

INSPECTION REPORT

Ilsham Church of England Primary School

Ilsham Road, Torquay

LEA area: Torbay

Unique reference number: 113401

Headteacher: Mrs L. Atkinson

Lead inspector: Will Gale

Dates of inspection: 8 -10 December 2003.

Inspection number: 256539

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	162
School address:	Ilsham Road Torquay Devon
Postcode:	TQ1 2JQ
Telephone number:	01803 292313
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Gordon Percy
Date of previous inspection:	23 February 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Wellswood area of Torquay, approximately a mile from the town centre. The school buildings are on a small site at the centre of the 'village', close to shops and the church. It is supported by the Exeter diocese of the Church of England and the local parish. The original buildings have been considerably extended and a further extension is due to be completed in 2004, which will provide improved staff and administrative accommodation. The school makes use of the nearby church hall for collective worship, and lessons in PE and music. The area has a mix of well established, privately owned housing and hotels. Some of the larger houses have been converted into flats. Parents and pupils come from a broad cross-section of backgrounds. The number of pupils from different types of social class households is in line with national averages. The percentage of pupils who take free school meals is in line with national averages.

There are 162 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11. The school has 6 classes in total; the 3 classes at Key Stage 2 contain more than one year group. Some classes have an imbalance of boys and girls, most notably the reception class. There are a below average number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, but the number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is in line with national averages. The school has a small number of pupils from ethnic minorities. All pupils speak English as their first language. Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment which are in line with national averages.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21317	Will Gale	Lead inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education, and citizenship Special educational needs
9769	Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
32257	Richard Chalkley	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Music
17693	Esther Digby	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Ilsham is a **very effective school**. The headteacher, staff and governors work towards a common purpose in improving the school. Teaching is good and helps pupils to develop impressive attitudes to learning. Pupils achieve standards which are well above national averages in English and mathematics, and represent very good progress since they entered the school. The school offers **very good value for money**. It is very popular locally and is at the centre of community activity. Its cramped site restricts opportunities for pupils to learn effectively in a small number of subjects.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- High quality of leadership provided by the headteacher, senior managers and governors
- Very strong commitment to the aims of the school by all staff
- Very good standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics, art, and personal, social and health education (PSHE)
- Good teaching, which is particularly effective in pupils' first and last years at the school
- Excellent relations with the community, which has a very high regard for the school
- A very small site, which cannot provide the necessary space and facilities for all areas of learning, despite good efforts to improve the quality of the buildings.

The school has made good progress in developing its effectiveness since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving significantly higher standards, especially in literacy and numeracy. All statutory requirements are now being met. There is a thorough system for planning and assessment, and schemes of work make suitable references to pupils' progress between year groups. The school has developed more thorough monitoring procedures with an increasing contribution from the governing body. The school improvement plan is a detailed document, with a clear statement of purpose. There are clear procedures for the setting and marking of homework.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' **achievement is good**. Pupils enter the school demonstrating levels of ability in line with national averages. In reception, they achieve very well and reach standards which are above the goals they are expected to reach. Pupils' achievement is good in Year 2 and they achieve standards which are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6, pupils' achievement is good. They reach standards which are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. Throughout the school, pupils show very good achievements in art and PSHE and reach standards which are well above expectations.

Pupils' **personal qualities are very good**. Their **social, moral and cultural development is very good**. Pupils have a keen sense of responsibility, and a very well developed sense of right and wrong. They enjoy coming to school, they are very enthusiastic to learn and their behaviour is very good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good quality of education. Teaching is good** and helps pupils to develop good learning skills. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 6. Teaching is very effective towards the end of Key Stage 2. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a substantial contribution to teaching. Teachers develop a high standard of pupil behaviour in all classes, which helps pupils to learn well.

The well-planned curriculum has been very well developed to include a very good programme for PSHE, and very good preparations for pupils to transfer to secondary education. In some areas, such as PE, the development of the curriculum is restricted by the lack of space on site. The excellent relations with the local community and the very good support provided by parents help the school to provide a wider range of learning opportunities for pupils. There are very good arrangements for the guidance and support of pupils at all stages of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The recently appointed headteacher has consulted widely and developed a renewed sense of purpose. The school's senior managers are hard-working, and provide very good models of successful teaching and curriculum planning. The governors have a very good sense of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are increasingly involved in monitoring the school's performance. Subject co-ordinators work closely with their colleagues and have developed consistent arrangements for their subjects. In some subjects, they are not yet fully monitoring standards across the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school. They appreciate the high standards achieved and the very good efforts the school makes to consult them. Parents are worried about the school's lack of space, but recognise that staff have tried to make the best use of the available accommodation. Pupils like being at the school. They get on well with staff. Many pupils are very pleased by the new computer suite. Some pupils are concerned by the cramped conditions in classes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop better accommodation to provide wider opportunities in subjects such as music and PE, more space in classes and the playground, and better facilities for staff*
- Raise standards in IT, music and PE, where the levels pupils reach are only in line with national expectations and not as high as in other subjects*

(*These areas are referred to in the current school improvement plan and actions are already underway in order to secure improvement)

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good and they reach standards well above average. In English, mathematics art, and personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils' achievement is very good. In the Foundation Stage, children's achievement is very good. Pupils' achievement is very good in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in the Foundation Stage
- Standards in English and mathematics are very good throughout the school
- Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are very good
- Achievement is very good in art and PSHE
- Significant improvements in recent years in pupils' results at the end of Year 2
- Standards are less good in aspects of IT, music and PE

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection, there has been a good level of improvement in pupils' results in national tests. Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are very high compared with the national average. Their results in writing are particularly impressive. Results have been steadily improving since 2000, as a result of the emphasis the school has placed on raising standards, the very good planning and effective teaching. At the end of Year 6, pupils' results in English and mathematics are also very high compared to the average, a level of attainment which has been maintained since 2000. Pupils' results in science are well above national averages, but are not as strong as in English and mathematics, largely as a result of weaknesses in the teaching of investigative work. The very slight dip in results in all subjects in 2003 has been carefully analysed by the school and was mainly caused by a slightly less able cohort of pupils, whose lower levels of attainment have been tracked through Key Stage 2. The school is doing well in meeting its targets, which have been set at a level that accurately reflects the information the school has about pupils' prior attainment.
2. The school performs very well compared with similar schools nationally and when compared with schools in the Torbay area. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and their level of improvement as they move through the school is similar to other pupils. In Year 2, in particular, pupils with SEN frequently achieve results in line with national averages, demonstrating that they benefit from the individual attention they receive in class and their full inclusion in all activities. The relatively small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups make similar progress to other pupils. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language reach levels comparable with pupils of similar ability. Girls achieve better results than boys at the end of Year 2; a situation which reflects the national picture. In Year 6, boys achieve better results than girls in mathematics and science, but this is also not dissimilar from national figures. The school's records, and inspectors' observations, suggest that pupils make their most rapid progress as they near the end of Key Stage 2.
3. Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage. Their progress is underpinned by very good personal, social and emotional development, which enables them to learn effectively in class. They are increasingly able to work independently. Their listening skills are very well developed and they talk with an ever-improving vocabulary. They enjoy following stories in books and demonstrate very good achievements in their early attempts at writing. Children have a good knowledge of number; they enjoy counting. Children's achievements in their physical development are satisfactory, but less impressive than in other areas, mainly

because the restricted nature of the accommodation limits their opportunities. Children enter the Foundation Stage with ability in the average range, but, by the time they progress to Key Stage 1, their levels of attainment are above average in most areas.

4. Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 1. Pupils of lower ability and those with SEN make the most consistently good progress, often reaching standards in line with national averages. More able pupils' achievements are also good overall, but not as consistently impressive, because they are sometimes given work which lacks sufficient challenge. As in the Foundation Stage, much of pupils' good work is based upon their very good progress in PSHE, which helps them to recognise the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning and listening to the suggestions of others. Pupils make very good progress in their reading, speaking and writing. Their achievements are good in listening and mathematics. Pupils produce an impressive range of artwork.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.6 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2. In Year 6, they demonstrate very good achievements, especially in English and mathematics. Throughout the key stage, they reach standards which are well above average in reading, writing and speaking, and above average in listening. Pupils benefit from the thorough way in which the school has adapted the National Literacy Strategy to meet pupils' needs. There are very good arrangements to meet the literacy needs of pupils with special educational needs, who make very good progress towards the literacy targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics; it is particularly strong in number work. Pupils are less sure when applying their number knowledge to the solution of problems. They reach above average standards in science, often demonstrating a good factual knowledge, but there are some weaknesses in their investigative work, which restricts their progress. Pupils are making very good progress in developing their understanding of citizenship. They know the importance of taking responsibility and demonstrate a very good awareness of social rules.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.1 (30.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (30.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.3(30.3)	28.6(28.3)

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

6. At both key stages, pupils achieve well in the majority of subjects, but in IT, music and PE, their achievements are only satisfactory. This is largely the result of difficulties in providing the full range of specialist resources and accommodation for these subjects. The recent development of a very well-equipped IT suite is helping pupils to show good progress, but lack of suitable resources has caused under-achievement in previous years and pupils are having to work hard to catch up. The lack of staff subject knowledge in music and the difficulties in transporting instruments to the church hall have led to weaknesses in the standards achieved in singing and composing. A concerted effort is now being made to rectify this. Pupils'

achievements in gymnastics are weaker than in other aspects of PE, mainly because equipment cannot be stored at the hall.

7. The strengths in pupils' language and literacy skills help them to make effective progress in other areas of the curriculum. They are able to discuss their ideas very well and write accurate factual accounts in subjects such as geography and history. Work in other subjects often has a strong focus on literacy, helping to further strengthen pupils' skills. There is satisfactory use of numeracy across the curriculum, in subjects such as science, but there is less frequent planning for opportunities to develop skills; as a result, some opportunities are overlooked. IT skills are now being used in a wide variety of subject areas. The computer suite is a hive of activity and pupils are showing increasing dexterity in their use of computer keyboards and their management of programmes. Pupils achieve well in RE, often exceeding the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. The good procedures in place to promote attendance are working effectively. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like their school and are keen to take responsibility
- Behaviour is very good and this promotes very good attitudes to learning
- Relationships in the school are very good; all pupils work well together
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is very good

Commentary

8. Pupils respond well to the school's very good arrangements for promoting behaviour and good attitudes to learning. Pupils are polite, helpful, and considerate in school, in the playground, and towards adults and visitors. They are recognised in the community for their very good behaviour and good manners. They enjoy their lessons, are keen to question, and show an interest in learning. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and pupils say they have no experience of any such incidents. There have been no exclusions from school in the last year.
9. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good and have a positive impact on their learning. They benefit from the strong PSHE programme, which helps them to develop very good social skills. Children in the reception class make very good progress in developing personal and social skills. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils are able to work both independently and in groups, working co-operatively, sharing and valuing ideas, and concentrating well on the task. Pupils are happy and secure, and they enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all, regardless of their background or ability, are valued. At playtime and lunchtime, relationships are good and cheerful play takes place. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in activities and establish firm friendships with other pupils. The recently-introduced 'buddy' system is proving to be very successful in supporting pupils who have more difficulty in establishing relationships. Pupils who have undertaken the role of 'buddies' are proud of their work and enjoy helping others. They take a pride in ensuring the inclusion of all members of the school in playground activities.
10. Pupils are happy and excited about the role they play in the school community. Their reason for being a school councillor is "to make the school a happy place to be for everyone". Pupils learn to appreciate the lives of those less fortunate than themselves through the charities which the school supports. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong, which is promoted from an early age in the first term of the reception class. Pupils in Year 1 explain in great detail how to move a spider without damaging it. They show it respect, acknowledging it has the same right to be on the planet as human beings.

11. There are many opportunities for pupils to enhance their social development through taking responsibility, which they do with commitment and pride. A wide range of visits for all years and a residential visit for pupils in Year 6 provide good opportunities for pupils to develop maturity. Pupils are encouraged to care for and respect others. They are fully involved in the local community and are developing a very good understanding of other cultures and beliefs.
12. As this table shows, attendance is good. Levels of unauthorised absence are below the national average. The school is making good attempts to reduce the numbers of absences of pupils who take holidays in term time, because their families are seasonal workers.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Good quality teaching results in effective learning. The curriculum is broad and inclusive. Pupils are very well cared for. The quality of education is greatly enhanced by the very good arrangements for working closely with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good. Pupils learn well and their work is assessed thoroughly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage
- Very good teaching of English, PSHE and art throughout the school
- Very good teaching in Year 6
- Work is not sufficiently demanding for a small minority of the most able pupils in Key Stage 1
- All teachers have a very good understanding of literacy and numeracy
- Weaker subject knowledge in a few other subjects, such as IT
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning
- Classrooms are very well organised
- Teachers' introductions and explanations are very clear
- Class rules and routines are very well understood by pupils
- Planning and assessment procedures are thorough, but very time-consuming

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0(0%)	11(31%)	17(47%)	6(17%)	2(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

