

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bishop's Stortford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117310

Headteacher: Mrs G Mackenzie

Lead inspector: Mr A Portlock

Dates of inspection: 15 - 17 September 2003

Inspection number: 256437

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	153
School address:	Woburn Avenue Bishop's Stortford Hertfordshire
Postcode:	CM23 4PW
Telephone number:	01279 656876
Fax number:	01279 755340
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Heathcote
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hillmead Primary relocated to its present site on the western outskirts of Bishop's Stortford in April 2002. The school is situated on a relatively new private housing estate: previously it had drawn pupils from more socially mixed housing. The number of pupils now receiving free school meals is below average. The school is still in a state of transition. About one third of pupils are bussed to the school from the other side of town. In the present Year 6 class, over half of the pupils have been in the school for less than one year and less than a third of them were in the school in Year 2. The significant decline in pupil numbers before the move has been reversed.

The children's attainment on entry is varied but is broadly average overall. The number of pupils with special educational needs has fallen considerably from about 30% to 18% (average). However, the number of pupils with statements of special educational need has risen to 5% (well above average). About 5% (above average) of pupils come from other countries, mainly speaking Portuguese, Danish and Cantonese. The local authority supports three of these pupils and four of them are at an early stage of learning English.

The school is on a spacious site. Although the school has been relocated, it is essentially a new school. Only the headteacher and one teacher were at the previous site. Over half of the class teachers started a week and a half before the inspection began.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21411	Mr A Portlock	Lead inspector	English, art and design, design and technology and physical education.
11414	Mrs A Bennett	Lay inspector	
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education and special educational needs.
30000	Mr J Tresadern	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, music and English as an additional language.

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge & Bedford Ltd
13A Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 8HY

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** and improving school. It is establishing itself as an effective school, with a caring and positive ethos. Standards in core subjects improved significantly in the last year. In English and mathematics, pupils achieve well largely because of the effective teaching and management. Provision for pupils of differing needs is very good. Leadership and management of the school are good overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for children in the nursery is good and they achieve well.
- Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average throughout the school, while standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT) are average but could be higher; pupils' achievement is good in English and mathematics.
- There is a high level of inclusion for all pupils: support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly strong; relationships in the school are good.
- Pupils' behaviour is mostly good but in a few lessons it was unsatisfactory.
- Links with parents are very good: the parents are kept well informed and are very supportive of their children's education.
- The school is satisfactorily led by the headteacher and well supported by the governors and very well by senior staff: the co-ordination of literacy is very good and of numeracy is effective. While science and non-core subjects are satisfactorily co-ordinated, they need some improvement.

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the school has undergone a significant change. It went through a difficult period before relocating but since moving it has made good improvement and in comparison to the previous inspection, the school is now much more focused on raising standards and quality of teaching and learning in which it is beginning to be successful.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	C	C	C
Mathematics	D	D	C	C
Science	E	C	C	C

*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 2002 national tests were taken immediately following the school's move. The significant change to the school's pupil population necessitates caution in making judgements about standards, as the majority of pupils were new to the school. Standards in the most recent 2003 national tests for Years 2 and 6 were very much improved in all core subjects, with a significant number of pupils attaining above average standards. Over the last year, pupils achieved well throughout the school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics with standards above average. During the inspection this was particularly evident in the nursery and in Years 4/5 and 6 where teachers were mostly more established. Nursery children achieve well and most reception children achieve the goals expected for their age. Achievement in other subjects is mostly satisfactory. This includes science and ICT where standards are average but could be higher. Pupils have good attitudes to work and school and have settled well into the new school. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. In most lessons, classes and at break times it is good: in a few lessons behaviour was unsatisfactory. Pupils' rates of attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is good: cultural development is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Whilst teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, they are good in the nursery and in the older two junior classes. There is effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning throughout the school. Pupil behaviour needs to improve in some lessons if effective learning is to take place. The curriculum provision is satisfactory overall: it is good in the core subjects, satisfactory but improving in ICT and satisfactory in other subjects. Additional activities that enrich the curriculum are good. Provision for pupils with special education needs is particularly strong. Good use of learning support assistants in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. The new building and grounds support pupils' learning very well, although some aspects are still being developed. Partnership with parents is very good: they are provided with good quality information. The school is beginning to focus on developing its own community. The school takes good care of its pupils, ensuring their welfare, health and safety.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory: she is well supported by governors and very well by senior staff. The school has managed the relocation to the new site well and management is good. The leadership and management of English and special educational needs are very good. Subject leaders need to be able to judge standards achieved in their subjects more rigorously. The governance of the school is good: governors are well organised and have made an effective contribution to the school's development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are **very supportive** of the school and are pleased with the improvements following its relocation. The pupils enjoy school and feel that they are valued and supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards further in science and ICT.
- Ensure that unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons is dealt with appropriately and promptly by teachers in order to minimise its effect on other pupils' learning.
- Improve the quality of marking.
- Develop the roles of science and non-core subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating pupils' standards and achievements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards in English and mathematics are **above average**. Pupils' achievement is **good**, particularly in the nursery and in Years 5 and 6 and some Year 4, although the significant changes to the school's pupil population necessitates caution in making judgements about achievement overtime, as the majority of pupils are new to the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the nursery.
- Standards in all core subjects have risen broadly in line with the national trend between 1998 and 2002 and have been mostly average, with very much improved standards in 2003 national tests overall.
- A greater number of pupils attained higher levels in the most recent test results in both key stages compared to previous years.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is good throughout the school.
- Achievement in other subjects, including science and ICT, is mostly satisfactory.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.9 (16.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	12.6 (15.4)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	15.4 (15.7)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 17 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 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (27.4)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (25.9)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	28.5 (28.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The 2002 national tests took place shortly after the relocation of the school to its new site. This change affected the results of the tests for Year 2 pupils (in the table above), which showed a marked decline in core subjects over previous years, particularly in reading and writing. The Year 2 unpublished 2003 test results show that there has been a considerable improvement over these figures. Virtually all pupils achieved at least average standards in reading and writing and all did so in mathematics, with a significant number achieving above average results. The Year 6 results of the tests were less affected by the move and were average in all core subjects, which is similar to previous years. However, the 2003 results show a significant improvement over all previous years in mathematics and science overall and in the number of pupils achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
2. The pupils are achieving particularly well in the nursery and in Years 5 and 6 and some in Year 4. Most of the very new teachers are still establishing themselves within the routines of the school and inducting and assessing the needs of their new pupils and achievement is mostly satisfactory in these classes. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that achievement is generally good throughout the school. Inexperienced teachers were well supported by senior staff in overcoming some initial problems to maintain pupils' effective

learning. In some situations, the poor marking of pupils' work last year limited progress, as pupils did not know how well they were achieving and what they needed to do to improve.

