

INSPECTION REPORT

HEARSALL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coventry

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103644

Headteacher: Mrs Ruth Winters

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson

Dates of inspection: 3-6 November 2003

Inspection number: 256378

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:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	264 plus 49 part-time in the nursery

School address:	Kingston Road Earlsdon Coventry
Postcode:	CV5 6LR

Telephone number:	024 7667 4625
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Janet Edwards

Date of previous inspection:	14 June 1999
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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hearsall Community Primary School is a large primary school situated in the Earlsdon area of Coventry. It serves an area with a range of social and economic backgrounds. Currently there are 264 pupils (128 boys and 136 girls) on roll, plus 49 children who attend the nursery part-time. When children enter the school their attainment varies widely, but overall it is similar to that expected for their age. A third of the pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Seven per cent of pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English language. The school has identified 13 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs, including two pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is broadly in line with the national average. Eighteen per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times of first admission or transfer to secondary school is similar to that found nationally.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25406	Mr Paul Nicholson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology
19693	Mrs Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
3751	Mrs Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography
23221	Mrs Lynda Parkinson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education
7420	Mrs Ann Simpson	Team inspector	Science Special educational needs English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides its pupils with a sound education and has considerable strengths. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with a significant number of good and better lessons. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory as they make sound progress and attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. The school is soundly led and managed. It provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do well in English.
- The sensitive and supportive leadership of the headteacher has created a positive ethos in which relationships throughout the school, including racial harmony, are very good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and are very well behaved in lessons.
- Standards in science by the end of Year 6 are below average.
- There is scope to improve planning in the Foundation Stage and in the mixed-age classes to ensure better progression in pupils' learning.
- The school successfully fosters pupils' positive attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Planning for the future is satisfactory but does not clearly identify whole-school priorities to focus the work of the school on raising standards.
- Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress in some of the non-core subjects are unsatisfactory.
- The school has good links with parents and the community and so parents have very positive views of the school.

The school has made **sound** progress since its last inspection. Improvements in standards have occurred in a number of subjects and in the spiritual dimension of the curriculum. The school has maintained its strengths in the care and personal development of pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are improving and are currently better than those recorded in the 2003 tests shown above.

- Achievement in the **Foundation Stage** is satisfactory and children reach the Early Learning Goals for their age in all areas of learning including communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Children do well in their personal, social and emotional development and many exceed the goals in this area of learning.
- In **Years 1 and 2**, pupils achieve well in English and standards by the age of seven are above average. In other subjects, including mathematics and science, their achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with national expectations.

- Overall achievement is satisfactory in **Years 3 to 6**. In English and mathematics standards by the age of eleven are average, but in science they are below average. In other subjects seen during the inspection, standards were in line with national expectations.
- The school's provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is **good**, with particular strengths in moral development. Consequently, pupils have positive attitudes towards school and their behaviour in lessons is very good. Their rate of attendance is similar to the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory with good features.

- Teaching is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4 is satisfactory and so pupils make steady progress in their learning. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good overall and progress accelerates. Teaching in English is good and in other subjects it is satisfactory. The school provides pupils with a **satisfactory** range of learning opportunities based on national guidelines. Teaching and learning could be improved if activities in subjects other than English and mathematics were more closely matched to the different ages and abilities particularly within the mixed-age classes. A good number of additional activities, visits and good links with the community enhance pupils' learning. Pupils are **well** cared for and there are **good** links between school and home, which support pupils' learning. There is **good** provision for pupils with special educational needs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is soundly led and managed.

- The headteacher provides **sound** leadership and is particularly successful in providing a caring school where pupils and staff feel valued. Together with the teachers, the headteacher manages the work of the school **satisfactorily**. The governance of the school is **sound**. Governors are supportive and carry out their statutory duties well and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Planning for the future is satisfactory but lacks a clear focus on whole-school priorities for improvement. The school **successfully** promotes the inclusion of all its pupils including those from a wide range of minority ethnic groups.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

- Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the work of the school. They are happy with the teaching and the progress their children make. Parents report that their children like school. They feel that the school is well run and that the care and support provided to their children is good. Parents feel the staff are approachable.
- Pupils express positive views of the school. They appreciate the help teachers give them and know who to seek advice from if they have a problem. Pupils feel they have to work hard and they enjoy new activities in lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise pupils' standards in science by the end of Year 6;
- improve teachers' planning to further raise the quality of teacher led and child initiated activities in the Foundation Stage and to better meet the needs of the differing ages and abilities within Years 1 to 6;
- have a clearer focus on whole-school priorities for school improvement when planning for the future;
- develop suitable assessment and recording procedures for the non-core subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils make **sound** progress and achievement for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 to 6 is **satisfactory**. Standards vary from year to year, reflecting the make up of different year groups and the wide range of ability, and are currently **in line** with national expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the Years 1 and 2, pupils do well in reading and writing and standards are above average.
- Standards in science by the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Pupils make better progress in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils' standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school.

