

INSPECTION REPORT

HERBERT STRUTT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belper, Derbyshire

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112789

Head teacher: Mr John Murday

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty

Dates of inspection: 28th – 30th June 2004

Inspection number: 256399

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	203
School address:	Derby Road Belper Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE56 1UU
Telephone number:	01773 822771
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Rachel Pygott
Date of previous inspection:	11 th –12 th June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average size primary school with 203 pupils on roll and an even mix of boys and girls. There is no Nursery class; children start in the Reception class at the beginning of the autumn and spring terms during the year in which they reach five years of age. Their attainment on entry is well below that expected nationally. The area the school serves is one of social and economic disadvantage and many of the pupils live under very difficult circumstances. All but two are from white English-speaking families; there are none with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils assessed as having special educational needs, mostly moderate and severe learning difficulties, equals broadly the percentage found in most other schools. The school is involved with several national initiatives including the Advanced Skills Teaching project and the Primary Consultant Leader Strategy in Primary Schools. In 2003, it received a Basic Skills Quality Mark and a School Achievement Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22261	Mrs Barbara E Doughty	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs
14141	Mr Ernest Marshall	Lay inspector	
32168	Mrs Ann Keen	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
32596	Mrs Gillian Phillips	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school, which gives good value for money. Pupils achieve well to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, and science by the time they leave the school. This is because teaching is good, having improved significantly over the last four years due to effective leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good, with some very good learning in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6, where the teaching is particularly good.
- Pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science, but writing skills are not taught through or used well enough to support work in other subjects. Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally by the age of eleven.
- Pupils do well in religious education and information and communication technology (ICT) to reach nationally expected standards; however, classroom computers are not used well enough.
- Teaching throughout the school is good, but there are times when the style teachers adopt does not suit the way some of the pupils learn.
- There is a firm upward trend of improvement because of good subject leadership and the very effective leadership of the head teacher.
- Pupils enjoy the work and because of this have good attitudes to learning.

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected two years ago. Standards have risen faster than the national trend. The weaknesses in ICT have been successfully dealt with and the uneven progress from Years 1 to 6 has been eliminated.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 table indicates satisfactory achievement in English and mathematics, but it does not contain the latest 2004 test data, which, along with the work seen, shows a substantial increase in the number of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels, because major developments in teaching and the curriculum are at last starting to bite. Current standards in Year 3 to 5 indicate these high standards are likely to be maintained next year and beyond. Achievement is **good**. Although in personal, social, emotional, mathematics and communication, language and literacy development most children do not reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year, they achieve well in their first year in school. This good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, pupils usually reach average standards reading, writing and mathematics. However, the current Year 2 group is a particularly low attaining cohort and this year's test results were lower than usual. Pupils continue to do well in Years 3 to 6, with most of the current Year 6 pupils working at the expected level, and a significant number attaining the higher level in English, mathematics and science. Standards in speaking are particularly high; those in ICT and religious education are as expected by the age of eleven, and pupils' achievements in relation to their abilities are good. However, pupils are not taught or expected to use the classroom computers or the skills they have learnt in writing lessons to support their work in other subjects. Standards in art and design are good.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good** across all subjects and for all groups of pupils including the socially and emotionally vulnerable pupils, those who are gifted and talented, and those with special educational needs. This is because teachers use assessment information well to tailor work to suit the different pupils, successfully enhancing and speeding up their learning; the level of challenge is realistic and pupils work productively. Teaching is particularly effective in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6, where pupils make the most progress. This is because, in these classes, the teachers always make sure that the learning opportunities involve practical activities, interspersed with explanations and instructions. This holds pupils' concentration well and enthuses them to work hard. Whilst this is mostly the case in other years, there are times when pupils have to sit through lengthy introductions, which do not suit the learning style of some of the pupils. Assessment is good. Pupils have a clear idea of what level they are working at because they are becoming increasingly involved in helping to assess their own work. Learning opportunities are enriched well by visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils are cared for well and the school has established a good partnership with parents and links with other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both **good**; governance is effective. The governing body meets its statutory duties well. The leadership of the head teacher is very good. His high aspirations have motivated staff, governors and pupils so that they all pull in the same direction in their relentless pursuit of high standards. His vision is clear and he knows what to do to bring about improvements. Subject leaders know the school well and, with good support and guidance from the head teacher, have successfully brought about improvements to teaching, standards, and the rate of progress pupils make as they move through the school. Governors have a clear idea of what is and is not working well enough and help shape the future of the school through their involvement in development planning and monitoring the school's effectiveness.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. Parents appreciate the improvements that have come about since the school was in special measures four years ago. They feel comfortable approaching staff and say that their children are happy and secure learners. Pupils like the fact that there is always someone to whom they can go if they are worried and they appreciate the way teachers make learning fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Make sure that teachers tailor the way they teach to suit the way these pupils learn best.
- Ensure that writing skills are taught through, and used to support work in, other subjects.
- Use the classroom computers to continue work started in the computer suite and to help with work in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils make good progress and achieve well from starting in the Reception Year to leaving at the end of Year 6, with many of them reaching above average standards by the time they transfer to secondary school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well at this school to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science, and art and design, attain the nationally expected level in ICT, and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.
- Standards are rising at a faster rate than nationally.
- All pupils do as well as each other including the gifted and talented, those who are vulnerable, and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils use subject vocabulary well when talking about their work and offer clear explanations of what they are doing, but their good writing skills are not reflected in other subjects.
- Pupils make insufficient use of the computer skills learnt in the computer suite to support work in the classroom.