3. Although there are variations from year-to-year, overall there is no significant difference between boys and girls in reading, writing and mathematics. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good; it is good for pupils who are learning English as an additional language ensuring that these pupils achieve as well as other pupils and at times make more rapid progress. The learning support assistants work well with these pupils and are used effectively. More able pupils are achieving well as can be seen in the improved test results. Their needs are clearly identified and appropriate work is planned. Both subjects are effectively managed and have been well established in the new school, with very good accommodation and a good level of resourcing; this has had a positive impact on ensuring that pupils are achieving well. The school has set up appropriate monitoring of pupils' progress, which is also used to identify those pupils who need extra help.
4. In science, during last year, pupils achieved well and the standards attained in the latest 2003 national tests were significantly higher than previous years. However, whilst most pupils are still achieving well, from the work currently seen in the school standards are average and higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in the work set. In some lessons, there are limited opportunities for developing the pupils' scientific enquiry skills. A system for monitoring the progress of individual pupils' achievements is not fully developed. In ICT, pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. The current standards of work are average in Years 2 and 6. The school is aware that standards need to be higher and has established a firm foundation from which to develop further. Although overall judgements cannot be made about pupils' achievement in other subjects, from the work seen, standards are mostly average and pupils achieve satisfactorily.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils demonstrate **good** attitudes towards their work and school life. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall: it is much improved and is good in most classes and at break times. However, there is poorer behaviour in a small number of classes. Pupils' rates of attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have settled well into the new school; the pupils work and play well together.
- The pupils' attitudes to the school and to their learning are good.
- Behaviour in most lessons and classes is good but in a few the behaviour is unsatisfactory.
- Relationships in the school are good.
- There is a need for greater participation in cultural activities in order to improve the pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures.
- Attendance is satisfactory.

Commentary

5. The positive attitudes to work result from the effective relationship between home and school and the high expectations of both. Most pupils enjoy school and like being there. Pupils were enthusiastic about their lessons and the other activities open to them. In most lessons, the pupils are attentive in class, and keen to get on with their work. The pupils are attentive to each other and willing to contribute to the discussions taking place.
6. In most lessons, the pupils settle quickly and sensibly get on with their work, allowing teachers to maintain a good pace without wasting time. The pupils apply themselves well to their work and persevere until it is completed. These good standards are continued around the school and in the playground. In a few lessons, behaviour was unsatisfactory. Pupils did not settle well to their work and did not follow the class routines. Some new teachers were still

establishing classroom routines. This affected the quality of work and limited the pupils' achievements.

7. The pupils get on well with each other and are supportive of one another. Since the school opened eighteen months ago, many pupils have started at the school at different times and these new pupils soon settle in and make friends. This includes a number of pupils with little spoken English. These pupils are well supported by the other pupils and they mix easily within the class. The pupils show respect for adults and for one another. They are polite and friendly. Older pupils help and support younger ones, which makes them more secure and confident. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities are developing and the pupils respond well to the challenge. They are taught to value themselves and others. The school council representatives take their role seriously, and talk authoritatively about what they have already achieved and their hopes for future improvements.
8. Provision for pupils' personal development is good and is developed throughout the school and taught from reception through designated lessons, subject lessons and through the operation of the school council. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, for example, in assemblies where pupils are given good opportunities for reflection. In lessons, pupils develop effective social skills when working together. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on pupils taking responsibility for their actions. There is a need, however, for greater participation in cultural activities in order to improve the pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

9. The attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average and the unauthorised absence is better than the national average.

Exclusions

10. There have been no exclusions.

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	147	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	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 is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The curriculum provision is **good** in the core subjects, satisfactory but improving in ICT and satisfactory in other subjects, although aspects of these subjects need to be more challenging. Additional activities that enrich the curriculum are **good**. Provision for pupils with special education needs is particularly strong. The new building and grounds support pupils' learning very well, although some aspects are still being developed.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall: they are good or better in the nursery and in older junior classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning in the nursery and for older juniors.
- Effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Pupil behaviour needs to improve in some lessons if effective learning is to take place.
- Good use of learning support assistants in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (11%)	16 (42%)	15 (39.5%)	3 (7.5 %)	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.

11. In most of the more established classes, teaching is good, with some very good teaching seen. In these classes, and for the oldest junior pupils, there are high expectations and pupils are challenged well to improve their work. This ensures that pupils effectively acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. Work is well planned and teachers have a clear idea how well the pupils are achieving.
12. Literacy and numeracy is developed well not only in English and mathematics lessons, but also in other subjects. This is particularly true of teaching and learning in subjects, such as history and religious education. In science, pupils use their writing skills well when producing descriptions and commentaries in their own words. The use of language and literacy is most effective in those lessons where teachers spend time developing pupils' specific subject vocabulary and provide appropriate writing models to support the work. The teaching of ICT to support pupils' learning is effective in English and mathematics but less so in other subjects.
13. The teaching of most of the very new teachers is satisfactory overall, with both strengths and weaknesses. The unsatisfactory teaching seen was mainly due to settling pupils into appropriate routines and dealing with more difficult pupils adequately. In a few lessons, this resulted in pupils not achieving as well as they should.
14. The learning support assistants are used effectively in all classes. They provide very effective support for lower attainers, for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are learning English as an additional language. They have been trained well in carrying out their roles and are clear about what they are doing to support the pupils they are working with. Consequently this supports the pupils' good achievements.