13. The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage is based upon the teacher's excellent understanding of the areas of learning. Notably strong guidance is provided for pupils in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. As a result, children make very good progress in all of these areas, rapidly acquiring maturity in their behaviour and concentration, which helps them to learn more effectively. The teaching of some aspects of physical development is slightly less effective, because of the very limited amount of outdoor space. All children are fully included in lessons, regardless of their level of ability or degree of special educational needs.
14. There are excellent arrangements for encouraging children to speak to each other and adults, and to ask questions about stories they are told or materials they are handling. Lessons are very well planned and children are provided with a good understanding of what is expected of them. They respond confidently, clearly enjoying lesson activities. Staff make very good judgments about the level of intervention in children's learning, often allowing them to learn through making initial mistakes or by exploring items in greater detail. For example, children are confident in their use of computers, handling them with care, but also exploring new functions to see if they can improve their work. Children's progress is assessed very thoroughly through careful observation and well organised recording of information. The class teacher has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in their learning and adjusts teaching to meet individual needs.
15. The good teaching at Key Stage 1 builds upon the progress pupils have made in the reception class. Lessons are well planned, especially in literacy and numeracy, where there is particular attention to pupils' individual needs. Pupils with SEN have relevant targets in these subjects, which help to provide a clear focus for their learning. Activities in lessons are suitable for the majority of pupils, and often help less able pupils and those with SEN to make rapid progress. Work for a small minority of the most able pupils is sometimes too easy and involves them practising skills which they have already mastered.
16. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan lessons well, in line with the four-year rolling programme for topics and the arrangements for 'progression in skills'. This ensures that pupils in classes with more than one year do not repeat topics and develop skills at the right level for their stage of learning. However, the complexity of this system means that teachers frequently have to spend too much time in their planning. The school is seeking to change this by developing a more straightforward system, but this is not yet in place. Teaching is very good in Year 6, especially in literacy and numeracy, and this provides pupils with very good preparation for national tests. Pupils also develop very good learning skills in preparation for secondary education, showing the ability to concentrate for extended periods of time and listening carefully to instructions. Teachers assess pupils work thoroughly in all subject areas, but it is not always easy to gain a clear picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses from the extensive amount of information which is compiled.
17. At both key stages, teachers have good knowledge of the essential elements of the majority of subjects, but they have a weaker understanding of IT and music. The school is seeking to address this by improving staff training in IT and providing a specialist music teacher. This is beginning to have an impact on standards in these subjects. Lessons are well organised throughout the school. They start on time with clear instructions from teachers. Classroom discussions are well managed and all pupils are encouraged to speak, including those with special educational needs. This leads to very good achievement in speaking and listening.
18. Teachers organise classrooms well and ensure that all resources are accessible. This helps pupils to cope with the lack of space in some rooms. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to support groups of pupils and individuals with special educational needs. They often work flexibly, interchanging to make sure that pupils' needs are met as they arise in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to work co-operatively. They have very

high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which creates a good working atmosphere in class. The end of lessons is consistently well organised, with good examinations of the progress pupils have made. Teaching is of a more consistently high quality than at the time of the last inspection. This represents good improvement since then, which has had a positive impact on standards.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good curriculum organisation
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory
- Good levels of staffing and resources
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Very good preparation for pupils as they progress through the stages of education and into their next school

Commentary

19. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The school meets all statutory requirements, with the result that the curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests. It follows the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies closely. In all subjects, the staff plan together and are successfully adapting national guidelines for lessons in the mixed-aged classes. The guidelines have also been well amended to meet the school's circumstances and the needs of all groups of pupils. In classes where there are significantly larger numbers of boys or girls, such as in the reception class, where boys predominate, good efforts are made to ensure the curriculum is suitable for all. The school receives visits from drama groups and artists to enhance the curriculum, and promotes healthy lifestyles by arranging further visits during the 'Healthy Schools Week'. The school has improved the range of lunchtime and after school activities since the last inspection, to a satisfactory level. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to participate in sports and arts events with local schools and the wider community. An important aspect of the curriculum is the way that the school has put emphasis on art and uses it very well to enhance learning in other subjects and aspects of the school. All of these activities not only develop pupils' interest in learning, but also effectively support their social, moral and cultural development.
20. The school overcomes the cramped conditions by imaginative use of space to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. A computer suite has been installed recently and it is already well used, expanding opportunities for pupils to learn about IT. Additional rooms will be built in the spring term. The school provides a bright, attractive and interesting learning environment through good displays of pupils' work. The facilities for physical education are inadequate. On the school site, there is very limited playground space and no hall or sports field. Consequently, the school arranges for the use of the nearby church hall and a local sports field. The lack of storage facilities results in no large apparatus for gymnastics. Music lessons are also held in the church hall requiring the need to carry musical instruments to and from the school for lessons. Learning resources are good overall and are of good quality and in good condition. Of particular note is the recently-created library which, although very small, contains a good range of fiction and non-fiction books well suited to the needs of all pupils. The school is well staffed with experienced teachers. The number, training and experience of the support staff is very good.
21. The progress of pupils with SEN is monitored closely. Pupils are effectively supported in small groups. For example, in literacy, specific language programmes are regularly provided to ensure that their needs are well met. The targets in pupils' IEPs are relevant to pupils' key areas of learning. Staff know these targets well and take them into account when planning

lessons. The curriculum is planned effectively so that all pupils have access to the learning opportunities provided. Participation in extra-curricular activities is monitored carefully to ensure that a full range of pupils is taking part, including those with special educational needs.

22. The use of thorough assessment procedures to plan the curriculum is very good preparation for pupils' progression to their next year as they move through the school. The school's 'progression in skills' programme helps to ensure that pupils are taught at the right level for their age and ability. The school has developed very good links with a number of secondary level schools and colleges in the area. As well as providing support and expertise in subjects, these partnerships help to prepare pupils very well for entry into their next school.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good arrangements for a healthy and safe environment. Pupils are very well cared for. Pupils' progress and personal development are very carefully monitored. Pupils receive very good advice and guidance. Pupils are fully involved in school life and their views are effectively sought and acted on.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A healthy and safe environment
- Very good support, advice and guidance which enhance pupils' progress and development

Commentary

23. Health and safety education is very good. Through their everyday learning and the PSHE programme, pupils are learning to care for themselves well. Child protection procedures are very good and fully meet legal requirements. Staff have clear written information and practical training for child protection issues, which ensure pupils' safety.
24. Induction arrangements are very good, when children enter the school and when they move from year to year. Good practice in this area is a priority for the school. Pupils' transition to secondary school is well planned; many will have met and worked with future teachers through work prior to transfer. The very good relationships between pupils and staff ensure that pupils have the confidence to seek help and support for their work and for any personal problems. Pupils are known very well by all staff and receive good support from them. Parents are extremely pleased with the very good level of care provided for their children and rightly believe it improves pupils' capacity to learn.
25. Pupils' progress is thoroughly monitored. The consistent whole school assessment policy helps pupils of all levels of ability to understand achievement and how to progress. Pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, understand learning targets and goals, having shared their progress with their teacher. Staff spend a considerable amount of time ensuring accurate recording of pupils' progress in the mixed year groups. They take note, and act upon, any differences in the performance of boys and girls. The targets in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) are regularly reviewed and pupils are given good information about how well they are progressing towards the targets.
26. Pupils are involved in the life of the school and their views are regularly sought. They discuss what they have learnt at the end of lessons and all are fully involved when deciding classroom rules and monitoring their successes. Through the school council, all are able to give opinions and make suggestions. Pupils' views are considered and acted on. All Year 6 pupils have a high degree of responsibility, including school office duties, and are polite and helpful on the telephone. The school buddy system is very effective both for pupils needing support and in developing a sense of care and responsibility.