Commentary

1. The results shown in the tables below are for 2002 and 2003 because these are the only ones that can be validated against the national picture. They show a firm upward trend, with standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 rising over time faster than standards nationally. Although this year, 2004, the Year 2 pupils did not do as well as usual in the national tests, this reflected a high incidence of special educational needs in the group. However, the 2003 Year 2 test results were in line with the national average and the work the current Year 1 are doing shows that similar standards to these are likely to be achieved in 2005.
2. Although the school has not yet received the final English test results, this year the Year 6 pupils did exceptionally well in the mathematics and science tests and, from what they achieve in lessons, are likely to do so in English. Taking the predicted English results and the actual mathematics and science results altogether, the average percentage of pupils reaching the expected level is likely to rise by 20 per cent. This is because a high number of pupils are working at above the nationally expected level, indicating how well the needs of the gifted and talented are met. The work Year 5 pupils are doing show that these high standards are likely to be maintained next year. This is because effective leadership and management are bringing about improved teaching and a more exciting curriculum. Standards in art and design are good and those in ICT are in line with what is expected nationally at the age of seven and eleven; standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils do well in relation to their abilities in all three subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.5 (15.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (25.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.2 (25.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.6 (28.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. At the start of the Reception Year, the attainment of most of the children is well below the level expected for their age. Nevertheless, they do well in all areas of learning and the majority of them reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception Year in knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. They achieve well but most children do not attain the early learning goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class in personal, social, emotional, and mathematical development and communication, language and literacy. Pupils do equally as well from Years 1 to 6 to reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above them by the end of Year 6.
4. Pupils are particularly good speakers who articulate their thoughts well and use subject language accurately to explain precisely what they mean. Their competency in reading and mathematics is sufficient to enable them to make good progress in other subjects. However, they do not use their good writing skills well enough across the curriculum. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve when writing in other subjects are too low. The demands they make on pupils in literacy lessons to choose their words carefully, spell accurately and use grammar correctly are not equalled in other subjects, such as history and geography. Consequently, pupils' reports and explanations in these subjects lack clarity and reduce standards to broadly average. Similarly, pupils learn good skills in ICT lessons in the computer suite and put them to good use to, for example, research Greek theatre for their history topic and compile databases for their work in science. However, their time in the suite is limited and not enough use is then made of the computers in the classrooms for pupils to continue their studies. These computers are often switched off and those that are on are often not used, limiting the support they give to learning in other subjects.
5. There are a high number of vulnerable pupils at this school who find learning difficult. These pupils do well and even in the lower attaining Year 2 this year, most of those with special educational needs reached only one level below that expected nationally; indicating good progress for these particular pupils. The school's success in providing for the least able pupils is in part due to effective support from the learning support assistants but, equally, because the work they are given to do matches their assessed needs and builds systematically on what they already know.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning, reflected in their good attendance and prompt arrival at school and to lessons; behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like school and show good interest in the range of learning opportunities provided.
- Many pupils start school with low self-esteem and lacking confidence, but the school successfully deals with this and most pupils leave as secure and confident youngsters.

- Behaviour is satisfactory overall. The school sets high expectation for pupils' good behaviour and works hard to achieve them, but occasionally when the teaching style does not suit the pupils' learning style a few of them lose concentration.

Commentary

6. Most pupils like school; this is reflected in the good attendance figures below. They find the work interesting and relevant and because of this, can see the point of working hard in order to do well, which in turn has a very positive effect on standards.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.2
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.

7. As they move through the school, pupils grow in confidence and maturity because of the increased opportunities for them to become independent learners. They trust their teachers and supporters, saying they find them “kind and helpful” and “good fun”; also, “they respect you”. This is because teachers and support assistants show them consideration, listen to what they have to say, and act on their comments and suggestions. For example, when pupils suggest changes to school routines through their school council, all of their suggestions are considered and the outcomes discussed with and explained to them.
8. Many of the pupils lack self-esteem when they start school and have poor views of what they can do and achieve. Through staff’s dedicated patience and encouragement, these pupils learn to believe in themselves and have faith in their ability to succeed. They do this because they are comfortable and are not afraid to make mistakes, reflecting the positive ethos that permeates the school. In the good work assemblies, pupils are made to feel special because their schoolmates, teachers, and support assistants show appreciation for what individuals have achieved – for example, when a Year 3 pupil who was not quite confident enough to read out her moving poem listened proudly to the teacher read it, and when Year 5 pupils beamed with pleasure as they showed the papier-mâché masks they had made in design and technology.
9. Behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils understand right from wrong and know about how important it is to get on with others, prompted well by their work with the school council. They have a satisfactory awareness of their own culture and of others’ and show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of other people. However, there is a small minority of pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, who struggle to conform. This is exacerbated further when teaching puts unrealistic demands on these pupils to sit for long periods of time listening to lengthy explanations. Although support assistants try to keep them focused these pupils struggle to maintain concentration at these times and quickly lose interest. However, their behaviour is effectively managed and does not have too detrimental an impact on their learning or that of others. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
178	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
22	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

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The most effective provision is in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6 where rapid progress takes place. Learning opportunities are enhanced well through visits, visitors and clubs. The partnership the school has with parents is good and it has established good relations with other schools and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good and because of this pupils learn effectively. Assessment arrangements are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The most rapid learning takes place in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6 but it is sometimes slowed in other years when there is too much teacher talk and the work is not of a practical enough nature to hold the interest of all of the pupils.
- Teachers share with the pupils what they are going to learn by the end of each lesson so that pupils know what to do and understand why they need to work hard. However, marking does little to show pupils how to improve their work next time.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented; this is because assessment information is mostly used well to tailor work to pupils' needs.
- Support staff are deployed well to work with individual pupils and small groups.
- Vulnerable pupils and those who find it difficult to conform to class rules and routines are provided for well in nurture groups.
- Speaking is promoted well, and good emphasis on subject vocabulary means that pupils can explain with precision what they doing. However, writing skills are not taught well enough through other subjects.
- Good use is made of the computer suite and specialist teaching from the local secondary school, but not enough use is made of the classroom computers for pupils to continue their studies.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
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3	3	13	8	0	1	0
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The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