The curriculum

The breadth of curriculum opportunities offered by the school is **satisfactory** overall. Opportunities for enrichment are **good**. The accommodation and resources are **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, broad and balanced nursery curriculum.
- The curriculum throughout the school very effectively ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- Very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs ensures that they achieve well throughout the school.
- Good support for learning outside the school day developing a wide range of skills and abilities.
- Very good accommodation enables teaching and learning to take place in a highly supportive and encouraging environment.

Commentary

15. Curriculum planning ensures that the curriculum is now broad and balanced and that all aspects of each subject are taught taking account of recent guidance. Policies are in place for all areas of the curriculum, except one on drugs education, which is being ratified. Statutory requirements are met for all subjects including literacy, numeracy, religious education and collective worship. Long, medium and short-term planning is satisfactory, ensuring satisfactory progression in pupil's learning in most subjects. However, the two-year programme to accommodate split age classes still creates some difficulties in managing progression in ICT and music in the Year 4/5 class. The school is very aware of this issue.
16. The school is highly inclusive ensuring that all pupils have access to a curriculum that meets their particular needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strength of the curriculum. These pupils are fully included in the whole curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. The teachers plan carefully for the work that these pupils will do each term and each week. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good and additional activities are provided for them. There is support two mornings per week from a specialist teacher for Year 6 pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils in other years receive support in class from learning support assistants, although special training for this role is not yet provided. However, all of these groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school encourages innovative working with local businesses and has agreed to become part of a DfES Leadership and Management Programme for literacy and numeracy.
17. The school provides a wide variety of clubs and activities including sports, dance, reading, computers and French. Older pupils undertake residential and adventure experiences. Cultural links with the community and local schools include musical events and the use of visits and visitors for subject studies but are otherwise not strongly developed. In particular there are few links with communities from other cultures. Pupils visit secondary schools in preparation for transfer and the school provides work experience opportunities for local schools and colleges.
18. The accommodation is very good, allowing effective teaching. Classrooms accommodate the pupil numbers very well and there are specialist facilities for food technology, ICT, library, hall and dining hall. Play areas are spacious. Resources are generally good though resources in ICT are still being developed.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **very good care** of its pupils, ensuring their welfare, health and safety. Pupils are consulted, and their views sought. The support and guidance they are offered is appropriate: this is the beginning of a school year, and over half of the classes have teachers new to the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governor expertise in health and safety is well used for the school premises.
- Pupil consultation has led to improved behaviour at lunchtimes.
- Pupils receive a very good level of care.
- Good pupil induction arrangements.

Commentary

19. Parents confirm that pupils are happy in school, and though many were apprehensive about the move to the new site, they are delighted with both the buildings and the improved ethos and community feel. The headteacher knows all the pupils well. There are plenty of adults, both teaching and support staff, but because teacher turnover has been quite high, a small proportion of pupils responding to a pupil questionnaire did not feel they have an adult they could turn to for help. Pupils are receiving appropriate support and guidance at the very beginning of the school year. Newer teachers are still familiarising themselves with their pupils and with school practice, which is to use individual or group targets to focus pupils' learning and to reward success.
20. Governors consider the health and safety of the school and pupils is one of its main priorities. The governor with responsibility for this is very knowledgeable and ensures that risk assessments are regularly carried out on buildings and grounds resulting in a good level of care.
21. Child protection concerns are dealt with appropriately and with the support of the relevant agencies. The school is well designed so that any pupils in a wheelchair have complete access to every part. Pupils who are injured or unwell at school receive a good level of care, and extra staff members are to receive first aid training this term.
22. There are good induction arrangements for pupils joining the Nursery. Arrangements for pupils joining at other times are tailored to their needs, and include shorter days, and a class "buddy". Those pupils joining the school who have special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language are given good support and their needs are assessed.
23. Pupils are now much more involved and contribute to decision making in appropriate areas. The deputy headteacher consulted them over problems of playground behaviour and made sure that they take credit for the improvements. Pupils now have better play equipment and designated older pupils act as playground friends. A school council exists and its role is developing.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are **very supportive** of the school and are pleased with the improvements following its relocation. They are provided with good quality information. The school is beginning to focus on developing its own community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication with parents is good.
- Parents are provided with very good curriculum information.

- Reports are good but do not give parents information on achievement.
- Parents support their children very well with work at home, especially with reading.
- Parents feel confident about approaching the school.
- Transfer arrangements as pupils move through their schooling are good.
- Community links are at an early stage.

Commentary

24. Parents are very enthusiastic supporters of the school, and any with anxieties over the move have been reassured. There is now a thriving Friends' Association; one parent felt that "the new parents have brought the school alive".
25. The half-termly curriculum information sent to parents is very good. It gives just enough detail, fits onto one side of paper, and is a good model for home-school communication. Parents receive good annual reports that tell them what their children know, understand, and can do. Some write really personal details, showing that teachers get to know their pupils exceptionally well during the year. Reports have targets for improvement, but do not say how pupils are getting on in relation to National Curriculum expectations or their own capabilities.
26. Parents feel free to communicate their feelings with the school, but communication is not always two-way. Good numbers of parents responded to a questionnaire at the end of the first year in the new premises, but the results were not analysed or reported back. The responses to the school's questionnaire were similar to those received in the anonymous inspection questionnaire. This shows that parents are confident in expressing their views openly to the school. Almost all parents feel that their child is making good progress and is expected to work hard at school. They valued a recent literacy workshop.
27. Parents are very supportive with work at home, especially with reading. Many parents add thoughtful and useful comments in the children's reading records.
28. A bus service is provided to bring pupils who still live near to the old site to school. This is helpful, although pupils who depend on the bus service are not able to go to after-school clubs. The school has been focusing successfully on developing its own community. Now that it has moved, it has to establish itself within a new community. Some of this is beginning to happen: it has the support of two local businesses through governors; and pupils watched a free performance in exchange for being the rehearsal venue for a local theatre group.
29. Pupils transfer from the Nursery to the Reception classes through a well-integrated programme. Transfer arrangements as pupils move to other schools are satisfactory. Information is transferred electronically, and pupils are offered the usual range of visits. There have been some links with other schools, for example, the co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils has had discussions and exchanged information with the secondary school co-ordinator. The school also wants to arrange sporting fixtures with local schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory and the school is managed effectively: she is supported well by governors and very well by senior staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body effectively challenges and supports the school.
- The deputy-headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provide very good leadership and management for their areas of responsibility.
- Subject leadership and management of English are very good and good in mathematics.