Commentary

1. At the time of the last inspection (June 1999), children in nursery and reception and pupils in Years 1 to 6 made satisfactory progress overall, though standards achieved required some improvement. In particular, standards in information and communication technology and religious education throughout the school, and standards in science in the infants, were below expectations. Since that time standards in the core subjects as shown in the school's performance in national tests have varied from year to year because of two important factors. Firstly, the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and secondly the proportion who speak English as an additional language. While many children enter the school with levels of attainment in line with the expectations for their age, a significant minority in some year groups enters reception or joins the school later on with attainment below average. This has had a significant impact on the results achieved in national tests for some year groups at Year 2 and Year 6.
2. **Foundation Stage:** Children enter the nursery with a broad range of experiences and abilities and their overall attainment on entry is similar to that expected for this age. Children make steady progress and by the end of reception most reach the expected Early Learning Goals¹ in each of the six areas for learning, including communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Many children go on to exceed the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development. This represents satisfactory achievement overall and is the result of satisfactory teaching in the Foundation Stage.
3. **Key Stage 1:** Over recent years the school's results in National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics have varied from year to year. For example, standards in mathematics have ranged from below average to well above average. Standards in reading and writing, which have been consistently better, have ranged from average to well above average. In 2003, results in tests in reading, writing and mathematics were similar to the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that in the current Year 2, standards are above average in

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

English and average in mathematics. In English, pupils do well and their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are above average because of good teaching in literacy.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.8 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.8 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach the expected standards in science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In religious education, their standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. The pupils' achievement in these subjects and in mathematics is satisfactory. It was not possible during the inspection to make a judgement on standards in art and design because of the limited evidence available and the timetable of lessons.
5. **Key Stage 2:** The school's results over recent years in National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds have varied greatly from year to year. Over the last two years overall results have been well below average and have not compared favourably with the results of similar schools². In some year groups the high mobility of pupils joining and leaving the school during the key stage is a factor. The overall trend in recent years (2001-03) has been of pupils achieving average standards in English but being about a term behind in mathematics and science as progress in these subjects through the school has not been consistent. This shows that pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 was satisfactory in English but that there was underachievement in mathematics and science.
6. The school has successfully addressed some of this underachievement through good quality teaching in Years 5 and 6. Inspection evidence indicates that in the current Year 6 pupils are on target to reach average standards in English and in mathematics. Standards in science are improving but remain below average as a result of the provision in science in Years 1 and 2 being unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Children presently in Years 1 to 4 have benefited from improvements made and currently teaching is satisfactory throughout the school but there is further scope for improving the learning opportunities within the subject. Pupils do not have sufficient depth of knowledge of the topics they have covered and their investigative skills are underdeveloped. Currently, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is satisfactory but in science achievement is unsatisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (26.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.1 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.6 (26.5)	28.7 (28.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

² Similar schools: for these comparisons schools are grouped together by their average prior attainment at Key Stage 1.

7. By Year 6 pupils reach the expected standard in information and communication technology, geography and religious education, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards seen in history, design and technology, music and physical education are also in line with national expectations. Pupils' achievement in these non-core subjects is satisfactory. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in art and design.
8. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Their needs are clearly identified and planned for so that they can work at levels that are suitable. Support for these pupils in their learning is well organised. Teachers and teaching assistants give them well-focused attention, particularly those pupils with emotional and behavioural needs, so that they can join in with the rest of the class. Work in small groups, individual learning targets and suitable, practical materials are effective in helping these pupils to make similar progress to their classmates.
9. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those from Asian backgrounds who are the largest group within the school, make similar progress to other pupils. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are carefully diagnosed and support is appropriately allocated. Their achievement is well tracked and they make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and often good progress in Years 3 to 6. A small number of pupils who enter the school in Years 5 and 6 make satisfactory progress and achieve well from their low starting point. They leave the school with levels of attainment below their peers but well placed to make further progress in secondary school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **good** and they behave **very well**. Opportunities for personal development are **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Moral development is very good and pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Relationships, including racial harmony, are very good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their school and to work.
- The school now has a shared understanding of spirituality.
- The school has successfully improved punctuality.
- Reasons for absence are not always correctly identified in the registers.

Commentary

10. The school's strong moral code is underpinned by consistent and high expectations of good behaviour by adults working in the school. Pupils, parents and governors were involved with staff in drawing up the code of conduct, which is prominently displayed around the school. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards and understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils behave very well in lessons and in the playground. Some pupils, however, are rather boisterous in the corridors at break times. Pupils say that rare incidents of anti-social behaviour are dealt with swiftly.
11. There is a strong feeling of community amongst staff, pupils, governors and parents. Because of the school's success in supporting and respecting all its members, relationships are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play together well, whilst respecting each other's cultures and beliefs. Most teachers are skilled at developing the pupils' self-esteem. They create an atmosphere where pupils are willing to

contribute their ideas without fear of failure or ridicule and this makes a positive contribution to their achievements both in lessons and in out-of-school activities.

12. The pupils' positive attitudes towards school life and their developing confidence have a positive impact on their learning. In lessons, most pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy challenging tasks. They listen carefully, are keen to answer questions and work with sustained concentration. Their attention wanes if they have to listen to their teacher for long periods. Pupils enjoy participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities; for example, pupils arrive at 8 a.m. for orchestra rehearsal.
13. Spiritual development is good. The last inspection raised this aspect as an area for concern, but, through training and discussion, staff now have a much better understanding of how to make the most of opportunities for pupils to think about their life and its meaning. In assemblies, staff create an atmosphere for reflection on carefully chosen themes such as the vastness of the universe and the beauty of a rainbow. In lessons, and in particular through the personal, social and health education programme and religious education, pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings and learn to respect the feelings and beliefs of others.
14. **Attendance:** The attendance rate for 2001/02 was below the national average, but the level of attendance has improved in the past year to 94.7 per cent and is now in line with the national average. Attendance is marked correctly in the registers but different types of absences are not identified. The school has successfully discouraged lateness and now nearly all pupils arrive at school on time. Pupils are keen to win a class certificate for punctuality and encourage their parents to bring them to school on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.3	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

15. **Exclusions:** In the last year three pupils have been excluded for short periods of time because of disruptive behaviour.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	156	5	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	24	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0

Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	5	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides a sound quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** and at times good. The curriculum is **satisfactory** and the school takes **good** care of its pupils. There are **good** links with parents.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and, at times, good. Pupils make steady progress in their learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4. Progress is better in Years 5 to 6, where teaching is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in English lessons are good and so pupils do well in this subject.
- Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour.
- Very good relationships are evident between staff and pupils and set a firm foundation for learning.
- Teachers' planning in science over time has not been good enough to ensure satisfactory achievement.
- There is good inclusion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning.
- In many lessons there is a good use of questioning to challenge pupils.
- There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics but scope for improvement in some other subjects.
- Homework is used well to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2.5%)	4 (10%)	14 (35%)	21 (52.5%)	0 (0%)	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.