10. The quality of teaching has improved since the school was in special measures four years ago and since its last inspection two years ago, which has had a significant impact on improving pupils' achievements and raising standards. Staff have worked hard implementing the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and have followed them to the letter. Whilst this has given them a good grounding in lesson structure, the format of teacher talk followed by pupil activity is proving to be inappropriate for those pupils who find it almost impossible to sit and listen to lengthy 20-minute explanations. They lose concentration and their learning is slowed. Teachers realise that it is now time to tailor the national strategy guidance to best suit the needs of the pupils at this school.
11. This has already been achieved in the Reception class and Years 5 and 6 where teachers constantly engage pupils in activities that interest them; they use a mixture and good balance of teacher talk and pupil activity, which work well. Whilst this happens in other classes, it is not as consistent and there are times when a small number of pupils lose interest and their learning is slowed. This was the case in the one poor lesson seen when the behaviour of two pupils disrupted the learning of the others. Although the teacher and learning support assistant tried in vain to deal with this, the nature of the lesson did not suit these pupils, who could not concentrate because they could not sit and listen whilst others shared their thoughts and feelings. In contrast, however, these same pupils were seen in a small nurture group session, working with staff from the local authority behavioural support team, and because they were in a smaller group with focused support and individual attention, their learning was focused and they made very good progress.
12. Throughout the school, teachers share with pupils what they are going to learn from the work they do and because of this, pupils see the point of working hard. Teachers' own enthusiasm, in turn, enthuses the pupils, who do well as a result. Pupils are well aware of what they need to work on next because they have personal learning targets that give them something to work towards. However, the comments teachers write in pupils' books do little to help pupils further; they are mainly positive or simply ticks.
13. Talk is encouraged very successfully, so that most pupils by the time they leave the school are confident, articulate communicators. Teachers also encourage pupils to use their reading skills to support work in other subjects, such as when researching world news on the Internet, or finding out geographical facts in books. However, whilst the writing standards pupils achieve in literacy lessons are good, teachers do not encourage pupils to apply these skills to their work in other subjects or to think about their personal writing targets when recording things in lessons other than literacy. This results in sloppiness and inaccuracy when recording work in, for example, science, history and geography.
14. Some specialist ICT teaching takes place as a result of the good partnership the school enjoys with the local secondary school. The excellent subject expertise of the secondary school teacher who takes four ICT lessons a week, currently with pupils in Years 4 and 6, means that explanations are clear and pupils learn well as a result. By the time they reach Year 6, they can find their way quickly round a program, and are confident computer users. Although good use is made of computers in the suite to learn new skills, mostly by continuing studies begun in the classroom, the classroom computers are not then used to continue work done in the computer suite. They are often switched off and when they are on, are not used enough.
15. Support staff are deployed effectively to work with the least able pupils in particular. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are taught well. This is because assessment information is used to good effect to tailor work to pupils' needs. Teachers have a clear idea of what pupils have learnt previously and use this information to set them work to challenge them further. The most able pupils are given work from the higher

levels of the National Curriculum and the least able are given work that builds, in realistically small steps, on what they already know.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum, which is appropriately broad and well balanced and meets the needs of all of the pupils; the Foundation Stage curriculum is particularly effective. A good range of additional activities is available for pupils of all ages that enrich their learning well. Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced with good attention given to English and mathematics.
- Learning opportunities in the Reception class are exciting and interesting and children work hard as a result.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the work is tailored well to their learning needs.
- Personal, social and health education is taught well.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of activities in and beyond the school day.
- Support staff are deployed well and contribute effectively to pupils' learning.
- The building is of great historical value, contributing well to pupils' cultural development and their historical understanding. However, the outdoor learning area for the Reception children is some way from the classroom, making its use difficult.

Commentary

16. Curriculum planning makes good use of national subject guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This ensures that the curriculum is well balanced and meets statutory requirements fully. Since requiring special measures four years ago, the curriculum has improved, which has had a good impact on raising standards. The school has placed good emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics, but is now appropriately and successfully increasing its focus on other subjects and providing a much broader range of learning opportunities for the pupils. These are particularly good in the Reception class, where activities interest the children. They are excited by their learning opportunities because they are based on learning through observation and exploration, which is appropriate for the age and the ways in which these young children best learn.
17. The school ensures that all pupils achieve well by planning to meet their needs effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons by teachers and support staff, guided by the pupils' well-detailed individual learning programmes. Emotionally insecure pupils in Years 3 and 4 are provided for well through the nurture group. This group meets for two full mornings a week. The pupils benefit greatly from it because they get individual attention, with the teacher and support assistants spending time talking with them, raising their self-esteem by making them feel special. Staff get them to think about their actions and how they affect them and others around them. Since attending the group there has been a marked improvement in the attitude of these pupils back in the classroom.
18. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school provides pupils with a good basis for their future development and life beyond this school. There are discrete personal, social and emotional educational lessons as well as circle times, which give pupils time to talk about how they feel. Sex education and relationships and the awareness of the dangers of drugs misuse are approached sensitively and taught well by the Year 6 teacher and school nurse.
19. The school plans an interesting and varied range of additional activities to enhance the curriculum, including visits to places of interest, such as Derby Museum, local farms and different places of worship. Year 6 pupils have good opportunities to experience learning in a wider context by going on a residential trip which gives them experience in rock scrambling, orienteering and a whole range of other outdoor pursuits. There is a good variety of well-

supported after-school and lunchtime clubs including sporting and art clubs, football, recorder club, and the African Ark music group.

20. The accommodation is a Grade II listed building of great historical and cultural value. The playground area is secure, but the Reception class children do not have easy access to their outdoor learning area. This presents supervision problems so it cannot be used constantly as an extension to the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. There is good support, advice and guidance for pupils' academic and personal development and they have good opportunities to become actively involved in the work and routines of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent use of support services enables pupils with behavioural difficulties to be included in all activities.
- Very well planned and implemented induction procedures enable children to settle in quickly.
- Good relationships with staff give pupils the confidence to approach them for advice or guidance if worried or concerned.
- The good level of pastoral care ensures pupils can work in an environment conducive to learning.
- The school has effective procedures for consulting pupils and enabling them to have a voice in shaping the school's provision.

Commentary

21. This is a caring school where staff know and respect each pupil as an individual with his or her own particular problems and needs. Pupils with particular difficulties are identified at an early stage and carefully assessed to determine the extent and nature of the support they require. Individual programmes with clear targets for learning are implemented well; these are regularly reviewed to check that pupils are making at least reasonable progress and to decide what they need to do next. Pupils with behavioural difficulties have excellent support from outside agency staff, which ensures that they are able to join their classmates in most class activities and make good progress.
22. The good care shown for pupils begins at the early stage of induction into the Reception class. New parents are invited into school to meet the staff and look at where their children will be working and what they will be doing. The term before they start school, the children and their parents are invited to join in lessons and activities and to have lunch with the other children. Once their children have started school, parents are able to stay in class as long as they feel necessary until their children are settled in. This well-planned arrangement enables children to quickly gain trust and confidence in the staff and they make good progress as a result. These good trusting relationships continue and extend up through the school. This encourages the pupils to approach the staff at any time if they are worried or concerned, safe in the knowledge that good advice and guidance will be given.
23. The school complements these good relationships by providing a good level of pastoral care for all pupils. Staff and governors work well together to ensure all arrangements for pupils' health, safety and welfare are properly carried out and meet statutory requirements. Safety checks and tests are routinely organised and risk assessments carefully carried out. First aid provision is good and child protection arrangements, including Internet security, are fully implemented and effective.
24. The school carries out regular written surveys of pupils' opinions on the school and seeks suggestions on how pupils would like to see structures and routines improved. The school council, a group of 14 pupils representing all of the different classes and year groups, meets