Partnership with parents, other schools, and the community

The partnership with parents is a strength. The school thrives on its parental and community links. High quality and good quantity of written and verbal information are provided for parents. The school uses the community and local environment to pupils' very best advantage. There is excellent involvement from a wide range of community visitors for health and educational purposes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good partnership with parents
- The very good communication which ensures parents feel encouraged to be involved in children's learning
- Excellent community links that make a sustained contribution to pupils' achievement
- Very good links with other schools

Commentary

27. The school works very effectively with parents who feel they are encouraged to be involved in children's learning in an open and welcoming atmosphere. They have confidence in staff and emphasise their appreciation of the high level of consultation undertaken by the headteacher. Parents feel the sense of co-operation is excellent. Everyone, including parents, works together to support children's learning.
28. Very good information and guidance are provided to enable parents to continue children's learning at home. Parents say their views are well received and acted on, and the school regularly seeks them out for help and information sharing. Parents from all communities are confident to approach the school with any questions or problems and equally confident they will receive a satisfactory response.
29. The school is very supportive of the Parent Teacher Association, which raises a considerable amount of money to support the school. The committee provides a range of events including fairs, concerts and an annual barbecue. All areas of the curriculum have benefited from the fundraising and parents also say it helps build good relationships between the school, parents and the community. The present project is to make the old Victorian school bell ring again.
30. The school is at the heart of the community and there is no doubt the community is central to school life. There are excellent links to support the school using the local and wider community. The school can call on a wide range of local tradesmen and individual community members to strengthen curriculum resources, support governance and promote pupils' learning. The school makes extensive use of the local environment to enhance pupils' learning, to widen the curriculum and to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
31. The school is innovative in the development of its links with other schools. These provide very good support both for the curriculum and for pupils' preparation for transition to the next stage of education. Shared resources and information, such as the art and dance project which provides shared teaching and connections with the local play group providers, build on the school's own provision and make a valuable contribution to pupils' development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher, senior managers and governors provide very good leadership and create a clear sense of purpose for the school. The school is well managed and governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very clear aims for the school
- Very good sharing of purpose with staff, parents and pupils
- Excellent team-working by leaders, co-ordinators and staff
- The very strong commitment to the needs of all pupils
- Very good involvement of the governing body in shaping the direction of the school
- Governors' very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school
- Very good arrangements for training to support the priorities of the school improvement plan

Commentary

32. The school is very well led. The headteacher, who was appointed earlier this year (2003), has embarked on a very effective period of consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils. This has resulted in the publication of new school aims and a revised school improvement plan (SIP) for the next 3 years, which accurately reflect the findings of the consultations. The new SIP builds on the successes achieved before the headteacher's appointment and has a very clear focus on key areas for improvement. These areas match the main weaknesses identified by the inspection team, indicating that the headteacher has been very thorough in her evaluation of the school.
33. Parents and pupils express their appreciation of the headteacher's willingness to include them in decision-making. Their views have been listened to very carefully and included in the main priorities for the future. Pupils are almost unanimous in their enthusiasm to make contributions and there is a very strong recognition of the need to include all individuals in school life, regardless of their age or level of ability. Pupils with special educational needs also feel that their views are valued and treated as important by the headteacher and staff. Senior managers and staff share in the ideals that have been identified and show, in their planning, the excellent atmosphere of team-working, which has been established. Class rules and methods of working in all areas reflect the key characteristics of the school. There is a harmonious atmosphere, based on mutual trust and confidence.
34. Senior managers make a substantial contribution to teaching and curriculum development. They demonstrate very good expertise in literacy and numeracy, which has been very well shared with other teachers. This has helped to raise standards in these areas to their current high levels. They are able to model teaching strategies to their colleagues, which has helped to improve the overall quality of teaching. Senior managers have also led the development of the thorough system of planning and assessment, which provides the school with a consistent model in all subjects. Co-ordinators are gradually developing their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subjects for which they are responsible. They have developed sensible action plans, which closely relate to the SIP. Some co-ordinators are not yet able to monitor fully their subjects across the whole school, but arrangements are in place to enable them to do this over the forthcoming year. All staff benefit from the close-knit working environment which enables them to share expertise and good ideas informally on a day-to-day basis.
35. Governors are very fully involved in school life. They worked closely with the headteacher in the development of the SIP and there are very good arrangements for them to monitor the progress of the implementation of the plan. There is a very effective committee structure with good arrangements for reporting to the main governing body. The governor committees have been heavily involved in seeking to improve the school's resources and its accommodation. They remain very concerned about the lack of space, despite the improvements which have been put in place. The governors maintain very good links with the community, helping to raise the profile of the school locally. The Chair of Governor's detailed knowledge of the parish and support for the school's extensive use of the church hall is of considerable benefit.

36. Governors are very knowledgeable about most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They also show a very good awareness of the areas of their own roles which need to be improved, realising that they need more information about the curriculum and standards achieved by pupils. Arrangements are already well advanced to more closely link individual governors to curriculum areas to strengthen their knowledge of the work of subject co-ordinators. Governors are very thorough in ensuring that the school meets its statutory duties, regularly checking on important areas, such as the arrangements for pupils with special educational needs. There is a good mix of governors with substantial experience and relative newcomers, who have complementary skills and enthusiasms.
37. The school is well managed. Performance data, from national and interim tests, the annual PANDA and LEA comparisons have been well used to set suitable targets for literacy and numeracy. This process is now being extended to other subjects, especially, in the first instance, science. The headteacher has provided a further boost to staff development, which is closely linked to the priorities in the SIP and areas agreed during professional interviews. Performance management is thorough and well organised. It has a clear focus on raising standards. Good staff deployment enables the school to run smoothly, although the fact that the deputy head has important class responsibilities, which sometimes clash with management priorities, can occasionally cause difficulties.
38. The school office is well run, despite the difficulties caused by lack of space. Visitors are welcomed and communication to other areas of the school is very good. Paperwork is well organised and carefully stored. The school's finances are well managed. The previous underspend has been well used to improve resources, especially in IT. Budget allocations to subjects are based on the SIP and subject action plans. Good information is provided to governors to enable them to monitor the school's finances. All areas of proposed expenditure are scrutinised according to the principles of best value. The school also provides the local education authority with clear information, 'flagging up' problems in advance and engaging in frequent discussions about the school buildings, the major obstacle to further improvement.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003.

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	449,388	Balance from previous year	21,956
Total expenditure	405,154	Balance carried forward to the next	66,160
Expenditure per pupil	2,397		

EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Example of outstanding practice

The range of excellent community links in a wide range of areas helps the school to provide an improved range of learning opportunities.

During the inspection, representatives of local businesses and organisations were very keen to stress the high regard in which they held the school. Several shopkeepers adjacent to the school provided examples of a high level of co-operation with the school; a local greengrocer described his support of 'Fruity Friday'. Inspectors witnessed further support for the school's PSHE programme, a father visiting the school with his baby to talk about parental responsibilities, and music, where the school choir visited an old people's home. There are a large number of similar examples in the school's records. Pupils talked about these events with great enthusiasm, demonstrating a highly developed sense of responsibility towards, and pride in, the local community.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. There are two intakes into the reception class, in September and in January. At the time of the inspection, only the older children, who entered the reception year class in September, were in school. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision. The school has very good links with the local pre-school group, which is based in the nearby church hall, but all providers in the local authority complete the same baseline and transfer record and this helps to ensure a smooth transition. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator, who is also the reception class teacher, is a highly skilled practitioner who contributes to the development of good practice in other schools within the education authority and, as a result, also enhances the provision within this school.

