving. They place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' number skills and most explain and demonstrate reliable methods of calculation effectively, so that pupils become more proficient. Although pupils learn multiplication tables methodically in school and for homework, their learning of these is not as secure as it might be. This is because teachers do not always use the time at the beginning of each lesson effectively enough to improve pupils' speed of recall of number facts. Consequently pupils do not always use the most reliable methods of calculation for the circumstances.
47. Work is, for the most part, satisfactorily matched to pupils' different abilities. This is because pupils' progress is tracked through each year so that teachers know the progress each pupil is making. However, teachers do not set individual targets based on pupils' previous achievements. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not provide sufficient guidance to show pupils what they need to do to improve. Consequently, tasks for more able pupils are not as challenging as they might be. Within lessons teachers give sound guidance and support to help pupils achieve the aim of each lesson.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the curriculum. There are good examples of pupils using mathematical skills in science and ICT, for example to record and present numerical information on graphs. In design and technology opportunities are missed; for instance pupils do not show measurements on design drawings.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve standards higher than those expected for their age.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by extra-curricular activities.
- Science is led and managed well.
- There is not a consistent system to track pupils' progress.
- There are not enough opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop their own methods of recording.

Commentary

49. The school has maintained above average standards of attainment since the last inspection, and pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school. Results in national tests for eleven year olds have been consistently above average compared with all schools over the last five years, and the work produced by current pupils in Year 6 shows that these standards are being kept up. Pupils have a good knowledge across all areas of science, and they understand well how to carry out an investigation to ensure that it is a fair test. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they are given in class.
50. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are also above average. This is an improvement on results of national assessments for the last two years, which have been about average. Pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding, for instance of living things. They understand terms such as 'prediction' and are already developing their understanding of the concept of a 'fair test', through an investigation to see if boys have bigger feet than girls.
51. Pupils achieve good standards because they are taught well. Their interest is aroused and they are kept fully involved in well-planned lessons, which have a good emphasis on investigative work. Teachers attach importance to the use of the right scientific words, for instance when pupils are investigating filtration in Year 6, which helps to develop pupils' use of English. Pupils make good use of ICT. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson they observed the changes in temperature when mixing water and plaster of Paris, by using a sensor linked to a computer. Pupils develop numeracy skills well as they record the results of their investigations, often using graphs. The school acknowledges the need for more opportunities to be given to higher attaining pupils to develop their own methods of recording, and is already taking steps to do this.
52. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject, and has produced an effective set of longer-term plans, which provide good guidance for other teachers. She has identified the need to introduce consistent systems to track pupils' progress through the school as an area of development in the current year. At present, there is no coherent system for doing this. Staff supplement lessons with other activities, such as a well-attended lunchtime science club for Year 6 pupils, and annual science weeks. These involve the whole school in a topic such as 'Space'. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development by giving pupils opportunities to work together and by teaching them about sex and relationships, and about the misuse of drugs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-designed lessons interest pupils and cover a wide range of skills.
- The co-ordinator provides good support for staff that is increasing their confidence.

Commentary

53. Standards achieved throughout the school are above average and have been maintained since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are good and the subject is led well. Pupils take part in interesting well-planned lessons that often begin in the classroom with direct teaching using a data projector so that pupils know what to do when they get to the ICT suite. Teachers plan lessons to cover a wide range of skills through interesting topics. For example, pupils in Year 6 publish a newspaper about four times a year. 'School Wise' includes contributions from all the pupils and makes good use of graphics and desktop publishing skills. In Year 5, pupils complete a data project entering data about themselves into a data bank and produce a good range of charts and graphs to show various features about the class. They also enjoy using a high quality graphics program to create patterns and pictures in a range of styles from mathematical patterns to more fluid designs. In Year 4, pupils edit their own poems well, choosing the font, size, colour of the text, and position on the page. They are completely engrossed in the range of ways they can present their poems, and learn to edit text efficiently. In Year 3 pupils work well together gathering and entering data for a class database, learning the basic skills of navigating through the program so that they can interrogate the data later on. Pupils in Year 2 effectively use a drawing program, and put captions with pictures, using simple word processing tools.
54. The good range of activities stem from a comprehensive longer-term plan that is supported well by the co-ordinator. He makes sure that teachers are confident in teaching each aspect of the scheme so that pupils make good progress. His confident leadership inspires teachers to improve their skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. This is satisfactory. The good range of activities in ICT lessons provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in other subjects. However, there are some missed opportunities in classrooms for ICT to be used effectively. Few pupils use ICT to edit writing in lessons, and there are some missed opportunities in science lessons to record data using the skills that pupils have learned in ICT lessons.

HUMANITIES

It is not possible to make overall judgements on provision in religious education, geography and history. Opportunities to observe religious education were limited and inspectors observed two lessons. In history, it was possible to see only two lessons in Year 1 and the introduction to a lesson in Year 5. In geography, inspectors observed two lessons, one in Year 2 and one in Year 6. In addition, inspectors analysed the work of a sample of current pupils, as well as examples of last year's work. In geography and history, the analysis was intended principally to see how well pupils develop their writing skills in these subjects.