regularly to discuss problems and suggestions raised by their classmates. They then draw up proposals to put to the staff for consideration. Recent topics have included behaviour and bullying, the division of the playground to maximise safety for different games and the provision of seats and equipment. The council not only gives the pupils a say in how the school can be improved, but it also is a significant factor in helping its members develop pride and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good and parents are appreciative of the work done by the staff in educating their children. The school's links with the community are good and used effectively to support pupils' learning. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with parents enables parents to feel well informed about the school and help them to provide effective support for their children's learning at home.
- Good links with the community are used well to broaden the curriculum and they help to support pupils' learning.
- Good links with other schools and colleges are used effectively to provide support for staff development and additional support in the classrooms; they ensure very effective transfer arrangements for the Year 6 leavers.

Commentary

25. The school works hard to develop good and productive links with parents. Staff are present in the playground each morning and afternoon to give any parent who has a concern the opportunity to discuss it. Good information is given in the school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents. Regular newsletters keep parents abreast of the work of and events provided by the school and the parent teacher group. Pupils' annual progress reports give good descriptive summaries of the progress pupils have made and of their strengths and weaknesses. Evening meetings are arranged each term with additional meetings for parents of the Year 6 pupils. To help parents give better support to their children when at home, the school has provided adult courses including parenting skills, literacy, and numeracy. These courses highlight the type of support parents can give their children. Information on the curriculum is issued each term to enable parents to plan the help they will be able to give.
26. The school is concerned to know parents' views and regularly consults with them through written questionnaires. The responses are analysed to identify any similarities or patterns and, wherever possible, action is taken to meet the concerns or suggestions raised. Voluntary questionnaires are issued at parent consultation evenings and used to assess parents' views on their children's achievement. As a result of the school's efforts to encourage parents to help, a group of 15 now regularly attends to give support in the classrooms. Parents help to run the gardening club and maintain the wildlife area. The parent teacher association works hard to raise funds for the school and has recently been instrumental in helping to buy equipment for the computer suite and for fitting out the accommodation. They have also bought a new music centre.
27. Links with the community are well established and the school uses members of the community effectively to enhance pupils' learning. The school uses visits in the local community to provide stimulus for topic work and make learning more appealing. These visits include outings to art centres, science fairs, and maypole dancing. Visitors from the community are invited into school to give, for example, demonstrations of puppetry and talks on personal safety and to tell stories from the Bible. Local businesses support the work of the parent teacher association. The school has set up a community room and this is used well by local music bands and a dance group uses the school hall.

28. The school has well-established links with other schools and uses them effectively to provide opportunities for sharing examples of good practice and joint staff training. Meetings of the local cluster group of schools are used to develop initiatives in literacy, numeracy, and ICT and to explore better ways to support pupils with special educational needs. The good links with the local college provide adult help in classrooms when national vocational course students attend for practical experience.
29. The link with the local secondary school is used particularly well to help the smooth transfer of Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their educational career. As a pilot scheme, a Year 7 teacher has this year commenced teaching work of secondary school level in science topics and the school has continued its own teaching of the type of work in literacy and numeracy pupils can expect when they transfer. A joint junior/secondary study day to work on scientific and technological projects has been arranged. A full day induction visit is provided to enable pupils to visit the secondary school and attend some of the lessons and activities. These arrangements mean that pupils are looking forward to their next school and transfer with confidence and enthusiasm.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both good and overall effective. The leadership of the head teacher is very good and is well supported by senior members of staff. Governance is good; the governing body meets its statutory duties fully.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher inspires a shared vision and has high expectations of the school's life and work. These are key factors in improved standards and achievement throughout the school.
- The head teacher values each pupil's development very highly and is committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit fully from all school activities.
- Staff and governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, a strong commitment to improvement, and a relentless pursuit of high standards.

Commentary

30. The head teacher provides a strong lead and motivates and encourages staff, pupils and governors by his hard work, dedication and drive for improvement. Staff share the head teacher's vision and sense of purpose, and this is reflected in the way they go about their work. They are united in their desire to provide the best educational experience for all pupils and fully support the direction the school is taking in moving to a more innovative and creative curriculum. The head teacher is always around the school and is readily available to pupils, staff, parents and governors. He is a very good listener and keen to hear the views of others. For example, he and senior staff use the information from questionnaires completed by pupils and parents to help determine the priorities for the school. Pupils in particular feel they are listened to and as a result have positive attitudes towards their work and other school activities.
31. A key feature of the leadership of the head teacher is his drive to ensure that all pupils, whatever their background or abilities, succeed as well as they can. This is also supported by his firm commitment to improving teaching throughout the school. His interest in each individual's development sets a very good example for others to follow. The school is a happy and harmonious learning environment, where pupils achieve well because of the provision that supports their academic and personal development. For example, those pupils who have special educational needs follow specific programmes of work and are given good support by teachers and support assistants. The most able pupils achieve well because teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. As a result, many of these pupils attain the higher levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

32. The head teacher and other senior managers carefully analyse English, mathematics and science test results to provide a very clear view of exactly where standards need to be improved. Governors are fully involved in this analysis and have a good understanding of the standards and targets for improvement. Senior staff are effectively involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning, and have a shared view of where improvements are needed. Subject co-ordinators have effective plans for improving their subjects, and senior managers ensure that the co-ordinators are given clear guidance and support in carrying out their roles. All these factors have contributed to the good improvement in academic standards and the attitudes of pupils since the previous inspection.
33. The governing body is effective and does everything it should to fulfil its duties. Many governors regularly visit the school to work with pupils and staff. Governors with particular responsibilities for subjects such as literacy and numeracy are kept well informed by the co-ordinators, and this helps them support and challenge staff in school. All governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are increasingly playing a greater part in shaping the direction of the school through, for example, involvement in the creation and evaluation of the school improvement plan. This plan is effective in reflecting the school's ambitions and goals, and in managing change. It focuses clearly on improving attainment and contains well-judged actions to enable all pupils to continually learn and achieve. The governing body is well led by an experienced chair person, who gives good support to the school's efforts to raise standards. Although governors support the head teacher they are always prepared to challenge proposals in order to ensure there is sufficient rigour in school policy and practice.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	473,446	Balance from previous year	58,548
Total expenditure	497,144	Balance carried forward to the next	34,850
Expenditure per pupil	2,436		