Children enter school with a wide range of attainment but overall they demonstrate average ability. They achieve very well as a result of the very good teaching. The main strengths of the teaching are the effective planning, based on very good assessment information, high expectations of behaviour, and the caring and enthusiastic learning environment provided by all the adults who work with the reception children. The accommodation inside is bright and well resourced, but the dedicated outdoor space is cramped with limited storage for large equipment. However, the reception teacher makes the best use of the accommodation available and plans a varied curriculum that makes very good use of local facilities.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and many are on course to exceed the goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the year
- A challenging and supportive learning environment, in which children are encouraged to become confident and independent
- Children show high levels of concentration when working and playing

Commentary

39. The teacher sets clear expectations of behaviour, which are promoted in a supportive and positive way by all those who work with the children. As a result children know class routines, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss and generally behave well. When children do not behave, they are dealt with firmly but fairly. Children enter the classroom confidently each morning and settle quickly to their choice of activity. They show high levels of concentration and co-operation when working with each other and are beginning to be able to work independently without direct supervision for extended periods. Children are encouraged to share and take turns amicably. They put their hands up when answering a question. They clear up and put away resources very sensibly. Children develop confidence through feeling that their achievements are valued. They work hard to achieve the high standards expected of them and take pride in their work. The very good personal, social and emotional development of the children provides the basis for their good progress in other areas of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy is planned and delivered in a structured way
 - The teacher and support staff provide very good opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills
40. Early indications are that the majority of children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and that many will exceed them. This is because of the systematic teaching of phonic skills, the support for reading and writing and the many opportunities for children to talk and to listen. Staff take every opportunity during activities to develop children's vocabulary through questioning and discussion. In whole class sessions, the teacher sets high expectations for children to listen to each other as well as attending to adult instructions and explanations. The positive and supportive learning environment gives children the confidence to talk and to feel that their contributions are valued. For example, each day a child is chosen to say a lunchtime prayer for the class. This is usually a simple sentence that they have composed thanking God for their food. Children are very keen to do this and always manage to produce a relevant contribution.
41. Children enjoy books and can follow a story using the information from pictures. They take books home to share with parents. Children are beginning to recognise the days of the week and common key words such as 'big' and 'little'. They use their developing knowledge of letter formation and initial sounds to make reasonable phonetic attempts at writing words. Children enjoy writing. Most can recognise and write their names and have confidence to 'have a go' at writing for a purpose; for example, a letter to Father Christmas. Around the classroom there are many informal opportunities for children to develop writing skills, through role-play areas like the 'Ilsham Post Office' and resources such as the sand tray. In more structured learning situations, the teacher makes the lesson objective very clear to the children and it is displayed on 'the learning intention tree'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good knowledge of number for their age
- Activities are well chosen to engage children's interest
- Good use is made of informal opportunities to extend children's mathematical understanding.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are very good and, as a result, children achieve very well and are likely to attain the outcomes expected for the end of the reception year. In aspects of number work, many children will exceed the early learning goals. Children confidently count and recognise numbers to 10. They can identify one more or less than a given number. Children are beginning to recognise pattern in number and place two-digit numbers correctly on a hundred square by following the 'tens' column down or counting on in units horizontally. Children use their knowledge of number to play games using dice. They are developing knowledge of time through sequencing events in the school day and recognising the days of the week. Children recognise one and two pence coins and are beginning to solve simple money problems using their knowledge of number. The teacher plans a very good range of activities and tasks to reinforce the main teaching focus, and is well supported by the classroom assistant and student nursery nurse, who make a good contribution to children's learning. There is an excellent match of activities and tasks to the age and ability of the children. An example of this is the way action songs are introduced to engage children's interest, develop their mathematical knowledge and ensure that they do not get restless by sitting for too long a period.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of interesting activities is provided.
- Good use of the local environment.
- Good access to ICT in the well-equipped computer suite.

Commentary

43. A good variety of activities is provided, covering all aspects of this area of learning. Children are developing investigational skills to identify differences in materials and sort by shape, colour and texture. They make and construct, using construction kits and a wide range of 'junk' materials. Role-play areas, such as a bakery and post office, help children to become aware of the world around them. Good use is made of the local environment with visits to the local church, the beach and recreational areas. Children are developing a good sense of time. They recognise the days of the week and months of the year. The teacher talks each day about the timetable for the day, helping children to sequence events. Classroom displays on Hanukkah, Advent and Divali show how children are taught about their own culture and beliefs and those of other people. Children are developing confidence in using computers. They are able to use a mouse to move the cursor and access parts of the programme. They are becoming familiar with the keyboard and space bar for word processing. A very good lesson was observed where the children were completely engaged in creating a picture using computer graphics. They then followed instructions to reproduce a design to form a border and used word processing skills to add their name. Children will attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and some are likely to exceed in aspects of this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children handle tools, materials and equipment effectively.
- They achieve good standards in movement and dance.
- The accommodation limits opportunities to develop gymnastic skills and to use large wheeled equipment.

Commentary

44. Children are on course to attain the expected goals in physical development, except in the area that relates to using large equipment. The lack of a school hall with fixed apparatus means that the children do not have regular opportunities to develop gymnastic skills using large equipment. The small outside area for the reception class is not big enough for large wheeled toys and the storage for such equipment is inadequate.
45. The school makes the best use of what is available and children achieve well in the other aspects of this area of learning. Children use the nearby church hall for movement and dance. Most children show good awareness of space and move very expressively in response to the music, adjusting their speed and direction.

46. Children are developing increasing skill and control in handling a range of tools for making and drawing, and when using the computer. They manipulate small construction equipment, puzzles and toys with reasonable dexterity. Their co-ordination when using pencils, crayons and brushes is good, enabling them to create pictures and form letters.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many opportunities for creative development
- Children express themselves well in artwork and in dance

Commentary

47. Children are on course to attain the early learning goals and some children show good levels of achievement. Children are developing satisfactory music skills. They play untuned percussion instruments and can make an informed decision when choosing an instrument to create the sound of an animal. Children sing enthusiastically and know many songs as a result of the teacher using music and songs to support most areas of the curriculum. They move very expressively to music. Most children responded very creatively to the idea of moving as the flames of a bonfire or as a firework. Children also engage in imaginative role-play in the classroom. They play co-operatively, developing their language, social skills and many of the other areas of learning.
48. Children show good skills in drawing and painting. A group of children painted very good representations of an owl, with effective use of colour mixing to create different shades for the feathers. Some others created reasonable owl models from play dough. Photographs of past work show that children are able to use a variety of paint, collage and printing techniques by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well, reaching well above average standards
- Teaching is good
- Leadership and management are very good
- Resources in classes and in the library are good
- Literacy is used well in other subjects

Commentary

49. Standards in reading, speaking, and writing are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in listening are above average. These standards are significantly higher than those found at the previous inspection which represents very good improvement. Pupils make very good progress from the average levels of attainment on entry to the school. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and effectively modified to meet the needs of the pupils and the mixed-age classes.

