

INSPECTION REPORT

KENTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kenton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113204

Headteacher: Mrs N Newington

Lead inspector: Mrs J Coop

Dates of inspection: 17–20 November 2003

Inspection number: 256595

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	92
School address:	Mamhead Road Kenton Exeter
Postcode:	EX68LX
Telephone number:	01626 890465
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr K Hall
Date of previous inspection:	27/4/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small primary school, situated on the outskirts of Exeter, serves the rural village of Kenton and surrounding area. There are 92 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven. Since the last inspection the school has experienced a significant period of instability and uncertainty. There has been considerable long-term illness among senior staff, and the quality of education declined. This situation has now been resolved. Two new members of staff have recently joined the school. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, but the school's socio-economic circumstances are broadly average. Attainment on entry is broadly average. Most pupils come from a white, United Kingdom background; no pupils are new to speaking English. Nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is also below the national average. Five per cent of the pupils come from New Age Traveller families. There are significantly more boys than girls in some year groups. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal times is well above average in some year groups.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31862	Mrs J Coop	Lead inspector	Foundation stage English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education. Special educational needs.
10329	Mr B Sampson	Lay inspector	
8864	Mr P Clifton	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good and improving school. The headteacher has acted decisively to improve the quality of education. Good teaching and a supportive family atmosphere ensure that pupils achieve well and enjoy school. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 in English, science, art and design, design and technology and history.
- Children get a very good start to their education in the Reception class and Year 1.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are very strong.
- Pupils are very happy in school and get on well with each other, and their personal development is very good.
- A good and innovative curriculum is significantly enriched by a very wide range of activities.
- The school is very caring of the pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Very good links with other schools, parents and the community enrich learning significantly.
- Spelling and problem-solving are weak.(These issues have already been identified by the school, in the school development plan)

The school is recovering well from a significant period of uncertainty and instability when the standard of education declined from that identified in the last inspection. Since her appointment, the new headteacher together with governing body has worked tirelessly to improve the school. The main key issues – assessment, planning, the school development plan and the Foundation Stage – have been tackled successfully. Standards are rising because teaching and the curriculum have improved. Overall, good improvement has been made.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	C	A	A
mathematics	B	B	D	E
science	C	C	A	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. Care should be taken when interpreting the results in small schools.*

Pupils achieve well. There is a wide spread of ability in each year group and small numbers make it unreliable to make year-on-year comparisons. Children start school with broadly average abilities. Children settle very well, make very good progress and achieve very well in the Reception class. They are on course to exceed standards expected by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils in Year 1, who started in this class, are already working at a high standard in many subjects. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing have improved significantly owing to the schools efforts, but there is potential for them to be even higher. Currently standards are above average in English and science at the end of Year 6. They are average in mathematics and have improved, but pupils' problem-solving skills are slightly below average. Standards in art and design and in design and technology are above those normally seen. Standards in religious education, information and communication technology, and physical education are in line with those expected nationally. In the past, girls did not do as well as boys in the mathematics test at the end of Year 6, but they are now attaining equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils achieve well because of the effective way they are supported.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, behave well and appreciate that there are many backgrounds and traditions that are different from their own. They accept each other's point of view and take their responsibilities seriously. They are caring of each other, and the school is a friendly, family community. Pupils' attendance is good. Although a few pupils arrive late each morning, punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is good and improving quickly. Teaching is good overall. Pupils learn well because they enjoy their lessons. They try hard to please their teachers, and most teaching is underpinned by good planning that takes into account pupils' level of ability. Teaching is very good in the Reception class and Year 1, where imaginative and stimulating activities are planned that support learning very effectively. In all classes teachers are well supported by hard-working assistants who make a considerable impact on the progress that pupils make.

The curriculum is suitably broad and is enriched by a very wide range of activities, visitors and visits. The care of pupils is very good and ensures that pupils are happy, safe and secure. The school is sensitive to individual needs and provides very good advice and guidance. Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are very good and make a significant contribution to the quality of learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are very good. She has been meticulous in her approach and tackled weaknesses decisively. Without the support of a deputy headteacher, and with few experienced staff, she has ensured that standards are rising. She has the very effective support of the governing body and, together with the small number of staff in the school, has formed a close-knit and effective team that shares her ideals and high expectations. Consequently, much has been achieved in a short time, and the school is now well placed to make further improvements.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a very high opinion of the work of the school and greatly appreciate the hard work of the headteacher, staff and governors. They speak with pride that the school is at the heart of the community. Parents from the Traveller community greatly appreciate the caring way that the school has welcomed their children into its heart.

Pupils share their parents' views. They enjoy all the activities available and, although they would like a larger playground, their views can be summed up by one pupil, who commented: "There is a nice atmosphere about my school and all teachers are nice."

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics throughout the school.
- Raise standards in spelling in all classes, and pupils' ability to write at length in Year 2.

All statutory requirements are met.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall. Standards vary each year owing to the small numbers in each class, and depending upon the proportion of more able and less able pupils, but they are above average in English and science and average in mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Reception class and Year 1 achieve very well and pupils in Years 2–6 achieve well in most subjects.
- Standards are above average in English, science, art and design, history and design and technology by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in writing are improving but the quality of spelling and younger pupils' inability to write at length prevent standards from being higher.
- Problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics are underdeveloped.
- In the core subjects in Years 3 to 6, the improvement in standards has been below the national rate, but standards are now rising quickly.