34. Financial management is efficient and secure. The school works closely with the local education authority in planning and monitoring the budget. The staff and governors work hard to ensure that money is spent wisely for the benefit of all pupils.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children's attainment when they start in the Reception class is often well below that of children of similar age. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, so children's achievement is good. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and staff keep detailed assessments of the children so that they can track their progress and plan what to teach them next. Consequently, all children including those with special educational needs achieve well even though most of them do not attain the early learning goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident to try new activities.
- Relationships are very good so children are happy to respect staff's expectation for good behaviour.
- Children are learning to be independent; selecting activities and resources for themselves.

Commentary

36. Teaching is very good and overall, the children's achievement in their personal, social and emotional development is good. However, by the end of the Reception Year standards are still below those expected for children of this age. By visiting the children in their own home before they start school the staff get to know the children before they start school. Parents are welcomed into the school to allow the children to settle and feel secure. Consequently, the children quickly and confidently occupy themselves happily with the activities. Teaching is very good. Relationships are very good so children have good role models and are learning to respect each other. Children's behaviour is good. They choose activities independently from the learning board. The imaginative activities such as the space-ship role-play area provide obvious fun and excitement as well as useful learning experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and sometimes very good, enabling children to learn well.
- Children are learning to express their ideas well verbally.
- Children are learning the sounds that letters make to help them to read and write.

Commentary

37. Although by the end of the Reception Year standards are still below those expected for children of this age, overall the children achieve well in this area of learning because the teaching is good. Sometimes it is very good ensuring children learn basic skills to help them read and write. Despite the quality of teaching, children are unlikely to reach the goals they are expected

to reach by the end of the Reception Year because many children come into school with poor language skills. Staff interact well with the children using role-play to encourage them to communicate and use language for thinking, resulting in well-developed speaking and listening skills. Group times are used well to extend the children's thinking and children respond to discussions on stories such as, 'Whatever next'. Children are learning to read; they are aware of print and many are starting to read sentences with the teacher. They are learning to experiment with writing and beginning to form letters correctly. Children are encouraged to express their ideas in writing and some children are able to spell words such as 'don't' accurately.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are learning well to name numbers and put them in order.
- Children learn through suitable methods so they enjoy mathematics.
- Occasionally adult-directed sessions are too long which results in children losing concentration.

Commentary

38. Good teaching in the Reception class results in good progress being achieved, although standards are below those expected for children of this age by the time they start in Year 1. The most able can count well beyond 10 and good emphasis is placed on understanding numbers. Children learn to order numbers correctly and they can sequence numbers and days of the week. Children are learning about mathematics and its use in everyday life through many suitable, practical activities such as making repeating patterns and symmetrical pictures. They compare the lengths of strips of fabric and ribbons and count the spots on ladybirds. As a result they enjoy learning. However, on occasions the adult-directed sessions are too long to hold the children's interest.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are able to participate in a wide range of activities to develop their skills of observation and exploration.
- Children investigate and explore the natural and made world.

Commentary

39. Good teaching in the Reception class, using a wide range of activities, ensures that the children achieve well in this area of learning. Most children are likely to attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year. Children are enthusiastic about the various activities on offer; they grow grass to create 'Mr Greenhead', for example. In doing so, they investigate the natural world and realise how plants grow. Interesting themes, such as 'light and dark', are used well to help the children explore shadows. They make shadow puppets to view on the overhead projector and use torches to find objects in the darkened tunnel. They are competent users of the computers and their early history and geography skills are developing well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have access to a wide range of small equipment to develop their manipulative skills.
- Children have limited opportunities to enhance their physical skills in climbing.

Commentary

40. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in this area of learning, therefore the children achieve well. Attainment is in line with what is expected for their age and the children are likely to attain the early learning goals in physical development by the end of the Reception Year. However, they have limited opportunities for climbing, outside of the time they have in the hall to work on the larger apparatus. Children are able to use tricycles, crates and a tunnel to move in different directions. The children use a selection of simple tools and small equipment to develop their fine manipulative skills effectively. They work productively both independently and with good adult support to increase their skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's imagination is developed well through role-play activities.
- Children explore colour and texture, helping them to learn through their senses.

Commentary

41. Overall, the children's achievement in the Reception class is good and they are likely to reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the year. Their artistic development is promoted through a wide range of experiences, for example model-making with discarded boxes, painting their own ideas of 'Whatever next' and 'dribble' painting. Children develop good imagination through role-play and 'small world' play. They create their own ideas in the 'rock pool'. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do, set them challenging targets and regularly check their progress.
- Pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 6 because the skills they need to be able to read and write are taught systematically throughout the school.
- At times teachers do not adapt the way they teach to suit the way pupils learn.
- Pupils do not transfer the writing skills they learn in English lessons to other subjects.