16. Parents are positive about the teaching and the progress their children make and pupils feel that their teachers help them to learn effectively. During the inspection half of the lessons seen were satisfactory and half were good, including examples of very good teaching and an outstanding lesson. Good teaching was seen across the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children in the nursery and in reception make steady progress towards their Early Learning Goals. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching in Years 3 and 4, where pupils consolidate their learning, is satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6, the rate of progress in pupils' learning accelerates because of good teaching overall and high expectations. Teaching in English is good throughout the school, though there is scope to improve the rate of progress in other subjects, particularly science, by more careful planning for the differences in age and ability within the mixed-age classes.
17. Teachers throughout the school provide regular opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and this has a positive impact on learning and the development of very good relationships.

Teachers ensure that the pupils' personal needs are well met and they successfully promote inclusion and equality of opportunity. Teachers value the contributions made by pupils, who feel that the staff listen to their ideas and give them help when they are stuck. The insistence on high standards of behaviour by all staff has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and so levels of attention are good. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants to help pupils with special educational needs and other targeted groups of pupils who have been identified as underachieving. Teaching assistants have a positive impact on learning, particularly when they play a full part in activities throughout the lesson.

18. Teachers make effective use of assessment data when planning activities in English and mathematics. The procedures for assessing children's progress in the Foundation Stage and pupils' progress in science, information and communication technology and religious education are satisfactory. In other subjects procedures are unsatisfactory, as they do not clearly show how groups of pupils progress as they move through the school in order to help teachers plan activities more effectively.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum throughout the school. There are **good** opportunities for enriching learning opportunities. Overall accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection.
- A good number and variety of clubs, visits and visitors enrich the whole school curriculum.
- The curriculum is particularly enriched by out of lesson activities in music.
- This is an inclusive school, committed to ensuring that individuals and groups have equality of access and opportunity. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Termly and half-termly planning for mixed-age groups in subjects other than English, mathematics and information and communication technology is not clear or sharp enough.
- In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is satisfactory overall but activities are not always planned to ensure children make the best possible progress.
- There is a good number of skilled support staff.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Overall, classroom resources are good.

Commentary

19. In the Foundation Stage a satisfactory curriculum is in place and activities and experiences are relevant for the age of the children. This supports the satisfactory progress children make. However, the way some activities are planned sets a ceiling to this progress. There are suitable opportunities for children to take part in activities planned and led by an adult but at times these are too long and children's interest wanes. There are suitable activities that children plan and initiate by themselves. Opportunities for interaction with children by adults during this type of activity is not sufficiently well planned to fully develop children's thinking skills or to provide sufficient opportunities for children to negotiate with each other and to make decisions.
20. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education that follows the locally agreed syllabus. Suitable guidelines are in place for all subjects and emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. This has contributed to higher achievement especially in literacy. The school has worked hard to improve its planning for the other individual subjects since the last report. The correct amount of time is

now given to each subject and, consequently, standards in information and communication technology, religious education and geography have improved and are now in line with expectations. In mixed-age classes, however, planning for the continuity and progression of skills in subjects other than English, mathematics and information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. It does not ensure pupils' steady progress in learning from year to year. This means that the standards of different groups of pupils fluctuate unnecessarily as they move through the school.

21. The school has a system of curriculum and leadership teams that satisfactorily monitor the core subjects of English, mathematics and science on a systematic basis. This has positively impacted on some areas of the curriculum such as early reading skills and is helping to raise standards. The monitoring of other subjects is less systematic and insufficient attention has been given to developing teachers' planning for the mixed-age classes.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well co-ordinated. Their achievement is carefully tracked and good use is made of outside sources of expertise and support. Good efforts are made to involve parents in their children's learning through regular reviews of progress and other meetings to give information and support. Parents are pleased with the good communication and support from the school.
23. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. The subject is effectively taught in weekly lessons and through activities such as pupil led assemblies. The good provision for activities outside of lessons enriches pupils' education. In history, there is virtually a visit for each unit of work to enhance pupils' learning in lessons. Visitors such as a 'Roman soldier', an archaeologist and people from the local community add interest to the subject. There are many musical activities out of lessons which many pupils and parents take advantage of. Musical activities help the very good relationships within and around the school. A number of staff join all ages of pupils in the school orchestra. Both parents and governors speak very highly of the annual musical production in which pupils sing and play instruments as well as designing and making scenery and props. Other activities include residential visits for Years 3 to 6, and out of school clubs, which make a good contribution to pupils' learning and social development.
24. Classroom resources in all subjects are good except for information and communication technology, where they are adequate. The pleasant library has adequate resources overall, though pupils correctly identify the need for more fiction books. The school has done its utmost to make an old, inconvenient building suitable for the needs of the pupils. The interior is bright, welcoming, stimulating, well-organised and cared for. There is no grassed area for sports but imaginative planning has created a suitable area for the youngest children as well as providing a safe climbing area for all ages.

Care, guidance and support

Care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. Support and guidance for pupils is **good**. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good procedures for health, safety and pupils' well being result in good levels of care.
- The vast majority of pupils feel that they can turn to adults for help.
- Staff know and support the pupils well.