- The leadership and management of other subjects have improved since the last inspection but subject leaders need to be able to judge standards achieved in their subjects more rigorously.
- The school is managed effectively overall.
- The school has managed the relocation to the new site well.

Commentary

30. Most of the governors are relatively new to the role and their varied backgrounds offer the school a wide and extremely beneficial range of experience. They have played an important and very effective role in the establishment of the school on its new site. They quickly identified what they needed to do to ensure that they were successfully fulfilling their role and developed their own action plan; they carry out their statutory duties well. The governing body is very well led by the chair and he is supported very well by the other governors who work effectively together. Through their commitment to visiting school, working with subject leaders and senior staff, they have a good knowledge of how well the school is working and what it needs to do to improve. They are supportive but also ready to challenge the school. For example, when the 2002 Key Stage 1 results were lower than expected, they established, with the headteacher, procedures to ensure that they had the necessary school data before the results of the tests were published and the reasons why results might be higher or lower in particular years. The governing body have very high expectations for the school and work hard to achieve them. The governors play an important role in financial management and work hard to achieve best value for the school.
31. The headteacher is committed to establishing an effective school, with high standards and a positive ethos. Monitoring of teaching and learning are firmly in place. She has worked hard and built up an effective management team to support her and has ensured that the roles and responsibilities of these staff are clear. They work well together as an effective team. The school has gone through a difficult few years from the time that it was at the other site with: unsatisfactory teaching in junior classes, which affected pupils' standards and achievements, significant falling pupil numbers and discontent amongst parents. The headteacher has received very good support from a consultant headteacher to overcome these problems and all of the areas of concern have been addressed.
32. The headteacher has been very well assisted by the other two members of the senior management team: the deputy headteacher and the SENCO. Both provide very good leadership within the areas for which they are responsible: they both have a clear vision and know how to attain it. The deputy headteacher has a wide range of responsibilities, for example, supporting learning support assistants through advice and training and monitoring their performance. Her role as English co-ordinator has been fundamental in establishing a very effective curriculum and in supporting teachers in developing their skills in teaching the subject. Much improved standards are a result of this work. The SENCO, who is also responsible for gifted and talented pupils, has established very good processes and procedures for supporting these pupils. She trains, supports and monitors the work of those learning support assistants who work with pupils who have special education needs. She gives time to parents who wish to discuss their child's needs. The leadership and management of other subjects have improved since the last inspection but subject leaders need to be able to judge standards achieved in their subjects more rigorously.
33. The headteacher takes the lead well in the day-to-day management of the school and in gathering pupil performance data and evaluating the work of the school. She has refined the assessment process, including the use of a computer package, and this is being used to record and track pupils' progress through the school. The assessment procedures are more effectively supporting the school in making judgements about the resources needed to support pupils with differing needs. Much of the training arises from Performance Management, which is appropriately in place and supporting the raising of standards.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	398948	Balance from previous year	40134
Total expenditure	407517	Balance carried forward to the next	31565
Expenditure per pupil	2397		

34. The school has managed the relocation to the new site well.
- Parents agree that the school is developing well on the new site.
 - An effective leadership and management structure is in place.
 - Standards are improving.
 - Pupils like the new school.
 - Staffing is becoming more stable.
 - Provision for English and mathematics is very effectively supporting pupils' good achievements.
 - The school is inclusive and supports all pupils well.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **satisfactory** overall; it is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception class. Communication, language and literacy together with mathematical development were the focus of the inspection. The other areas of learning were seen in passing but are not reported on in depth.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is **satisfactory** and standards are similar to most children.
- Teaching is good overall.
- A wide range of appropriate activities are provided in the nursery.
- Outdoor provision is **very good**.

Commentary

35. Attainment on entry to the nursery is mixed and the proportion with low attainment for their age is relatively large compared to other schools. Children make relatively quick progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in Reception towards the national goals for early learning. They are actively engaged with the activities most of the time and are achieving broadly the same standards as pupils of similar capacity in most other schools.
36. Planning is generally appropriate and the learning objectives for the day are clear. The assessment arrangements are satisfactory but teachers and adults do not always check what children have gained from the learning opportunities provided. The planning for the year and the term is appropriate to the needs of the pupils. Indoors, a wide range of stimulating activities are provided, including good provision for creative development. Outdoor provision in the nursery is well planned, making maximum use of the large, secure area available. A good range of equipment is provided. Appropriate use is made of ICT to reinforce teaching in several of the nationally agreed areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is **satisfactory** and standards are similar to most children.
- Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to adjust to life in school and to learn to play and work together constructively and effectively.

Commentary

37. The substantial majority of children in the nursery and the Reception are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the time they transfer into Year 1. They are confident and at ease with the teachers and settle to their tasks willingly and with interest. The Reception children are attentive to their teacher and follow instructions and routines well and increasingly so in the nursery. They share resources without squabbling and behaviour is good. Relationships between pupils and with teachers and with other adults are effective and this is helping pupils to gain confidence working in pairs, in small groups, and in front of the whole class. The general organisation of both the nursery and the Reception promotes the personal development of pupils effectively, helping them to mature and get on well with other children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is **good**.
- Teaching is good. An appropriate emphasis is placed on providing activities for pupils to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Commentary

38. Speaking and listening skills are mixed on entry to the nursery and more pupils than typically found have limited skills of expression and attentiveness. The substantial majority of pupils are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for learning by the end of the Reception year. The Reception children use language effectively when playing to establish imaginary roles and to negotiate events with their playmates. Nursery children are more inclined to play side-by-side with others, rather than negotiate, and often do not use language except to express preferences and ask for things, which is typical of children of nursery age. Almost all children enjoy stories and respond well to books. They readily join in with rhymes and songs and with predicted endings to stories.
39. Much of the teaching is motivating. When reading stories, for example, credible characterisation by the teacher makes the story have emotional depth and captivates the children's attention. Good emphasis is placed on literacy. For example, in shared work, teachers ask children to identify initial sounds in words and to look for initial letters in words. Several of the activities promote writing, such as drawing things with names that begin with a particular letter; this is good practice. The teaching of letters and sounds is planned and taught systematically and this is leading to children making the progress they should. The extent of assessment, particularly the day-to-day assessment that tells teachers whether learning is successful, is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision does not always challenge the more able pupils to excel themselves.