Commentary

42. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching overall and the very good teaching in Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved faster than nationally. Although this year standards at the end of Year 2 are lower than they were last year with fewer than usual pupils reaching the expected level and above, this is because of the high level of special needs in this group. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved significantly this year, with about a third of the pupils achieving standards above those expected nationally. Their writing is varied and interesting. Words are chosen carefully to explain with precision what is being said. Stories and reports are organised into paragraphs and a good range of punctuation is used accurately.
43. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work so most pupils work hard and enjoy learning. In the most effective lessons the teachers' good subject knowledge, probing questions and well-chosen texts ensure that all pupils are constantly challenged and achieve well. Teachers plan work that is just the right level for pupils but challenging enough to make sure all pupils learn and achieve well. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, because the teacher had clearly explained how to use facts to form a biased opinion, pupils successfully manipulated the facts to write a letter giving the reasons against using animals in circuses. Pupils with special educational needs achieved well because they worked on a simplified task with the support assistant who gave them just the right amount of support and praised and encouraged them regularly, raising their self-esteem and convincing them they could do the work.
44. Teachers have set up good procedures for checking how well pupils are learning and whether they are making enough progress with their reading and writing. They use the information well to identify groups and individual pupils who need help in specific areas and successfully implement strategies to support these pupils. They track the progress of all pupils very closely and set them appropriate targets to make their work better. Older pupils know what their targets are and how they can improve their work and this has contributed to the improvement in standards. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 regularly referred to their target cards when they were writing.
45. Pupils make particularly good progress with their reading because teachers throughout the school are good at teaching the skills that pupils need to enable them to read. Pupils at the early stages of reading are taught sounds systematically, and learn how to put them together so that they can read unfamiliar words. They successfully use this and other strategies when they are reading so by the end of Year 2 most pupils read fluently and with plenty of expression and good understanding. In a Year 2 lesson pupils successfully answered questions about non-fiction texts because the teacher had explained the importance of locating information by finding key words rather than reading the whole text.
46. Teachers throughout the school provide good opportunities during the day to enable pupils to practise reading in groups, with a partner and to themselves. They ask good questions to check that pupils understand what they are reading, and to discuss the texts, and as a result, all pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6 most of the pupils talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the books and poems they have read. They identify essential points and make sensible deductions about what a writer is implying. They find the relevant parts in the text to support their views and select sentences and phrases that explain what they mean. In the most effective lesson in Year 6 the teacher's obvious enthusiasm for the text and her constantly challenging questions sparked the pupils' imagination and led to a very successful discussion which extended pupils' learning very well.
47. Teaching is most successful when teachers actively involve pupils in their learning and change the way they teach to meet the needs of the pupils. However, at times pupils spend too much time listening to teachers and as a result some of the pupils lose concentration and this decreases their achievement and slows their learning to satisfactory. For example, some pupils in Year 4 did not listen very attentively to the class discussion about how to write a poem, but

as soon as they worked in groups, they worked hard and contributed some good ideas to the discussion.

48. Subject leadership and management are good and the weaknesses from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The knowledgeable and hard-working subject leader analyses pupils' work regularly, and uses the information on pupils' progress and from her observation of lessons well, to identify strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, there is a well-focused action plan for English with a strong emphasis on raising standards further.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Overall, there is satisfactory use of language and literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to be involved in discussions and these are well managed so that they contribute effectively to pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 personal, social and health education lesson pupils confidently and sensibly debated the issue of benches in the playground and respectfully listened to the views of their classmates. Pupils use their reading skills effectively when, for example, they read information from primary and secondary sources in their history lessons. However, although teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to write in other subjects, they do not put sufficient emphasis on transferring the skills they learn in their writing lessons to other subjects which affects pupils' progress in these lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching and it is very good between Years 3 and 6 because of particularly effective teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- The standard of the pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding is above average by the end of Year 6.
- Leadership of mathematics is good, bringing about very good improvement since the last inspection.
- Staff analyse data and track the pupils' progress well so they can ensure that teaching meets pupils' needs.
- Marking does not tell pupils how to improve standards.

Commentary

50. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above what is expected nationally in mathematics, and pupils achieve very well. Normally standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 are broadly as expected nationally and pupils achieve well. However, this year, 2004, the standards are lower than normal because of the high number of pupils in the current Year 2 group with special educational needs.
51. The teaching and learning of pupils in mathematics, including pupils with special educational needs, are good overall. When teaching is lively, which is most of the time, their interest is held and as a result, the pupils behave well and respond appropriately to the teaching. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to learn about the properties of numbers. Good emphasis is put on investigations and problem-solving and this heightens pupils' understanding of the need to learn mathematics to help them in everyday life. Teaching, as indicated by the progress achieved by pupils, is particularly effective in Year 5 and Year 6. This is where the teaching is at its liveliest and pupils are engaged more in practical tasks, which suits their style of learning. Throughout the school, teachers plan well for pupils of all abilities and teaching

assistants support the learning well. The very good relationships between pupils and their teachers contribute well towards pupils' achievement because pupils want to work hard in order to please their teachers.

52. Teachers use the national subject guidelines to plan their lessons well and make sure pupils are taught what they should be taught. Aims for what will be learned are clearly outlined at the beginning of the lesson so that pupils are clear what they are going to do and they know what is expected from them. In some excellent teaching in Year 6, ably assisted by the support staff, skilled questioning and challenging problem solving was used to extend the pupils' learning. Personal learning targets give pupils something to aim for, but teachers' marking is not always used as well as it can be to help pupils understand how they need to improve.
53. The leadership and management of mathematics are good and, consequently, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Initiatives have successfully been put into place to improve standards and, consequently, test results show an upward trend that is more rapid than the national upward trend. This is because careful analysis of pupils' work and of their assessment and test results has been used to identify areas where the pupils are not achieving as well as they could. The school used this knowledge to improve the pupils' ability to perform mental mathematics, for example.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory, although pupils' competence in mathematics is good. For example, in science, mathematical skills are used when needed, such as measuring the temperature of materials used to keep water warm and to plot graphs to show the results of investigations. On the computers, pupils make graphs from spreadsheets and use data handling programs. However, these opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects are unplanned and because of this incidentally help and support learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The investigative approach to science suits the way pupils learn and because of this teaching is effective and pupils achieve very well over time to reach above average standards.
- Very good subject leadership and management have brought about a considerable rise in standards since the last inspection.
- Pupils talk with clarity and precision about what they have done and are doing because teachers use subject language well, which pupils emulate; however, teachers do not encourage pupils to apply the writing skills learnt in literacy to their work in science, and an over-emphasis on worksheets exacerbates this further.
- Whilst teaching is good overall, marking does little to inform improvement.

Commentary

55. Pupils start in Year 1 with standards that are below those expected for pupils aged six. They make good progress in Year 1 to Year 2 to reach standards in line with those expected nationally. Further good gains from Year 3 to Year 6 leads to standards that are above the national average for many pupils. This makes achievement from the start of Year 1 to the end of Year 6 very good. The work Year 5 pupils are doing indicates these high standards are likely to be maintained next year.