Commentary

25. This is an inclusive school and members of the school community show good levels of care and concern for each other. The good role models provided by the headteacher and staff help to assure very good racial harmony within the school. The results of the pupils' questionnaire clearly show that nearly all pupils say that they can turn to adults working in the school if they need help. Teachers know the pupils very well. They track the progress of the pupils' personal development, celebrate their achievements and make valuable comments in the pupils' annual reports. Support staff, midday supervisors and office staff and outside agencies work alongside teachers to support pupils, raise their self-esteem and encourage independence. Pupils feel that their views are valued. Older pupils take responsibility for the themes of some assemblies and members of the newly formed school council are keen to make improvements to school life.
26. Staff ensure that pupils work in a healthy and secure environment and the school pays particular attention to risk assessment. The involvement of the pupils in a local risk assessment competition added a new dimension to them becoming more aware of keeping each other safe. Appropriate arrangements are in place for testing of electrical equipment and emergency evacuations. Child protection procedures are well known by adults working in the school and they know to report any concerns to the headteacher. There are satisfactory arrangements in place for pupils in public care. The arrangements for first aid are good. Good records are kept of accidents and parents are kept informed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good**. The school's links with the community are **good** and links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents with good information.
- Parents feel welcome and support the work of the school.
- Well established links with the community support pupils' learning.

Commentary

27. The school provides parents with good information about their children's progress. Pupils' annual reports are of a good quality and parents feel that they capture their children's individuality. The reports give parents good information about how their children are doing and how they can improve their work. There are good opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers. The school sends parents valuable information each term about what their children will be studying and also provides helpful suggestions about how parents can support their children's learning at home. Newsletters keep parents informed about future events but do not always celebrate the school's successes. The prospectus is informative and the governors' annual report gives parents clear information about the school year.
28. The school works hard to reach out to parents and makes them feel welcome in school. Parents value the way in which staff are approachable. The headteacher is often in the playground at the end of the school day and this provides parents with good opportunities to talk with her on an informal basis. The caretaker welcomes families at the start of the day and chivvies along any latecomers. The school values the opinions of parents and has conducted surveys, for example, on school uniform. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Attendance at consultation evenings and events such as concerts is high. The vast majority of parents ensure that their children complete their homework and listen to their children read. Some parents help in school and have completed training in the Reading Partnership scheme and they provide a valuable asset

in supporting pupils' learning. The active Friends of Hearsall group raises considerable funds for educational purposes as well as organising social events.

29. The school's good links with the community enrich the curriculum and have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and achievement. Visitors and the good range of visits, for example to a local mosque and a sculpture trail, bring topic work to life. Grandparents are also encouraged to share their musical and craft talents. Pupils' understanding of the world of work is enhanced by visits to businesses such as the local car factory. The school works closely with community groups to provide relevant courses for parents and carers, for example an English language course for Asian women. The orchestra and choir undertake prestigious public performances and the school takes part in local sporting events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **soundly** led and managed. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher and that provided by other key staff is **sound** with particular strengths in the personal development of pupils. The effectiveness of the management of the school is **sound** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has considerable commitment and drive, and is successful in providing a caring school where pupils and staff feel valued.
- Governors work well with the headteacher and each other to achieve the school's aims.
- The headteacher is held in high regard by parents and the school community.
- The school works hard to include pupils from different groups in all that it offers.
- The curriculum is satisfactorily managed through a team approach. Strengths and weaknesses are identified, but the quality of education is not consistently monitored in all subjects.
- In planning for the future, the school does not focus sufficiently clearly on how to raise standards.

Commentary

30. The headteacher is successful in maintaining the school's friendly and industrious atmosphere, which pupils and parents value greatly. In her dealing with adults and pupils alike, she provides a good role model of integrity and respect. A key to this is the way in which all school groups are valued and included in the life of the school. The leadership team of senior teachers brings considerable expertise to its role and provides important links between the Foundation, infant and junior phases.
31. An experienced and well-informed chairperson leads the governing body and governors have a sound grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors work well with the headteacher, who provides regular reports about the quality of education provided by the school. Governors act as a critical friend to the school and the chair and governor for special educational needs monitor provision in the classroom, which helps their understanding of the work of the school. There is a clear commitment to achieving the principles of best value in all aspects of the work of the school. The school manages its finances appropriately. Reserves are lower than in most schools.
32. Learning support staff are highly valued in the school, contributing to initiatives such as a reading partnership, and providing effective support in lessons. There are good arrangements for their ongoing development. New staff settle in well and speak of good support and guidance from colleagues. On a day-to-day basis the school runs smoothly and administrative staff undertake their duties effectively.
33. The school has suitable procedures for self-evaluation, which have resulted in steady progress in school improvement since the last inspection. It analyses data from test results to monitor the progress of different school groups and to identify areas of strengths and weakness. However, it is less clear about how to put things right with regard to improving standards and achievement, particularly in aspects of English and science. The school adequately monitors and evaluates classroom practice in these subjects, but not in other subjects of the curriculum.
34. The school's development plan has some shortcomings. It has too many targets and does not prioritise clearly enough. There is not a sharp enough focus on improving standards and

diagnosis from monitoring and evaluation does not provide the plan with specific information about what needs to be done.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	864,953	Balance from previous year	22,938
Total expenditure	886,482	Balance carried forward to the next	1,409
Expenditure per pupil	2,824		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and between children and adults are very good.
- There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all children are met.
- There is a happy and caring atmosphere where children are valued.
- Resources are good.
- The curriculum is satisfactorily based on the nationally recognised areas for learning but there is scope for improvement in the way activities are organised.
- There is good teamwork between teachers and support staff.