50. In Year 2, all pupils speak in whole sentences and the majority make accurate use of the past and present tense. Pupils with SEN speak in relevant phrases in answer to questions. Pupils can read all common words and are adept at using pictures to help them with their reading. Pupils' writing is neat, letters are well formed and sentences are carefully punctuated. In Year 6, pupils speak fluently, recognising the needs of the listener. They incorporate a good range of descriptive words in their speech. Pupils are able to cope with a wide range of reading material and the majority can scan pages for relevant information. Their writing is well presented and is organised in a logical order. The majority of pupils are able to write in a lively fashion, understanding the importance of an interesting narrative.
51. Teaching is good. There are examples of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have high expectations, plan carefully for all levels of ability and maintain a very good pace in lessons, which challenges pupils and ensures their very good concentration. Teachers ask good questions which not only develop pupils' knowledge and understanding by requiring them to explain their answers but also provide an effective way for checking their progress. Teachers make good use of IT by using interactive whiteboards when available. Most teachers mark work carefully so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and are very effective and professional in their work. They offer very good support to pupils with SEN in small groups, which helps them to make very good progress in developing their basic literacy skills. Teaching assistants also make every effort to ensure that all are included in all learning activities.
52. The subject is very well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator. She is very knowledgeable and experienced and is a 'lead teacher' for the local education authority. Since the previous inspection she has very carefully evaluated the provision and has identified a number of highly relevant priorities for improvement. Consequently, she monitors teaching and planning, analyses pupils' work and very successfully encourages a strong emphasis on the use of writing in other areas of the curriculum.
53. The school has recently developed a library for use by pupils of all ages and abilities which is a very good resource for such a small and cramped building. It is well resourced with fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils enjoy reading and describe, with enthusiasm, the books they have read as a result of using a "Reading Pathway" guidance form which encourages them to read widely, to record the books they read and to write reviews.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Literacy is used very well in other subjects. Teachers frequently incorporate specific planning for literacy in their lesson plans for other subjects. Pupils are provided with frequent opportunities to practise their language and literacy skills. Pupils write in a wide range of styles. For example, in history they write poetry about Martin Luther King; in design and technology, they record instructions on how to construct tables and chairs for a doll's house; in RE, they write letters to Mother Theresa, and in geography they produce travel brochures for visitors. IT is used well to support pupils' writing. They use word processing programmes to produce reports and stories.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection
- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and learning
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills

- Pupils do not apply their numeracy skills well to solve problems, but the school is working hard to address this

Commentary

55. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. In 2003 national tests, results in both year groups were well above the national average and very high in comparison with similar schools. About half of the pupils attained levels above that expected for their age. Pupils make good progress in the time between entering the reception class and leaving school at the end of Year 6. They achieve well, particularly in number work. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and achieve as well as their classmates.
56. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and classroom assistants contribute well to the good support given to different groups. There is very good teaching in the classes with the youngest and oldest pupils. These very good lessons in Year 1 and Year 6 are characterised by:
 - detailed planning with clear learning objectives which are made explicit to the pupils and supported by clear explanations;
 - teaching which captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm;
 - emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary;
 - exploration of different strategies and methods for mathematical investigations;
 - opportunities for pupils to see pattern and relationships in number;
 - effective questioning to check pupils' understanding and extend their learning;
 - good opportunities and support for pupils to evaluate their learning and progress.
57. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' mental number skills and each lesson starts with a lively oral and mental session. Younger pupils are able to count and to recognise numbers to 100. They have a secure knowledge of basic number facts to 10, which they can then apply to working with larger numbers. They are beginning to use different methods for recording and analysing mathematical information. Pupils are confident in estimating and rounding numbers up or down to help them in their predictions of expected outcomes.
58. Teaching is less effective when insufficient attention is given to planning for the needs of different ages and abilities in the class. This occasionally results in a lack of challenge, particularly for more able pupils. The school is aware that pupils are not able to apply their very good numeracy skills as effectively as they might to solve problems. This is now being addressed, particularly at Key Stage 2. As a result, the oldest pupils are developing effective strategies for working out what number operations are required to solve a problem in words and can use a variety of methods, often involving large numbers and quite complex operations.
59. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well to plan a broad curriculum. Effective marking and assessment procedures are used well to identify aspects of teaching and learning work that require improvement. Systematic analysis of pupils' performance and the action taken has resulted in a significant improvement in standards since the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of subject requirements and has identified areas for future monitoring and development. However, because of recent absence, she has not yet fully implemented the actions identified.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects, such as when recording data in science. However, opportunities tend to occur incidentally rather than as a result of systematic planning. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve above average standards
- Understanding of materials and their properties is often well above average
- Some weaknesses in investigative work
- Very good leadership of the subject
- High quality self-evaluation, with good identification of weaknesses

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievements in Year 2, as assessed by teachers, and in Year 6, in national tests, are good. However, the standards pupils reach are not as high as in English and mathematics, reflecting the fact that the subject has not received as much emphasis until very recently. In most aspects of the subject, pupils achieve well. Their factual knowledge is good. At 7, pupils can identify objects made from wood, plastic and metal, and describe the main characteristics of common living things. Pupils know how simple equipment powered by electricity works. They can explain some of the basic reasons why equipment might not work. The majority of pupils are starting to make suggestions about which materials might be used for different purposes; the more able use words, such as 'smooth' and 'bumpy' accurately. They know that not all metals are attracted to magnets.
62. At 11, pupils are able to classify materials well. The majority can identify which materials are conductive. They know that materials can be changed by heating and cooling, and they can provide descriptions of the different aspects of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils can draw, write and describe the hydrological cycle. They give good examples of food chains. Less able pupils and those with SEN often show similar knowledge of living things and materials as other members of the class. They achieve well, especially in terms of talking about what they have learnt. Their written work is less detailed, but usually contains similar basic information.
63. Throughout the school, pupils reach less high standards in scientific enquiry. This is largely as a result of lack of regular practice in investigative work. This situation is improving as good efforts are made to introduce regular investigative work to all classes. As a result, pupils are steadily improving their achievement. They are gradually developing their skills of observation, noting a wider range of features and becoming less reliant on prompting from staff. At 7, pupils produce accurate drawings of experiments, but their labelling is brief. At 11, pupils do not always incorporate graphs and tables into their description of changes, relying instead on more general descriptions. With more regular practice, they are developing this aspect of their work and developing a better understanding of all the aspects which comprise a fair test.
64. Teaching is good. Teachers are increasingly consistent in their practice, especially as they develop a better understanding of how to conduct small-scale experiments in the classroom. This is making lessons more varied and interesting for pupils, who are enjoying linking ideas to actual observations. For older pupils, there is a suitable emphasis on making predictions. Teachers stress the importance of fair testing and accurate recording, demonstrating their good understanding of the key areas for improvement in the subject's action plan. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory, but it is improving rapidly, which is helping teachers to answer the questions of older, more able pupils. Teachers are well organised. They provide good introductions and clear guidance to pupils on what is expected of them. Materials are well organised to make them accessible to all pupils. Pupils in groups work well together, they share tasks and help each other with findings of investigative work; for example, passing information to each other on how much coloured ice has melted in different areas of the school. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to help pupils, who might find it difficult to work independently. They are very reliable in their support of pupils with special educational needs. The end of lessons are used well to discuss what pupils have found out. Pupils enjoy these sessions and are very good at listening to each other's opinions. Pupils' initial predictions are examined carefully on the basis of their subsequent findings. There is a

detailed, but rather complex, system for assessing pupils' progress. Teachers are thorough in their recording of pupils' achievements, but they sometimes find it difficult to identify key strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.