56. The success of the teaching is due to the emphasis it places on pupils learning through observation and exploration. This style of teaching suits the pupils because it engages them in practical activities that interest them and that they can see the point of doing. For example, Year 5 pupils learnt well when they explored through role-play how the earth rotates and how its changing position in relation to the sun causes night and day. One pupil became very excited when she realised that this is why, when she speaks during the day to her uncle in Australia, he is usually in bed. Similarly in Year 4, investigations to separate liquids and solids excited the pupils as they worked out why the equipment they used mattered because if the holes in the sieves were too big, sand got through. However, although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they make few comments to help pupils to know what to do next to improve their work, slowing progress.
57. The promotion of subject language has a high profile throughout the school. Teachers use it well so that, in turn, so do the pupils. This means that when pupils explain what they are doing, or respond to teachers' questions, they explain their thoughts clearly and precisely. However, this quality of explanation is not mirrored in their written work, which is too often littered with spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes. This is not helped by the regular use of worksheets that require very little writing from the pupils and when it does, words spelt on the paper are often mis-spelt by the pupils and, more significantly, their mistakes go unchecked by the teachers.
58. Very good leadership and management have led to a significant increased focus throughout the school on investigative work, a weakness identified in the school's latest inspection report, which has been dealt with extremely well. The effectiveness of leadership and management ensures that there is a clear idea of where to go next to make the provision in science even more effective. The subject leader has raised the profile of science throughout the school and, because of her effective monitoring and evaluation, has a very good idea of what is happening around the school. She leads staff very well, providing in-service training and support and encouragement to colleagues; her very effective leadership means that staff share a clear vision for improvement, everyone is pulling in the same direction, and standards are rising rapidly.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well to reach standards in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Effective teaching makes very good use of the computers in the suite, but not of those in the classrooms.
- When pupils are working on the computers, their interest is very good. However, a very small number struggle when expected to listen to sometimes too lengthy instructions before going on the computers; they lose interest and sometimes misbehave because of this.
- A good range of hard- and software and some very effective specialist teaching mean that some of the more advanced computer skills are taught exceptionally well.
- Good leadership has brought about good improvements since the last inspection.

Commentary

59. Achievement is good and pupils do well to reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and by the time they leave the school. Their mouse skills are particularly good and the speed with which pupils log on, access programs, move around the screen, and make effective use of the drop-down menus is very good. They access the Internet speedily and quickly locate the website they need, for example when Year 5 pupils researched Greek theatre and Year 4 pupils found information about Indian food, musicians and religion.

60. Progress since the last inspection, when standards were below those expected, has been good. This is due to improved learning resources and effective subject leadership and management. The subject leader, although new to the post, has good vision for the future, with some pertinent ideas for further improvement, especially in improving the use of ICT in other subjects. She has a good grasp of what additional resources are needed and has already ordered more interactive whiteboards, laptops, digital camcorders and up-to-date software. She is aware of one pupil in Year 5 who shows a talent for using computers and has ordered some additional resources for him.
61. A specialist ICT manager visits the school one morning a week to teach computer skills to two classes – this term to Years 4 and 6. This provision is very good. Because her expertise is so good, the instructions and explanations are crystal clear. Pupils know precisely what to do, for example in Year 6 to use sensors to control devices, and get on very well. The interest generated from these sessions is rapid and learning is long lasting. However, the style of teaching sometimes adopted by her and other teachers does not always suit the ways in which some pupils learn most effectively, particularly those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Whilst these pupils are eager to work on the computers, and behave well when they do, they lose interest when they have to listen to lengthy instructions and explanations; their time could be better spent learning through doing.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Good use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects, but the use of computers is mainly confined to those in the computer suite where, for example, pupils in Year 6 found out about what is happening in the world to support their work in geography and those in Year 4 learnt how to use branch databases to continue their work in science. However, the computers in the classrooms are not used enough to continue these studies or to practise the skills learnt in the computer suite. Although they are networked, pupils do not often retrieve the work they have stored whilst they were in the suite to work on in other lessons. In some classrooms the computers are difficult to find, and in many they are not easily accessible, being in corners and sometimes difficult to get chairs under. They are often switched off, or when they are switched on they are not used.

HUMANITIES

63. It is not possible to make firm judgements about the provision in geography or history because there was insufficient time to observe any complete lessons. However, from examining pupils' completed work, and talking to pupils in Years 2, 3 and 6, it is evident that in both subjects teachers use the national subject guidance well to make sure that pupils build on the knowledge and skills they have learnt previously. Teachers plan satisfactory links to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote a letter to 'Katie Morag' as part of their geography work about the Isle of Struay, and used co-ordinates to locate people and places on the map of the island. Pupils in Year 6 used the Internet to find information about the Aztecs. However, pupils do not transfer the writing skills they learn in their literacy lessons to their written work in geography and history.
64. In **geography**, pupils' skills and knowledge develop well from year to year through the study of maps, and by finding out about the local environment, other parts of Britain and other countries of the world. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to develop a good understanding of geographical vocabulary when they correctly identify the human and physical features on the Isle of Struay. Pupils correctly identify similarities and differences between their local environment and other areas of the world. For example, Year 4 pupils compared the human and physical features of Chembakolli, a village in India, with the local area.
65. In **history** pupils develop key skills well, such as finding evidence from artefacts, because teachers make good use of primary and secondary resources. For example, pupils in Year 2

had a good understanding of the differences between hospitals at the time of Florence Nightingale and modern hospitals because the teacher had explained key facts about the life of Florence Nightingale and had provided a good video, which made the work interesting for the pupils. Pupils in Year 6 used photographs of archaeological finds, accounts and maps produced at the time, as well as information from the Internet and books to find out about the life of the Aztecs. Teachers plan the pupils' work carefully and explain information clearly, so pupils remember important historical facts and make good links between different periods of history. For example, pupils in Year 6 had a good factual knowledge of life at the time of the Aztecs and knew that the explorations they had learnt about took place at the time of the Tudors whom they had studied in Year 5. This enabled pupils to develop their understanding of how events are interlinked.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is effective, achievement is good, and the subject is well led and managed.
- Teachers plan work effectively to make sure that pupils develop their understanding of Christianity and other faiths.
- Teachers encourage pupils to apply what they learn in their lessons to everyday life. This effectively supports their personal and social development.
- Pupils develop their understanding well because teachers give them good opportunities to talk about their ideas.