Commentary

35. There has been significant re-organisation very recently to ensure that the nursery and reception work more closely as a unit and as part of the whole school. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but the two classes are a distance apart within the building and this is a hindrance that the school works hard to overcome. The teachers and all the support staff, who are a strength of the provision, work as a team in the Foundation Stage. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and is underpinned by high expectations of behaviour and attention. Consequently, the majority of pupils are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development. All children achieve satisfactorily and there is good support for children who speak English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs.
36. The accommodation is satisfactory but the arrangement of the main reception classroom does not always help children in choosing for themselves what to do. Satisfactory planning is securely based on the six areas of learning. It includes suitable activities in which children make steady progress. Opportunities to improve the rate of progress are at times missed. Staff do not always make the most of using conversation and carefully framed questions to help develop children's understanding during activities the children have chosen. In some of these activities staff do not always recognise when it is timely to intervene and question the children in order to provide greater challenge. New formal systems for assessing children's progress and attainment are in place and these are satisfactory. Recording children's choice of activities and useful assessments of their progress during them to help plan future teaching were not observed during the inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are likely to exceed the standards expected of them in this area of learning.
- There are good links with parents to support children's development.
- There are missed opportunities to challenge and extend children's thinking.

Commentary

37. In both the nursery and reception classes, the children achieve well and make good progress because of good teaching in this area. Staff have high expectations in many aspects of this area of learning. The majority of children show interest in what they are doing and are well behaved even when not directly supervised. They are eager to learn and confident to try new activities. Adults manage the children well. Children are treated with courtesy and respect and this leads to trusting relationships and helps children to succeed. The established system of children moving around a number of organised activities does not sufficiently encourage children to make choices and develop independence. Children in the nursery learn to take turns through playing board games but these last too long sometimes and they lose interest. Good links are made with parents first thing in the morning when they accompany their children into class and stay with them either talking to staff or working with the children.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Strengths and weaknesses

- Children listen well and have a good understanding of books.
- Many teacher led activities are too long.

Commentary

38. Children's achievement in this area is sound and so by the end of reception they form their letters clearly and accurately. A recently introduced scheme to help children recognise letters and their sounds is proving effective and supports their steady progress. Teaching is satisfactory and the aims of the very regular sessions when teachers focus on early reading and writing skills are very clear and so children make satisfactory progress in these aspects. However, these sessions are too long and learning, especially for children of lower ability, becomes slow. There are insufficient opportunities for children to use and develop their reading and writing skills informally during other activities. During the time given to reading, adults spend too much time changing books rather than listening to individuals to ensure good progress.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher led activities ensure steady progress.
- Children find it difficult to maintain their progress when teacher led activities are too long.

Commentary

39. Teaching is satisfactory and staff provide a suitable range of activities to promote mathematical learning and understanding. This is particularly so with lower ability children and children with special educational needs. Children's achievement is satisfactory. The regular sessions of teacher led activities are well thought out but are too long for so early in the year. This means children's interest wanes and progress slows by the end of the activity. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop and use their mathematical skills in everyday practical situations or as part of other activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote this area of learning.
- There is a lack of planning to extend outdoor activities.

Commentary

40. Achievement is satisfactory. In the nursery, children learn good routines of hygiene and are constantly reminded of these. In reception, activities such as watching a demonstration of how a sari is worn and a demonstration of hand painting help the children to learn about the differing cultures into which they will grow up. Teaching is satisfactory and there are some imaginative ideas to interest the reception children such as a time line of the school year and a washing line of scent bags for them to smell when working on the senses. Local visits are used well to stimulate children's interest in the world and follow up lessons provide good reinforcement of learning. In outdoor activities in school children use resources satisfactorily, such as bikes. Planning does not extend these activities by, for example, using the resources available to set up daily situations such as tracks or zebra crossings and traffic lights.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made very good attempts to develop the outside provision for both nursery and the reception classes.
- Outdoor activities cover all the areas of learning.
- Access to the outdoor play areas is on a rota basis and does not allow for children to choose whether they wish to go outside, remain outside or come in.
- When the daily sessions take place there is a lack of clear planning as to what children should be learning and limited monitoring of which activities children choose.

Commentary

41. Teaching is sound. Children develop their manipulative skills by handling dough, scissors and brushes in both classes and achievement is satisfactory. There is a good supply of construction equipment but there is a lack of opportunities for children to plan and negotiate with each other when building with these. Some activities have a strong focus and the children learn effectively from these. Other activities lack focus and are really a session for children to race around or to choose without any clear idea what learning they are to gain.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for children to use their imaginations.
- Some activities lack challenge because children have little scope to make important decisions.

Commentary

42. Teaching is sound and children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of this area of learning. Children in both the nursery and reception are given a good number of opportunities to use their imaginations and to explore colour, texture, shape and sounds. There is insufficient monitoring of this achievement in order to guide assessment and planning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall provision in English is **good**, with standards rising across the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good throughout the school.
- Setting by ability in Years 3 to 6 is working well and raising standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Good quality work with letters and their sounds (phonics) helps pupils in Years 1 and 2 to achieve well in spelling and writing.
- Guided reading³ is managed effectively outside the literacy hour and is supporting progress in reading.
- There is scope to improve achievement in some classes in Years 3 to 6, where work is not always planned clearly enough for different levels of ability.