Commentary

40. Achievement is **satisfactory** and standards are **average**. The substantial majority of pupils are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for learning by the end of the Reception year. Children in the Reception year are beginning to match objects to numbers and count reliably to five. They are able to recognise some numerals and are generally confident with those to five. Teaching is satisfactory and makes good use of resources to make the learning real and memorable.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and opportunities for using literacy skills in other subjects are well developed. The provision has improved significantly over the last year and it is very well managed. Consequently standards are much higher.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards in reading and writing in both key stages.
- The 2003 national test results for Years 2 and 6 pupils showed significant improvement over previous years.
- Good pupil achievement throughout the school.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good; it is good for pupils who are learning English as an additional language ensuring that these pupils achieve as well as other pupils and at times make more rapid progress.
- More able pupils are achieving well.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Language and literacy skills in other subjects are well developed.
- Work to improve speaking and listening is effectively raising standards but there needs to be more opportunities for developing role-play and drama.
- Good use of learning support assistants.
- Good support from parents/carers in their children's learning.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

41. By ages seven and 11, the pupils' standards in English are above average. The pupils enter Year 1 with standards which are average and so, by the end of Year 6, they make good progress overall. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
42. Standards in speaking and listening have improved and are satisfactory overall. The pupils concentrate well in most lessons and respond appropriately to the questions or instructions they are given. By the end of Year 6, they are capable of using a good range of words to talk about their work. Opportunities to develop pupils' skills through role-play and drama are limited. The pupils develop confidence and skill in performance by taking part in school assemblies, a poetry recital evening and drama. For example, Year 4 pupils took great pleasure reading parts in a play and enacted the script expressively.
43. Standards in reading are good throughout the school in comparison with national standards. The enthusiasm displayed by the teachers and the good support and encouragement of parents, results in most pupils enjoying reading and having a love of books. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are able to use phonic, context and picture clues to read texts independently. The pupils read increasingly confidently and expressively throughout the school and can talk about what might happen next in the story and about books they like. They understand where to find the index, contents and glossary pages in information books and the more able pupils can use these effectively to find information.
44. Standards in writing are good by the end of Year 2. In Years 1 and 2, scrutiny of work shows that the pupils learn to write in a variety of formats including stories, instructions, reports, personal reflections, descriptions of characters and poems. They develop their ideas in sentences, mostly using capital letters and full stops. In handwriting, the pupils are beginning to form letters accurately and their work is neater. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have made good progress, their writing is better organised, with good sentence construction. Standards in writing by the end of Year 6 are good. The pupils write for a wide range of purposes and audiences and amend their style accordingly. They study the work of famous authors and

poets to inspire their own work. Their work is often interesting and imaginative, with good sentence construction. Pupils talk about their work very enthusiastically. Two Year 6 pupils talked about how their work had improved and what they needed to do to improve further.

45. Pupils are achieving well in nearly all aspects of their work. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' comprehension skills and work has begun on improving these with some success. The quality of handwriting varies in junior classes but at best is fluent and neatly joined. Handwriting standards could be improved if there is more consistency in challenging pupils to improve. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good; it is good for pupils who are learning English as an additional language ensuring that these pupils achieve as well as other pupils and at times make more rapid progress. The learning support assistants are used effectively and have developed good skills and built positive relationships with the pupils. More able pupils are achieving well. Their needs are clearly identified and appropriate work planned. At best the pupils rise to the high expectations; this happens in many classes. Extra opportunities are provided out of school for extending the pupils' learning, such as the visit to listen to a writer and poet. Good support is provided by most of the parents or carers, for example, in hearing their children read and in encouraging them with their homework.
46. All teachers plan effectively using the National Literacy Strategy and identify clear objectives for learning. These are shared with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of the focus of the lesson. Teachers teach well the basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation and model adventurous words. Tasks are usually well matched to the different abilities of the pupils. The pupils use their literacy skills well across the curriculum, particularly in history and religious education. Homework is used well to support learning and this is well supported at home. However, in a number of classes, marking is too often inconsistent and does not indicate what the child needs to do to improve and at times too much work is unmarked. Marking is at its best when it is used to develop positive attitudes in pupils' working habits and informs them how well they are achieving and what they need to do next. This needs to be monitored more carefully by the senior staff.
47. The subject is very well led and managed. Very good progress has been made since the school moved to its new site resulting in improved standards achieved. Pupils are very well monitored and targets for improvement are set based upon assessments made. This helps the school to identify which pupils need additional support so that these resources can be provided. Governors are actively involved in the monitoring process. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning support assistants and make good progress. A visiting specialist teacher supports very well those pupils who are learning English as an additional language in Year 6. In other years support is provided by learning assistants but they have not been given specialist training.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Opportunities for developing the use of language and literacy in other subjects are well developed as they were at the previous inspection. This is particularly true in subjects, such as history and religious education. Good examples of report writing were found in science work. The use of language and literacy is most effective in those lessons where teachers spend time developing pupils' specific subject vocabulary and provide appropriate writing models to support the work. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is effective.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and opportunities for using numeracy skills are well developed. The provision has continued to improve and it is well managed. Consequently standards are much higher.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6
- The pupils achieve well.
- Good use of mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Good quality teaching, except for a few occasions where pupils' behaviour were not well managed.
- Appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- The effective work of learning support assistants.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Need for more consistency in the marking of pupils' work.
- The leadership and management of the subject have established the subject well.