65. The school has identified science as an area for improvement. The headteacher, who is also the subject co-ordinator, has evaluated the subject very thoroughly and identified weaknesses, which are already being addressed through the subject's action plan. There has been an increase in expenditure on resources to equip all classes with the materials needed for experiments. The professional development needs of staff have been well identified and initial training has already taken place. Indications are that standards are rising, and are higher than at the time of the last inspection. The improvements which are being put in place are likely to continue this trend.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good facilities
- Teaching is good
- Very good use of ICT in other subjects
- Leadership is very good

Commentary

66. Pupils are now achieving well, largely as a result of the improved resources and more effective teaching. However, the subject has suffered from a lengthy period when resources were not in place to enable effective learning. As a result, many pupils are having to catch up on skills they were not able to acquire earlier.
67. ICT facilities have recently been improved as a result of the installation of a new computer suite. In addition, the school has developed strong links with a local secondary school which currently loans them fifteen laptop computers. National Curriculum guidelines have been adopted. Standards are now in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when standards, achievement and overall provision were unsatisfactory.
68. Until recently, opportunities for teaching ICT have not been possible due to the lack of resources. It has not been possible to teach the 'control' aspects of the subject. This has already been identified and it is now included in teachers' planning and appropriate resources have been purchased. Teachers are aware of the earlier limited opportunities and good teaching is quickly developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. All teachers and support staff have attended training which ensures that lessons are led at a good pace. Pupils of all ages and levels of ability are challenged well.
69. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about improving standards throughout the school. She is aware of the previous limitations within the subject and provides very good support to staff in their efforts to help pupils to 'catch up'. She monitors teaching through analyses of teachers' planning documents and evaluates pupils' progress by regularly sampling their work. A portfolio of pupils' work is being gathered together in order to provide teachers with examples of good work at each level of development. The co-ordinator is responsible for the budget arrangements for ICT along with additional grants that have been awarded to the school. These funds are used very well in providing additional resources and training for teachers.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. ICT is used very well to support learning in other subjects. In history, pupils use a digital camera to take photographs of toys which they then describe and compare; in mathematics, Year 6 pupils use spreadsheets to work out costs of an imaginary tea party and in geography, pupils use PowerPoint to design tourist guides of the local area. Of particular note is the link with science in which pupils, during an educational visit, monitored their pulse rates during an abseiling exercise and recorded the information on a database. In addition, they learnt how to produce animated pictures and used software to produce graphs of their activities.

HUMANITIES

Geography

71. No lessons could be seen in geography, because the focus of work at the time of inspection was on history. Some pupils' work was available to sample and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator took place.
72. Records indicate that teaching covers all of the recommended programmes of study. The overall planning for the subject is thorough. There are sufficient resources for the topics studied. The co-ordinator is able to monitor other teachers' planning, but is not yet able to monitor fully other aspects, such as pupils' progress. She has frequent discussions with colleagues, which has revealed strengths in pupils' factual knowledge, but weaknesses in map work. A subject action plan has been drawn up to address areas of weakness.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good writing about historical events and characters
- Good understanding of chronology
- Less knowledge of the reliability of different sources of information
- Literacy skills well developed
- Good teaching, based on thorough subject knowledge
- Consistent planning for pupils' progress
- Increasing use of ICT

Commentary

73. Pupils achieve well. They reach standards above expectation in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' writing about historical characters and events is particularly strong. In Year 2, pupils know when to use the past and present tense in their writing. They can write about events in the correct chronological order; for example, when describing notable events in their own lives. All pupils construct clear and accurate timelines, showing a good understanding of dates and some of the gaps between time periods. In Year 6, pupils compile detailed family trees of royal families, such as the Tudors. They write interesting accounts of the Battle of Bosworth, based on an empathetic understanding of how ordinary people were caught up in events. Pupils provide sensible reasons for the actions of historical characters, explaining, for example, the motives for Tudor explorations. They are used to reading different types of information and are good at scanning for relevant facts, but they have less understanding about which sources are likely to be more reliable.
74. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and based on nationally-recommended programmes of learning. There is suitable planning in place to ensure that pupils in mixed year

groups are able to progress from one stage of learning to another. Teachers provide good introductions to lessons, with good questions to check on pupils' levels of understanding. Pupils are prompt in their answers and enjoy demonstrating their knowledge. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to make sure that all pupils are included in activities. Written materials vary in their level of detail and difficulty to meet the needs of pupils with different reading abilities. Teaching assistants are quick to assist pupils with SEN to help them to get started with their work, but allow pupils to develop more independent skills and their collaboration with others.

75. Teachers' narratives are lively and interesting and pupils concentrate well, listening for details about historical characters. Teachers make good use of historical terminology, which encourages older pupils to develop an understanding of words such as 'inference'. Pupils are encouraged to write neatly and to make sure that their finished work is well presented. All pupils have the opportunity to use word processors to enhance their work. Most pupils are also showing increasing skills in locating and downloading relevant information from encyclopaedia programmes.
76. The subject is well managed. Planning is well organised with good advice on the programmes of study. Suitable resources are in place to support the topics. There are frequent discussions between the co-ordinator and class teachers, which has led to steadily improving provision. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. In particular, pupils' writing about historical events is much more thorough and well explained.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and of other world faiths.

Commentary

77. Standards of attainment are good. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 often exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Only two lessons were observed, but information was also gained from pupils' recorded work, classroom displays and talking to pupils.
78. Teaching is at least satisfactory and one very good lesson was observed. Pupils are gaining a strong understanding of Christianity and are given opportunities to apply these principles in their everyday lives. The close links with the local church contribute to this. Pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments. The youngest pupils show great sensitivity and thoughtfulness when discussing what they might give to Jesus, following the story of the Three Wise Men. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied Hinduism in depth and show good awareness of the beliefs and rituals of this religion. The variety of world religions is celebrated in colourful and informative displays in classrooms.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

79. No lessons were observed during the period of inspection. Sampling of pupils' previous work, planning documentation and discussions with staff indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met.