Commentary

43. By Year 2 and Year 6, attainment in the national tests in English over time has varied between below average to well above average. Results reflect the make up of particular year groups and the wide range of ability found in some classes. In the latest English tests (2003), standards were average by Year 2 and below average by Year 6. The inspection found that standards have improved since last year. By Year 2, attainment is above average in reading and writing and by Year 6, average. Throughout the school pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Standards have improved at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection, when reading was judged average and writing well below average.
44. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because recent initiatives with teaching letters and their sounds enable pupils to read, write and spell in a confident and independent way. Teachers plan activities in lessons that carefully meet the pupils' needs and so they make good headway with their learning. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory overall. However, progress in some year groups is better than in others. For instance, in Year 5 and Year 6, progress is accelerated and achievement is good. This is because of good teaching and the successful management of 'setting' by ability for literacy lessons. In the past, in other year groups, work was often planned at a similar level for all ability groups and this set a ceiling to the progress pupils could make.
45. The school works hard to include all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from regular support in lessons and achieve well. There are no pupils at the early stage of learning English as an additional language although a small number receive additional 'targeted' support in lessons and make good progress. Focused support for 'nearly average'

³ Guided reading is a classroom activity in which pupils are taught in groups according to reading ability. The teacher, or another adult, works with each group on a text carefully selected to offer an appropriate level of challenge to the group.

attaining readers and writers is successful and helps pupils improve and work independently in class. Boys and girls work in a similar range of ability groups, with the exception of the lower Year 6 set in literacy, which is all boys. The school looks to motivate boys' interest and learning through its choice and range of reading resources and topics of study.

46. Pupils' good standards in speaking and listening add to the quality and pace of learning. In all year groups, pupils co-operate well and their good range of vocabulary supports their development in reading and writing. There is a clear focus in 'guided reading' time and regular support from adult 'reading partners', who provide specific help when needed. Pupils show that they enjoy reading. By Year 2, reading is accurate and fluent and, by Year 6, the vast majority of readers read in a mature, expressive way.
47. Pupils undertake a range of purposeful writing experiences, with work on structuring stories clearly planned. Good standards in spelling in Year 1 and Year 2 enable pupils to write and spell words confidently by themselves. 'Setting' by ability across Year 5 and Year 6 is paying dividends: more able writers are expected to achieve well in national tests, while pupils with difficulties with their writing work in smaller groups and benefit from extra adult support. Evidence from past work suggests that pupils have less opportunity to draft and edit longer pieces of original work.
48. Teaching in English is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage lessons well. In two very good lessons seen during the inspection, expectations of behaviour and work were high and this promoted good standards. In other lessons, learning is satisfactory because the pace and challenge, particularly in writing, is less than expected.
49. Management of the subject by a team of teachers is sound with many good features. A number of initiatives, such as the 'reading partnership', have helped raise standards in certain aspects of English. Teaching and learning are monitored and areas of strengths and weaknesses identified. The literacy team is less clear why standards have dipped by Year 6, other than the effect of differing intakes on test results. Resources are in the main good but the range of non-fiction books and the quantity of fiction books for older readers is limited.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. There are some effective links between English and other subjects, such as writing and researching about World War II in history. Work in other lessons benefits from pupils' competent reading and research skills. Satisfactory use is made of computers to support learning in English and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is good.
- There is good support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs.
- Insufficient use is made of resources to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

51. Standards at the time of the last inspection were average at both Year 2 and Year 6. Results of national test have varied considerably since that time because of differences in attainment within the year groups. Currently, standards at Year 2 are average and pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of place value to 100 and use suitable strategies to solve number problems involving money. This represents satisfactory achievement and is the result of steady progress and sound teaching in Years 1 and 2.
52. After a period of underachievement standards at Year 6 have improved and are now average. Slower progress in Years 3 and 4 is accelerated in Years 5 and 6 and by Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They use a suitable range of methods of calculation satisfactorily to solve number problems and use calculators to check the accuracy of their work. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. In the best lessons seen during the inspection, there was a good pace to learning and activities were well suited to the needs of all groups of pupils. The small steps required to achieve the lessons' aims were clearly identified and followed.
53. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics by identifying areas of the curriculum for development, including shape and space, and those underachieving pupils who require additional support. Effective use is made of skilled teaching assistants to support pupils in lessons. All teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily to provide full coverage of the curriculum. They follow the recommended lesson structure and provide a suitable balance between teaching and individual practice. The short mental starter at the beginning of lessons is at least satisfactory and so pupils' mental calculation skills are appropriate for their age. In the main activities teachers give clear explanations and make good use of questions to check pupils' understanding. In several of the lessons seen, insufficient use was made of mathematical resources to support pupils' learning and this slowed progress. The use of ability sets in Years 3 to 6 goes some way to ensuring work is at a suitable level. Activities within a lesson, however, are not always sufficiently modified to suit the wide range of ability within a set.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. Measurements are made in science and design and technology, and graphs used to display information. Information and communication technology is occasionally used in mathematics lessons to reinforce work in numeracy. However, computers are not used as effectively as they could be to support pupils' learning and opportunities in lessons are often missed and tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** in Years 1 and 2 and **unsatisfactory** in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is inconsistent progress in Years 3 to 6 leading to standards that are below average at the end of the key stage.
- The weaknesses in the curriculum seen at the last inspection have been addressed and planning is now satisfactory.
- Planning in the mixed age classes does not take sufficient account of the needs of the different year groups and lacks a focus on attainment.

- There is a consistent approach to assessment, which is leading to improvement in standards.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject.