Commentary

49. The standards achieved in the most recent 2003 national tests shows that standards are significantly higher than in previous years. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 and beyond. They investigate number sequences, including odd and even numbers. They have a good understanding of place value up to 1000 and they order numbers to 100. They add sums of money to find the cost of items. Lower attaining pupils find it more difficult to calculate change. The pupils have a good understanding of half as a fraction. They recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and they compare the weights of classroom objects. Lower attainers have difficulties in telling the time on analogue clocks.
50. By the end of Year 6, the pupils use all four number operations well, in order to solve problems mentally. They use efficient written methods to solve more complex real life problems. They have a good understanding of the times tables and they solve problems involving short multiplication and division. Higher attainers use written methods well to work out long multiplication and division. The pupils find the fractions and percentages of amounts and they calculate the area and perimeter of compound shapes. They draw and measure angles accurately. They use the language of probability accurately and they find the mode, median and range of sets of numbers. They represent data by means of accurate graphs and diagrams.
51. The quality of teaching is good. There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' ability to make quick mental recall of number facts and on their ability to solve real life problems involving the four rules of number. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils, so that they are clear as to what is expected of them. Mental mathematics sessions are brisk. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' ability to use correct mathematical terms. In a Year 6 lesson, this helped the pupils to understand terms such as *perpendicular*, *bisect*, *intersect*, to develop their understanding of the properties of quadrilaterals and to record these graphically, such as by means of a Carroll diagram. The teachers deploy learning support assistants very well and these adults provide very effective support for lower attainers and for pupils with special educational needs. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher made effective use of practical apparatus, in order to help the pupils understand the concept of subtraction as 'take away'.
52. The teachers organise their lessons well. They match work well to the pupils' varying needs and they provide a good challenge to higher attaining pupils. They use questioning effectively to make the pupils think carefully. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked, "*Why wouldn't we use a metre stick to measure a person's waist?*" and this helped the pupils to use appropriate ways of measuring classroom objects. The teachers sum up at the end of the lesson well to reinforce learning. Regular homework is set for the older pupils.
53. A weakness in teaching is the inconsistency of the marking of pupils' work. Comments in exercise books, such as, '*Your working out should be a lot clearer*' and '*Make sure the clock's*

short hand is pointing correctly to the number', suggest ways in which the pupils might improve their work. Some marking, however, is less helpful. Some teachers manage the challenging behaviour of less motivated pupils better than others, so that there are fewer interruptions and the lessons move at a quicker pace.

54. The subject co-ordinator has been in post only since the start of term. She is keen to maintain the current high standards of provision in mathematics. Leadership and management of the subject hitherto have been good. The previous co-ordinator checked the quality of planning and teaching in the subject and developed good systems to track pupils' progress and set targets for further improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. The pupils make good use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, Year 1 pupils contribute to a clear block graph of their favourite fruits and vegetables. Year 2 pupils measure the distances travelled by objects in work on forces and they record their findings by means of accurate bar graphs. Year 6 pupils make accurate measurements of shadows at different times of the day and they construct accurate line graphs of the time taken for sugar to dissolve in water.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision is satisfactory. A satisfactory curriculum is now in place and the resource base allows effective teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The results of the 2003 national tests are significantly higher than in previous years and the average standards currently seen in the school.
- Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in the work tasks set.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in the pupils' work so limiting their experience of using computers across the curriculum.
- The planning and management of scientific enquiry in some lessons is insufficiently secure to promote effective learning.
- A system for monitoring the progress of individual pupils is not fully developed.

Commentary

56. The current standards of work in Year 6 and Year 2 are broadly the same as those found in most schools nationally. These standards are the same as those found at the time of the last inspection. They are, however, below the standards attained in the significantly higher 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils due to the composition of the current Year 6 cohort. Despite the changes the school has faced in recent years the curriculum has been improved since the last inspection through the adoption of national guidelines. With support from the local authority, long, medium and short-term planning has also improved.
57. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in both the infant and junior years. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a basic knowledge of scientific enquiry. For example, they use simple equipment to make observations about the distances toy vehicles move when different forces are applied, measuring and recording their results as tables and presenting them as graphs. They also know the names of different parts of the body and describe the changes observed when different foodstuffs are heated, comparing the results with those they predicted. Pupils use their writing skills in writing the descriptions and commentaries in their own words well. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a broad knowledge of scientific enquiry, life processes, materials and their properties, and physical processes. They test the time it takes for ice to melt in different locations, demonstrating an understanding of how to conduct a fair test, observe,

measure and draw conclusions. They use keys to identify groups of living things correctly using scientific vocabulary such as 'arthropods', 'molluscs' and 'invertebrates'. They construct electrical circuits in different ways to vary the brightness of a bulb and represent them with circuit diagrams.

58. Numeracy and literacy skills are developed well throughout the school and presentation standards are good. However, in the work seen there was little evidence of the use of ICT.
59. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Planning is detailed but for some lessons the objectives need to specify the key learning outcomes in terms of the desired scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. Teaching is firmly based in developing scientific enquiry through practical investigations. However, the management of some lessons is insufficiently secure to ensure that all pupils are purposefully engaged and clear about procedures. There was also insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in the tasks that were set in both the infant and junior years.
60. There has been too little time for the new co-ordinator to make an impact, however he is already aware of the key areas for improvement and the subject is now part of the school development plan. Work has started on a system to monitor the attainment of individual pupils and for improving teaching. Resources are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for the subject is satisfactory overall and is improving. The curriculum and resources are satisfactory overall, although, some aspects are underdeveloped.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The average standards achieved need to be higher.
- The subject is insufficiently developed in other subjects across the curriculum.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach with enthusiasm.
- Learning support assistants are knowledgeable and support the pupils well.
- Accommodation is good with a purpose built computer suite.
- Resources require further development to supplement the programs available to support the planned work and to support whole class teaching.