Art

Provision in art is **very good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and all pupils achieve very well
- Teaching is very good
- The school provides a very wide range of interesting curriculum opportunities
- Management of the subject is very good

Commentary

80. Pupils demonstrate very good achievement and reach standards well above average. They show a very good level of competence in all aspects of the subject. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the subject and enjoy the lessons. They are very good at evaluating their own and others' work, as well as that of famous artists. They strive hard to improve. Pupils concentrate very well. Opportunities to link pupils' learning in art with other subjects, for example, speaking and listening, mathematics and IT are used well.
81. All lessons are very carefully planned. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and resources well used to sustain pupils' interest. Teachers give good demonstrations and tasks are clearly explained. In Year 1, pupils listen and respond well to the teacher as she talks knowledgeably about the work of artists and develops their vocabulary, knowledge and understanding of weaving. Pupils improve their skills as they weave fabric onto a frame in the style of the chosen artists. This is further developed when, in pairs, and with very good support from an assistant, they weave, with considerable enthusiasm, a large snowman on the boundary fence in preparation for the Christmas festivities. From the time that they start in the school, pupils learn to mix their own colours and, as they move on, become increasingly skilful. For example, Year 6 pupils use oil paint as they imitate the style of landscape pictures. They depict the shade and tone of the original with maturity and skill.
82. The very good quality of learning opportunities for artwork ensures that pupils become very familiar with using a wide range of media for a variety of purposes. The range of opportunities, which includes paint, observational drawing, 3D structures, printing and the use of fabrics, is very good and is often based upon the work of famous artists or the local environment. The use of IT is being developed to provide opportunities for research and to use programmes to design and paint pictures. Pupils exercise a good degree of care in all of their work and are rightly proud of their achievements.
83. The subject is very well led and managed by a co-ordinator who has very effectively developed and improved the quality of the provision since the previous inspection. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear view of the ways in which the subject can be further improved. For example, she has recently introduced evaluation sheets to develop the pupils' ability to evaluate their own and others' work. The co-ordinator provides very good support for teachers by regular monitoring of their planning and analyses of pupils' work. She arranges for visits to the school by artists and has developed very good links with a local secondary school, nearby shops and the Professional Development Centre, all of whom help to encourage pupils' enthusiasm and promote their self-esteem.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is improving since the appointment of a specialist music teacher

- Accommodation is unsatisfactory
- Good awareness of the areas for improvement

Commentary

84. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain average standards in the subject. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. National schemes of work are used as the basis for planning and ensure coverage of the National Curriculum. Pupils enjoy music and many participate in choir and recorder group sessions.
85. The school compensates for the lack of available space in the school building by arranging for music lessons to be held in the nearby church hall. It provides satisfactory accommodation, but storage space is not available and, consequently, teachers and pupils need to carry resources as they walk from the school for lessons. Valuable teaching time is lost.
86. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned but need to focus more closely on improvement of pupils' skills. Singing is sometimes out of tune. Pupils' composition skills, whilst satisfactory, also need to be developed. These aspects have already been identified in the subject action plan, which demonstrates that there is a clear intention to raise standards. Pupils' abilities need to be improved by focussing more closely upon lesson objectives which improve and develop pupils' musical skills. Good teaching occurs when the teacher intercedes in order to rehearse and develop skills. This can result in above average standards and good achievement. This good practice needs to be extended to all lessons in order to raise pupils' awareness of what they need to do in order to improve.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to overcome the limitations of its accommodation and grounds.
- Lack of a hall with apparatus for gymnastics limits pupils' opportunities.

Commentary

87. Pupils reach standards in line with national expectations. Pupils achieve well given the constraints of the accommodation. There are very few facilities on site. Pupils use the church hall for dance and gymnastics. This provides a reasonable amount of space, but there is no permanent apparatus and a lack of storage, which restricts the range of activities that can take place.
88. Pupils respond well to music, creating a sequence of movements to communicate ideas. They engage in a range of games activities and are developing satisfactory ball skills. The field for these activities is some distance from the school. Extra time has to be allocated for walking to and from the field. Classes can only use this facility if there are enough additional adult helpers to ensure the safety of the pupils. The school provides good opportunities for competitive sport and supports netball, football and hockey teams, who play against other schools. However, all matches have to be played away because of the lack of facilities at the school. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim.
89. Lessons are well planned and ensure that pupils have adequate warm-up activities at the beginning of each session. Pupils are developing appropriate awareness of health and fitness issues. They co-operate well in all physical education activities, working in pairs and small groups. In the activities available, pupils show good levels of co-ordination. Additional opportunities for sport are provided by after school football clubs and a netball club. The school is developing very good links with other schools to improve provision through the 'primary link'

teacher initiative and by accessing support from the local community college, which has specialist sports status.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE and citizenship is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good development of pupils' sense of responsibility
- Very good understanding of a healthy lifestyle
- Very good teaching, with especially good management of classroom discussions
- A thorough curriculum, effectively revised to incorporate all elements of citizenship
- Very good use of the community to broaden pupils' awareness and develop their sense of responsibility

Commentary

90. Pupils reach a level of understanding of PSHE and citizenship, which is well above expectations. Pupils benefit from very effective teaching in discrete PSHE lessons and when aspects of PSHE are taught across the curriculum. Pupils achieve very well in developing their sense of responsibility. The good basis established in the reception class is very well built upon in Key Stage 1. At 7, pupils have a very good sense of fairness. They follow class rules very well and discuss their importance. They know that giving to others less well off than themselves is important. Pupils have a very well developed sense of community. They are very keen to include all members of the class in activities, often offering to help those who find tasks more difficult.
91. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of their own feelings. They know their own strengths and weaknesses, and recognise each other's achievements. Pupils discuss the effects of poor behaviour on communities and can offer opinions about the type of rules necessary in all social groups. Pupils recognise people in their own community who need help and they explain how Christmas should be a time to give to others. They recognise how differences in cultural background can provide a mix of experiences of benefit to all. Although pupils have limited contact with multi-cultural environments, they are able to discuss the issues that arise in different types of towns and cities.
92. Throughout the school, pupils show a very good understanding of healthy and safe lifestyles. They are particularly knowledgeable about healthy eating. The healthy snacks available, in the fruit 'tuck shop' and during Fruity Friday, help remind pupils of healthy eating. They frequently offer opinions about healthy lifestyles. Pupils have a thorough understanding of school rules about health and safety. They know about conduct which could be hazardous and they know where to get help.
93. Teaching is very well planned. The relatively short sessions of PSHE are very well used. Discussions are lively and very well managed. All pupils are encouraged to offer their opinions. Pupils with SEN are active in discussions and show their very good progress by the sensible contributions they make. Teachers and teaching assistants prompt pupils well, but often allow them to discuss issues without direct intervention. There are good arrangements for parents and other visitors to speak to groups of pupils. For example, during the period of inspection, a father visited a class with his baby to talk about the responsibilities of being a parent. Pupils were enthusiastic about this and continued discussing the points raised long after the end of the lesson. Good records are maintained about pupils' progress, which provide teachers and the subject co-ordinator with reliable information about the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.

94. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator works closely with other class teachers. There are frequent checks to ensure that the planned programme is implemented throughout the school. Resources are well organised, providing teachers with ready access to suitable materials, which often form the basis for classroom discussions. The co-ordinator has written a relevant action plan, which is already being put into operation and is likely to lead to a further strengthening of the subject. The school has a long tradition of good work in PSHE, but there has been substantial improvement since the last inspection leading to pupils achieving higher standards.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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