Commentary

- Standards by the age of 7 have improved since the previous inspection when one of the key issues related to raising standards for this age group. They are now average overall with a good proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels. An improved approach to planning is now soundly based on national guidelines and teachers plan a coherent programme by which pupils will make progress. Teacher's knowledge of the subject has been strengthened through staff training. In the small number of lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and some was good.
- Standards by the age of 11 have fluctuated from well above average to well below average over the last few years and in the most recent national tests were well below average. Only one lesson was seen in Years 3 to 6 and the teaching was satisfactory, but a scrutiny of the pupils' work shows that there is uneven progress through Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not sufficiently made up earlier lost ground noted in Years 1 and 2 at the last inspection and so their standards are below average. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are benefiting from improvements brought about since the last inspection. However, the planning for mixed age classes in science is not always rigorous enough. Pupils' ability to retain and build on the knowledge they acquire is limited by the lack of attention given to the specific skills needed for the different year groups in many classes. Consequently, pupils do not have the depth of knowledge and understanding expected by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils respond with enthusiasm to the opportunities given to them to explore scientific ideas through practical investigation. They generally work in a responsible manner, using resources with care. They acquire a satisfactory knowledge of scientific vocabulary and methodology. They record their results and conclusions methodically. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not developed their investigative skills through planning and organising their own experiments. Younger pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what is required to make a 'fair test' because of a clearer focus on experimental work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and assistants who help them to keep up with the work of the class. Pupils who are still learning English as an additional language are supported by the use of visual and practical material.
- There is a satisfactory emphasis on the development of literacy skills and pupils draw on their skills in numeracy in some aspects of science, such as recording their results and observations in graphs and tables. There are few opportunities to use information and communication technology as a resource for scientific learning.
- Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. A team approach is effective in ensuring commitment and enthusiasm as well as promoting new ideas. Monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work is now soundly organised by the senior team and is leading to improvement, especially in the infants. Monitoring of planning is not yet good enough to ensure that there is effective progress through the juniors. Pupils' attainment is efficiently tracked and analysed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's provision for ICT is much improved since the last inspection and standards are now in line with expectations.
- Teachers and pupils make good use of the ICT suite but opportunities to use the classroom computers are often missed.

Commentary

60. The school has successfully improved the provision for the subject since the last inspection when teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. The curriculum and resources are now satisfactory following the introduction of national guidelines and an ICT suite. Teachers' confidence and expectations have improved following training so that teaching and learning are now satisfactory. Consequently, standards have improved and are no longer below expectations.
61. Evidence from pupils' previous work, discussions with pupils and staff and observations in three lessons, two in Year 2 and one in Years 5 and 6, show that standards throughout the school are in line with national expectations. This represents a satisfactory level of achievement. Pupils make satisfactory progress through their weekly visits to the ICT room, where they develop their computer skills. Pupils in Year 2 satisfactorily use computers to type and print text, produce pictograms to show simple data and to draw pictures of their classmates. By Year 6, pupils use a suitable range of skills to produce multimedia slides that combine text, graphics and sound. Teachers make good use of the adequate resources available in the ICT suite to teach computer skills to groups of pupils. A new and enthusiastic co-ordinator provides sound leadership for the subjects. She has correctly identified areas for improvement, including enhancing resources and making greater use of ICT to support pupils learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Overall, satisfactory use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects but opportunities to make better use of the resources are missed. Some classes make satisfactory use of the ICT room to support learning in literacy, for example, through the use of story writing programs. Computers in the classrooms are used to support learning in other lessons such as number games in mathematics and simulations in history. However, insufficient use is made of monitoring equipment and data handling programs in science.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved considerably since the previous inspection, when raising standards was a key issue in the report.
- Work is planned at one level for all class groups.
- The quality of learning in discussions is not always reflected in written work.
- Teaching and learning is not monitored in the classroom.

Commentary

63. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school, progress is satisfactory and for all school groups, including pupils with special educational needs, achievement is sound. The provision has improved since the last inspection. Consequently pupils' progress is no longer unsatisfactory. This is because teachers' knowledge and understanding has improved and the curriculum is better balanced with sufficient time for lessons. Planning now satisfactorily meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus though there is scope for further development.
64. Pupils are interested in learning about other faiths and beliefs. They clearly recall the stories, such as that of the Passover and, at a deeper level, discuss the symbolism of the 'bitter herbs' and 'salt water'. They create powerful images in art lessons, for example, depicting the plagues cast on Egypt. As well as learning about Christianity, there is a clear focus on other faiths and beliefs. For example, pupils consider the importance of prayer and look at how Muslims prepare for this.
65. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to contribute in lessons and draw from their own life experiences. The quality of learning in discussions is not always reflected in pupils' written work. Activities are planned at one level in both single and mixed-age classes and do not always sufficiently challenge older or more able pupils. There were missed opportunities in a lesson seen for pupils to explore ideas by themselves and to handle resources.
66. The subject is managed satisfactorily through a 'team' approach. As yet there is no monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons in order to have a clear picture of learning across the school.

Geography

It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the provision as no lessons were observed in geography.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection when pupils' progress was unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' planning does not take sufficient note of the different ages and abilities of the pupils, especially within the mixed-age classes.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning.

Commentary

67. Evidence from an analysis of pupils' previous work and discussions with staff and pupils show that standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations in geography. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Discussions with pupils in the infant classes show a sound knowledge of place, gained through the study of their own local environment and island habitats. Skills, including map reading, are developed progressively and by Years 5 and 6 pupils understand physical features, such as the development of a river.
68. A curriculum team manages the subject satisfactorily. Whilst planning and pupils' books are monitored, there is no monitoring in the classroom to ensure consistent quality and coverage. The school has adopted national guidelines that provide a satisfactory curriculum overall, but they have not been sufficiently adapted so that teachers can plan work at different levels to meet the differing needs of their pupils, particularly in the mixed-age classes.