Commentary

61. The current standards of work meet national expectations at the end of Year 6 and Year 2. These are the same as those found at the time of the last inspection and have been maintained through a period of great change in the school by effective teaching supported by a curriculum based upon national guidelines and good long, medium and short term planning. The school is aware that standards need to be higher and has established a good foundation from which to develop further. They are also aware that the present mixed age composition of some classes creates difficulties when teaching the more technical aspects of the upper junior curriculum.
62. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. By the end of Year 2 pupils use the keyboard well in their tasks, opening and closing down programs confidently. They use CD-ROMs and retrieve, save and print information. They give simple instructions to control the movements of a 'floor turtle' and Year 1 pupils use a simulation package to create coloured designs on the screen with fun and amazement. They present ideas using text and tables they have composed. By the end of Year 6, pupils use the Internet to gain information. They develop ideas creating and using text, images and sounds and they use control mechanisms to operate buzzers, monitor temperature with sensors and use spreadsheets to explore the

effects of changing numerical values in sets of information. They exchange information, using e-mail and interrogate information to check for accuracy.

63. From the evidence of the three lessons seen and the scrutiny of work, the overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers use good subject knowledge and national guidelines to produce detailed plans with clear and specific objectives, developed by well thought out activities that engage the pupils and lead to good achievement. Teaching is less effective, when the teacher does not give pupils time to assimilate ideas or sufficient time to master the skills. Learning assistants are knowledgeable and support the pupils well.
64. The new co-ordinator has had insufficient time to make an impact upon management of the subject but he has already identified weaknesses in some areas of resources. For example, programs to support the more advanced aspects of the curriculum for the upper juniors are insufficient and the facilities do not yet exist for large screen demonstrations to the whole class. Accommodation is otherwise very good and the computer suite permits easy teacher access to all pupils and work-stations. Assessment procedures are still being developed to identify accurately the pupils' attainment. The subject is now part of the school development plan and a computer club further supports pupils' learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The studies undertaken contribute well to the development of the pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. However, the use of ICT in other subjects, for example in science, is not well developed. This reduces the opportunities for the pupils to use their skills and to see the practical implementation of the subject into to other aspects of life.

HUMANITIES

66. Two lessons were seen in geography and one lesson was seen in history. As the inspection was at the beginning of the school year there was insufficient evidence upon which to base a judgement.
67. In **geography and history**, by the end of Year 2, the pupils are beginning to understand how things change over time and how a timeline can show this. They know about the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and significant events in British history, such as The Great Fire of London. The pupils are beginning to understand the concept of a map as a view from above and they can locate rooms on a plan of the school. They describe their journey to school. They compare life on a Scottish island with that in Bishop's Stortford.
68. By the end of Year 6, the pupils understand the importance of evidence in finding out about the past. They research information about life in Victorian times from CD Rom and other sources. They use their literacy skills effectively to write a letter home in the role of a child working in a woollen mill. They compare the lives of rich and poor in Victorian times. The pupils know about some aspects of life in ancient Greece. They are making satisfactory progress in developing their mapping skills, such as using co-ordinates to locate map features. They understand the changing nature of a river and its valley from source to mouth. The pupils use the Internet and tourist literature to research information about mountain environments. They make effective use of their literacy skills to write in the role of a mountaineer climbing Everest.
69. There are good links with literacy. The teachers maintain an appropriate balance between giving pupils information and providing them with sufficient opportunities to find things out for themselves. The teachers make effective use of resources, including ICT, to support teaching and learning. In geography, the teachers encourage the pupils to use correct geographical terms, such as *porous*, *permeable*, *erosion*, *deposition*, *tributary*, *confluence*. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher made effective use of a sand tray to illustrate how running water

erodes a channel and deposits sand elsewhere. Class control is insecure at times and some pupils have a very limited concentration span. The quality of marking is variable.

70. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Planning is satisfactorily based on national guidelines. The subject leader has developed a clear action plan to raise standards. The school is aware that there are no whole school systems in place to check the progress of the pupils' knowledge and skills and is planning to remedy this.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong links with aspects of literacy.
- Good encouragement of pupils' spiritual development.
- Too few opportunities for the pupils to use ICT.
- Good opportunities to support pupils' research skills.
- Good leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

71. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain average standards, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection and the pupils are making satisfactory progress.
72. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some Bible stories. They know about the birth and baptism of Jesus and of some of the stories He told. They know about some of His miracles, such as the feeding of the five thousand and the calming of the storm on the Sea of Galilee. The pupils are familiar with some of the stories of the Old Testament, such as Joseph and his brothers and the story of Moses. The pupils are beginning to understand some features of religions other than Christianity, such as the Jewish festival of Hannukah and the Hindu celebration of Diwali. They know about the Hindu story of Rama and Sita and the Sikh story of Guru Nanak.
73. By the end of Year 6, the pupils think about ways in which the world could be made a better place. They use their literacy skills effectively to describe this. They consider the characteristics of a hero today and in times past. They reflect on the reasons why Jesus is a hero to Christians. They reflect, too, on the nature of God and love and on the relationships between a father and son. The pupils are familiar with aspects of religions other than Christianity, such as Buddhism and Sikhism.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teachers value pupils' contributions in lessons and are patient in letting pupils express their own ideas. In a Year 2 lesson, this helped the pupils to understand the significance of signs and symbols in everyday life and in different religions. This teacher developed the pupils' confidence by emphasising that there are no right or wrong answers and that people have different beliefs. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that the teachers make good links with literacy and that they enable the pupils to reflect on religious and moral issues. Weaknesses in the teaching include introductory sessions which are too long, causing some pupils to lose concentration, occasionally using language which is too difficult for the pupils, for example 'the *unity of God*', and sometimes lacking secure class control.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met. The co-ordinator checks colleagues' planning and has developed a clear action plan to raise standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. No lessons were seen in art and design, one lesson in music and two lessons in design and technology. There is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about standards and quality of teaching in these subjects. Sufficient time is allocated to these subjects and both the curriculum being followed and the resources available are satisfactory.
77. In **art and design**, the evidence from wall displays and sketchbooks indicates that a good variety of techniques and media have been developed by pupils throughout the school. The work seen was mostly two-dimensional. Younger pupils had produced painted flowers and animals and very effectively printed using bicycle tyres. Infant pupils had used crayons and chalk to produce colourful and carefully produced drawings. They had also produced weavings effectively, using a range of different yarns. Junior pupils developed patterns well, using tissue and other papers: they also investigated African masks and recorded their ideas, using charcoal, pastels, paint and clay. Most of the pupils were enthusiastic when talking about their work and take pride in the finished product.
78. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator has produced an effective improvement plan. There is no system for assessing the pupils' work or the development of their skills against the expectations in the national guidelines. The co-ordinator has no opportunities to observe lessons but she provides advice and resources and checks the quality of teaching and learning through monitoring wall displays and sketchbooks.
79. In **design and technology**, in Year 6, the pupils had investigated and researched slippers, which led them to designing and making their own. They had considered such aspects as which materials would be the most comfortable and safest. The pupils recorded their progress and produced a final evaluation. The completed slippers were well made but their construction and designs were fairly similar. Literacy skills were well developed in this work, although spelling of key words needs improving. Year 3 pupils had investigated control mechanisms for making pop-up cards. They have a good grasp of the construction involved and produced a variety of ideas well but the subject leader identified that designing and evaluating aspects were less well developed. In the two lessons seen, both junior classes were investigating bread. In the more effective lesson, the teacher spent time developing the ideas and vocabulary that the pupils would need more rigorously than in the other. While the initial discussions in both classes effectively developed their ideas, in the less effective lesson the pupils were not sufficiently supported in developing their writing about the different breads and consequently the pupils did not achieve as well.
80. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take a pride in their work. There are limited opportunities to develop work using resistant materials and ICT.
81. The subject leader is well informed. She has had opportunities to monitor other teachers' planning. The scheme of work ensures that planning is consistent across the classes. Effective planning exists in all classes and there is evidence of sufficient time being made available to carry out the planned work. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but these are not planned for and the pupils' specialist subject vocabulary is not sufficiently well developed.
82. In **music**, the infant pupils compose simple songs expressing different moods through variations in rhythm and pulse and they explore the sounds made by different instruments. They perform their compositions using voices and instruments. They listen and respond to changes in pitch using signs and body movements. They also listen to and appraise story music. Junior pupils compose and perform by taking part in singing rounds and simple part songs, by incorporating their own instruments into pieces of music and by improvising within a group. They also appraise musical performances, for example by comparing different

examples of the same music. From evidence gained through discussion with junior pupils, they are not totally secure in the use of some basic musical vocabulary such as 'pulse', 'dynamics' and 'pitch' and in two assemblies the quality of singing was unsatisfactory with a lack of commitment from many pupils.

83. Too few lessons were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, although in a lesson seen the planning was thorough and detailed with clear and specific objectives. Activities were well matched to the objectives and to the levels of ability of the pupils helping them to achieve satisfactorily.
84. The subject leader is new to the post and has had insufficient time to make an impact on the subject. A new commercial scheme has been purchased to enhance the national guidelines and support teaching. The school takes part in local musical concerts and these together with the school musical production give pupils good opportunities to perform before audiences. The school dance club contributes to pupils' learning.

Physical education

Three physical education lessons were seen and several lunchtime and after school activities were observed.

Provision in physical education is **good**. The curriculum covers all aspects of the subject, resources are appropriate to the needs of the curriculum and accommodation both inside and outside is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average for 11-year-olds.
- The pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Well-developed curriculum.
- Curriculum enriched by additional activities.
- Well resourced and very good accommodation.

Commentary

85. Standards are average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds and the pupils achieve well throughout the school. There is a comprehensive programme of work to meet all aspects on the National Curriculum and a good range of activities provided outside lessons enhances this. Year 4/5 pupils at present have swimming lessons at a local swimming pool and junior classes have lessons for one term each year. Nearly all pupils attain the expected level of competence by the time that they leave the school.
86. Year 1 pupils are finding different ways of controlling a ball. They repeat and explore a variety of ways of moving, mostly with satisfactory control and co-ordination. Pupils concentrate and work hard on the task. They work reasonably well with a partner. In the Year 2 class, the pupils are finding different ways of moving with a ball and by the end of the lesson the pupils were beginning to work more effectively. Year 6 pupils get enthusiastically involved in the warm-up at the beginning of the lesson. The pupils are developing their skills and understanding of using hockey sticks and controlling a ball with it. They increasingly improve their control and most groups work hard, challenging their opponents when taking part in small-team games.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Where the teaching is successful, the teachers have good subject knowledge, plan thoroughly and have high expectations of the quality of the work and make very clear to the pupils what they are doing. This allows the pupils to feel comfortable to explore and develop their own skills. Overall, the pupils enjoy their work and get involved well in the wide range of activities.

88. The subject is satisfactorily managed and there are appropriate and useful plans. The subject leader is very new to the role. There have been no opportunities to monitor. The good out-of-lesson activities enhance the pupils' learning. The school is just beginning to take part in a variety of sporting events and matches.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

89. Only two lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and so no overall judgements can be made. However, the available evidence points to provision being good. In the two lessons seen teaching was good. Pupils' skills and understanding are developed well in assemblies, personal, social and health education lessons, subject lessons and through the operation of the school council. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and they respond well to the opportunities to develop their social skills and get on well with each other.
90. A school council exists and is developing its role and the pupil representatives are clear about what they have already achieved and their hopes for future improvements. Pupils feel that they are involved and contribute to making decisions. When there were some problems at play time they were consulted and the recommendations acted upon. The pupils are helped to understand the need for showing respect for adults and for one another and they respond well by being polite and friendly. Older pupils help younger ones to be more secure and confident. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities are developing and the pupils respond well to the challenge. They are taught to value themselves and others. As new pupils join the school they are well supported by staff and pupils in settling into the routines of school.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).