Commentary

66. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. The school has done well to maintain the standards from the previous inspection. Although only one lesson was observed, analysis of the available work and discussions with pupils indicate that teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well throughout the school.
67. Teachers plan work that meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus well. This ensures that pupils increase their awareness and understanding of Christianity, and other faiths, mainly Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Teachers draw good links between the different faiths so pupils understand the similarities and differences between them. For example, pupils in Year 2 knew that though the Bible explained that God created the world in one week, people from other faiths, such as Hindus, had their own story of how the world was created. Pupils in Year 6 participated in mock wedding services at a local church and a Hindu temple. They explained that there were many similarities in the services, such as the wearing of special clothes and the exchange of vows that the bride and groom made. Pupils explained that Christians and Hindus have a special place for their worship, and rules so that 'we learn how to treat other people'. However, they recognised that there were differences between the faiths such as the symbols in the places of worship and the custom of taking off shoes and washing hands before entering a Hindu temple.
68. Pupils understand the relevance of what they learn in religious education to their everyday lives because teachers make good links between religious education and personal and social education. For example, following the story of Adam and Eve, pupils in Year 5 took on the roles of Eve and the serpent. The role-play and the discussion that followed raised pupils' awareness of how they could deal with temptations in their everyday life. Following a lesson about the Qur'an, pupils in Year 5 wrote their own 'guidebook for life'. These examples indicate that pupils are being given good opportunities to discover the meaning behind religions as well as the facts.

69. Pupils have regular opportunities to share ideas and talk about their experiences and feelings. As a result, pupils discuss issues such as friendship confidently. For example, Year 2 pupils said that a good friend 'helps you when you fall over' and 'speaks to you when you are lonely'. Year 6 pupils talked positively about their recent discussions about how they would make new friends when they moved to the secondary school.
70. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and supports her colleagues effectively because of her good subject knowledge and her commitment to promoting the importance of religious education. She examines teachers' planning to ensure the correct coverage of topics and looks at examples of pupils' work to check on standards. The recently improved procedures for assessing what pupils know and how well they are making progress have helped teachers to plan their work more effectively. The co-ordinator has purchased a wide range of resources, including books and artefacts. These are well organised and easily accessible and successfully enhance pupils' learning. As the subject has not been a priority in the school improvement plan there have been no recent opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons. This reduces her effectiveness in gaining a good grasp of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and slows improvements to the subject provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. The work in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education was sampled during the inspection. Judgements about the provision were not made because insufficient evidence was collected and it was not possible to observe sufficient teaching to make secure judgements.
72. From the work displayed in **art and design** and the sketchbooks available, it is clear that pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills in all aspects of the subject. The work seen in art and design indicates that by the end of Year 6 the standard of pupils' work is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop skills through the use of a range of materials and media. They experiment with shape, colour and form by, for example, creating pictures in the style of Paul Klee. A variety of starting points for their work has been used, such as the visit made by two teachers to Hungary. This has been used to stimulate pupils' imagination; the Reception and Year 2 pupils painted plates and spoons in colourful designs. Pupils in Year 1 have made imaginative designs based on 'The Snail'. Pupils study the work of famous artists and use their techniques to develop their own skills and a wide variety of artists are used as a stimulus for the pupils' own work. In Year 4 pupils have created interesting drawings in the style of Picasso. Pupils in Year 6 have been taught to use a variety of techniques to give a sense of place. They compared the styles used by artists such as David Hockney, when painting 'The Splash'. Computers are used well in art and design. For example, pupils made repeating patterns using computer programs to investigate colour and enhance their experiences.
73. Some interesting work was seen in **design and technology**. In Years 1 and 2 the children made puppets of tigers, creating their designs using felt. They evaluated the process and were encouraged to think about their designs and how they could improve their work. By the end of Year 2 the pupils are developing appropriate skills. Design and technology is planned in line with national guidelines. In Year 4, pupils are learning useful skills such as creating ways of joining structures so they can create chairs from boxes. The pupils' work on design has been linked with other subjects at times. In Year 5 pupils have created effective models of Greek pots, connected to their work in history.
74. No complete **music** lessons were seen but Year 6 pupils speak enthusiastically about their experiences of music in the school. The whole school participates in a Christmas performance each year and Year 6 pupils look forward to presenting their leaving production. Pupils undertake useful work that links with science to explore and investigate how sounds are made. They are aware of ways that sound can be made through vibrations and link this knowledge to musical instruments that they play in lessons. Pupils of all ages play both untuned and tuned musical instruments with good enthusiasm. In Year 1 pupils learn about signs and symbols and

how these can be used to determine their singing. They sing enthusiastically to taped music. In assemblies, pupils are encouraged to listen to music as they come in and they know the words of well-known songs. Lessons are supplemented through the chance to join lunchtime clubs and learn musical instruments, such as the recorder.

75. **Physical education** lessons were sampled during the inspection so no full lessons were seen. The school has its own gymnasium, although the acoustics are poor, making teaching challenging. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn ball skills and how to hold a racquet correctly. They demonstrate control and co-ordination through careful teaching in Year 2. In the same lesson pupils were taught the importance of warming up their bodies, and about the changes that occur after exercise. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught to move imaginatively using music as a stimulus.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

76. Very few lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and citizenship, but from what was seen and from talking with pupils, provision is good. Sex education and relationships are taught well and because of this pupils in Year 6 have very mature attitudes towards relationships. They see friendship as an important part of their lives, explaining, for example, that in a friend what they look for is honesty, trustworthiness and dependability.
77. Work on the class and school councils gives pupils of all ages a good sense of what citizenship is about and a notion of their role in society. In Year 2, for example, a very sensible class discussion took place about what ideas they wanted to take to the school council. The issue of benches in the Year 1 and 2 playground was debated at length, with pupils offering sensible arguments for and against having benches before deciding that their representatives would bring up the matter for discussion at the next council meeting.
78. In a sharing assembly, pupils' spontaneous applause showed their respect for the achievements of others and their pleasure in how well their schoolmates had done. The provision in the Rainbow Club is exceptionally good. This is a time when up to 10 pupils at a time work with two trained adults in a small group in order to build their confidence and self-esteem. In these groups, pupils make very good progress; their behaviour is very good and their positive attitudes mean that they work hard and achieve well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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