History

Provision in history is **sound**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Visits and visitors enhance learning.
 - Pupils say history is one of their favourite lessons.
 - Older pupils enjoy working on ‘history projects’ at home.
 - Work is not sufficiently well planned to meet the different age and ability levels in each class.
 - Teaching and learning is not monitored.
 - Assessment is at an early stage of development and does not clearly record pupils’ progress.
69. Only a limited number of lessons were observed and so discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their past work have helped to form judgements. Pupils reach the national expectations in history by Year 2 and Year 6. Their achievement is sound throughout the school. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection.
70. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a growing understanding of the passing of time and begin to ask questions about ‘long ago’. Good skills in speaking and writing enable pupils to communicate their findings clearly. In junior classes, visits and visitors from a Roman fort have stimulated learning. Pupils are keen to research information and classify primary and secondary resources. They begin to sift fact from fiction about the past. Older pupils in Year 5 and 6 enjoy working on history topics linked with personal study at home and a good number use the Internet to access in-depth information. Pupils have a good knowledge of World War II and of specific periods of time in British history.
71. Teaching is sound in history. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources and visits to places of historical interest successfully to highlight learning. Teachers use a range of strategies to encourage research and discussions. Working in pairs and sequencing events on ‘white boards’ works well in Year 1, whilst pupils in Year 3 enjoy being archaeologists and handling artefacts. History lessons are not planned to meet the different levels of ability found in classes and this sets a ceiling to the progress pupils can make.
72. The subject is managed satisfactorily through a ‘team’ approach. Teaching and learning are not monitored in the classroom in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. Assessment procedures need further development in order to track progress and help teachers in their planning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was not possible during the inspection to make judgements on provision in all aspects of these subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic to learn about design and technology.
- Music is an important part of the school’s enrichment of the curriculum.
- Pupils are much less knowledgeable about art.
- Planning lacks refinement for mixed year groups.

- Assessment is at an early stage of development and does not clearly record pupils' progress.

Commentary

73. No lessons were observed in art and design or in design and technology. In addition to observing lessons in physical education and music, inspectors spoke to pupils about what they had learned in art and design and design and technology and analysed samples of work and planning in all four subjects. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall but does not always identify the difference in skills to be taught to different year groups in mixed ability classes in all four subjects to ensure consistent and constant progress. The curriculum teams satisfactorily manage the subjects but they do not always give them sufficient focus to ensure the raising of standards.
74. It is evident from teachers' planning and the work in sketchbooks and on display that work in **art and design** is varied and interesting. Good attention is paid to the design aspect. Discussion with pupils, however, showed a lack of confidence and knowledge. They knew little about famous artists and were not able to demonstrate much knowledge about materials or techniques. Art is used very well in supporting other subjects but there appeared to be little evidence that art was taught for its own sake.
75. In **design and technology**, standards are in line with those expected for pupils by the time they are eleven years old and achievement is satisfactory. There is a lot of work done in this subject. There were some good examples of very interesting, lively, imaginative work. The range of work over Years 1 to 6 included toys and books with moving parts, fairground carousels, in addition to models from topics linked to other subjects, such as food topics in science and old buildings in history. All work is planned, made and evaluated by pupils. Pupils' designs of flying machines were detailed and well labelled. In discussion with pupils it is obvious how much they enjoy this subject. They say things such as, 'technology is never boring' and 'working but still fun'. They work in groups or pairs and, in their opinions, they 'help each other and you get to know your friends really well'. They are knowledgeable about prototypes and the various stages they must go through to design and make a model.
76. In **music**, singing is a strength of the school. A number of staff have expertise in music and this is beneficial to the whole school interest in music. A few pupils, who are identified as gifted and talented, go to a centre to compose music using information technology. The results sound very good. Lessons are supplemented by many other opportunities for making and playing music. There are opportunities to learn to play a wide variety of instruments, play in the school orchestra, sing in the school choir and to take part in productions. The school choir takes part annually in a very large production at a local university. The school makes good use of a visiting grandfather to teach the orchestra. There is a sense of pride and joy in music in the school as a whole.
77. The small number of lessons seen during the inspection indicates that standards in **physical education** are in line with national expectations. The school does not have a grassed area but nevertheless ensures that pupils have access to all strands of the subject. Teachers make good use of a visiting specialist in basketball. Pupils in Year 4 benefit from weekly sessions at the swimming baths and the majority of pupils learn to swim differing distances from five metres to 400 metres. There are a variety of sporting activities outside of lessons. Overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily because they work with enthusiasm in all lessons. Inspection evidence suggests there is good attention to safety and that pupils gain a sense of independence and responsibility.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

- The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and overall is good.
 - Citizenship is taught as an integral part of personal, social and health education and there are good references to the need for rules, respect, politeness and definitions of war, peace and ally.
78. Pupils achieve well in their personal, social and health education. They develop confidence, responsibility and make the most of their abilities. They develop very good relationships with adults in school and their friends and respect the differences between people. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have learnt the importance of standing by their convictions and that, 'it does not matter how old or young, big or small you are, you just have to believe in yourself'. In a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, the pupils discussed the meaning of friendship. The teacher very effectively illustrated the true meaning of friendship by using the pupils' own behaviour in a demonstration and discussion about sharing ideas. The teacher's very good open questions made pupils think and one girl said it was important that friends have 'faith and hope' in you. She was able to explain the meaning of this beautifully when she talked about friends.
79. The programme of activities the pupils follow is extremely effective in promoting confidence and a sense of responsibility, giving them a very good sense of achievement and self-esteem, encouraging them to work collaboratively and to develop a good spirit towards independent research.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent assembly for Years 5 and 6 pupils led and taken by three of the pupils

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given responsibility for planning, organising and leading one year-group assembly per week. This is a very imaginative and well thought out provision. Teachers give pupils definite criteria to abide by, such as choose a subject that will be of interest to the other pupils and provide enough information to last 15 minutes. The list of subjects they choose are very varied from Beatrix Potter to the Islam and Hindu religions, from aeroplanes to the one observed on fashion through the ages. For a month prior to the assembly, the girls had met in their own time to plan and research together. The other pupils attending the assembly were totally absorbed and listened with great attention. The girls had collected and used different music, illustrations, posters and artefacts from years gone by throughout their talk. They organised the display and technical equipment needed. The girls responded well to the questions asked at the end by pupils and staff. The sensitive prayer they had composed centred on the importance of different cultures and their differing ways of dress 'because fashion allows us to be seen as individuals and celebrate that we are all different'.

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	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).