Commentary

Religious education

56. In Year 2, the teacher communicated information about the Jewish festival of Succoth well and helped pupils understand the festival more clearly by making a link with their own experience of a harvest festival. In Year 5, the teacher provoked very thoughtful responses from pupils by the sensitive way she explored the experiences of Jewish people under the Nazi regime, at the same time developing well their understanding of what it means to be a Jew. Pupils' work is a satisfactory standard and shows they learn about the major world faiths, but they do not have the opportunity to visit places of worship except for Christian churches, nor do they have the opportunity to talk to visitors from other faiths.

History

57. Pupils in Year 5 put questions to a teacher dressed as Henry VIII. Teachers prepared very well for this session, ensuring that the answers given were accurate and motivated the pupils to find out more. In Year 1, pupils developed an understanding of the difference between past and present as they looked at teddy bears of different ages and identified different features, which gave a clue to their age, such as wear and tear. However, the pace of the lessons slowed as teachers passed the bears around, and the momentum of one lesson was interrupted by a playtime so that pupils lost concentration. The school enhances pupils' learning in history well. In all year groups there is a wide range of visits and visitors, including theatre groups. The visits include sites such as Bosworth Field, as well as the immediate locality of the village of Barrow. Pupils' written work shows there are good opportunities for them to develop their literacy skills, for instance when they write about the Victorians. Photographic evidence illustrates how the school provides regular opportunities for pupils to take part in 'Living History' projects; for example, pupils dress up in Tudor and Victorian costumes to re-enact life in the past. The quality of pupils' writing about these events demonstrates how valuable they are. Pupils' own evaluations of their work in Year 4 indicate they achieve well in history, learning a great deal through each topic.

Geography

58. In geography, pupils in Year 6 were working on a survey of jobs in the local area, which they planned to analyse later, using a computer database. This work links closely to previous work on the history of the area, when pupils examined local records from the nineteenth century to look at occupations in that period. In Year 2, pupils make comparisons between life in their own village with that on a Scottish island. Teachers use visits in the locality well, such as to Cropston reservoir, to enhance pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was possible to observe only one lesson in each of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. As a result, no judgement about the quality of provision in these subjects can be made.

Commentary

59. There are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in the performing arts, as well as good extra-curricular sports and dance activities. This is because the school plans many opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge of the performing arts. They regularly take part in music, drama and dance performances, and have opportunities to see professional performers. During the inspection a dance expert provided Morris-dancing tuition to an enthusiastic group of Year 6 boys, who thoroughly enjoyed finding the rhythm and clashing their sticks in perfect time together. The expert taught Year 4 dance lessons, so that staff improved their skills in teaching dance by observing her, and pupils developed their skills very well. They listened carefully to the teacher's instructions and were highly motivated by the enjoyable activities. These and other rich experiences enhance the curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.
60. The good range of extra-curricular activities and use of expert tuition enhances the development of pupils' skills in areas such as football, tag rugby, cricket and dance. The school plays a good range of competitive sports against other schools and pupils are particularly successful in athletics competitions. There are a good number of opportunities to learn to play instruments such as the clarinet.
61. Planning in all these subjects is satisfactory and covers all the areas required. Pupils of all abilities work very well together. In the Year 6 design and technology lesson and the Year 4 dance lesson the very good co-operation contributed effectively to pupils' learning. In design and

technology pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their designing skills. They use their research skills to gather more information about the aspect they are studying, for example, about the history of bread making. However, their descriptions of the processes involved in the making of the different products do not always contain sufficient details about each stage of making.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good attention to health education.
- The newly formed Key Stage 2 Circle Group enhances pupils' personal skills.
- Some lessons are over-directed so that pupils do not have the opportunity to organise their own work.

Commentary

62. A good policy promotes all aspects of personal, social and health education. The oldest pupils cover sex education in a science project on 'Myself'. Drugs education forms part of work that pupils undertake as they prepare to transfer to secondary school. Consequently, by the time that pupils leave the school they have developed some self-confidence in talking about these difficult issues.
63. A new discussion group called the Key Stage 2 Circle Group includes representatives from each class of seven to eleven year old pupils who discuss issues of concern to the whole school. The group actively seeks the views of all pupils and plans to improve playground equipment as its first major project. This is typical of the good provision for pupils to develop personal skills. Pupils already organise many charity projects. For instance, they organised and held sales on the playground during the inspection to raise money for charity. These activities provide pupils with good opportunities to develop mature attitudes.
64. In lessons, pupils are often over-directed. On the whole, they do not have enough opportunities to organise their own work. Consequently, they do not have enough opportunities to plan and write at length, which affects the standards they achieve in writing. There are few opportunities for pupils to think about the way they record mathematics and science work. Pupils in some year groups are over-dependent on teachers and do not work well independently, which sometimes slows the pace of lessons. There are few planned activities that require pupils to work together in pairs and groups, so that pupils' skills in negotiating and planning together are restricted.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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