Commentary

A difficult period for the school

1. The school is recovering from several years of uncertainty and instability due to long-term illness. This resulted in the school being without a permanent headteacher for a considerable period of time. Currently, the school is still without a deputy headteacher. This situation has meant that some younger pupils had several teachers in one year. This disrupted and affected the quality of education provided by the school, overall standards attained and pupils' achievements over time. In addition, the small numbers in each year group, together with high levels of mobility in some classes, make any year-on-year comparison of standards unreliable. Therefore, although data show that trends in standards have been below the national average over the past five years, this is not indicative of the current position in the school.
2. The recent difficulties experienced in the school have been resolved. There is now a stable situation and, because of the decisive action of the new headteacher, staff and governors, standards are beginning to rise in many subjects. The school recognizes that there is still ground to be made up in order to plug the gaps in pupils' learning in some subjects. All staff are working hard, and inspection evidence indicates that the targets the school has set in English, mathematics and science should be attained in 2004, and might even be exceeded.

Starting school

3. When children start school in the Reception class, which they share with Year 1 pupils, assessment data show that their knowledge and understanding are quite varied each year. In recent years, the data show that many pupils have had specific literacy difficulties and started school with below average language skills and limited knowledge and understanding of the world. This affected the standards attained in the reading and writing national tests in 2003. In 2002, children started with broadly average skills. Most far exceeded the expected goals in all areas of learning, and more able pupils in Year 1 are already working within Level 2 of the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science. This year, it is not reliable to make an overall judgment about attainment on entry as only three children are currently attending the class. The exciting and interesting style of teaching in this class ensures that all children delight in learning and blossom in this environment. The children are very settled, happy and

eager to learn. As a result, they are making very rapid progress, achieving very well, and are likely to exceed the expected goals for children of this age in most areas of learning.

The school's results in national tests

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.1 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (18.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards in the national tests in 2003 for reading and mathematics were average at the end of Year 2. They were well below average in writing. This class was one whose pupils were affected by numerous changes of teacher and did not have such an effective start to their education in the Reception class. Compared with reading and mathematics, fewer pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing. A small number of pupils did not reach the standards expected of them. Observations in the current Year 2 indicate that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. However, there are still few pupils who are on target to attain the higher Level 3 in writing. Many pupils lack confidence to put words onto paper and to attempt to spell words using their knowledge of spelling patterns and letter sounds. Ideas are not developed and, although there are some interesting starts, ideas are rarely developed to form a simple beginning, middle and end because pupils work slowly. Recently, a new teacher has joined the class and evidence indicates that she has already begun to successfully address this difficulty. Pupils' confidence and rate of progress are improving. As a result, their level of achievement is also improving.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4.(27.5)	26.8.(27.0)
Mathematics	26.2.(28.1)	26.8.(26.7)
Science	30.2.(28.6)	28.6.(28.3)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English and science. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was very high in both subjects and in the top five per cent of schools in the country. Observations show that standards are currently above average in both subjects. Although standards are not as high as in the previous year, this still represents good progress and achievement between the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils who have more recently started in the class have settled quickly into the school routines and are also making good progress and achieving well.

6. Standards in mathematics in the 2003 national tests were below average overall. Although the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was above average, it was undoubtedly the well below average proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 that impacted on overall standards attained. More able pupils did not achieve as well in this subject as in English or science. In the past, data show that girls did not attain as well as boys in this subject in the national tests. Evidence shows that there is now little difference between them. Girls make the same progress and achieve as well in lessons as boys.
7. The school was understandably disappointed in the mathematics results. Through a detailed analysis of pupils' responses to the test, it has recognised that a key reason is that pupils are over-reliant on formal written methods of calculations. Pupils do not use problem-solving and reasoning skills sufficiently well. They are not able to jot down ideas or work out in their heads the most appropriate approach to basic calculations. The school is working hard to address this difficulty and has participated in a research project that has developed teachers' skills to challenge pupils' mathematical thinking. Observations show that this is beginning to bear fruit and pupils are gaining in confidence. Pupils in Year 6 are now making good progress, but because of the gaps in their learning, progress over time is steady and pupils' achievements are judged to be satisfactory.

Standards in other subjects

8. Standards in history, art and design and design and technology are above average by the end of Year 6. The school has ensured that, in the drive to improve standards in the core subjects, other more practical subjects are not neglected. Parents appreciate this approach and value the wider range of educational opportunities provided for their children. Consequently, the good standards in these subjects are in part due to the good curricular provision and the very effective use of visits and visitors. These motivate pupils, who benefit from the support of experts, and this develops their learning well.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are average as there are some gaps in pupils' learning. This is because until recently the school did not have sufficient resources to teach this subject. Resources have improved significantly and pupils are now catching up. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in those aspects of physical education observed are also average, and improved since the last inspection because of the improved use of the small hall and of other facilities.

Pupils' achievements

10. Overall, pupils of all capabilities achieve well. In many subjects and year groups, teachers are adept at challenging all groups of pupils so that they try hard and are engaged by the wide range of interesting activities planned. This develops their learning well. Where teachers are less experienced or where they are not so confident in their subject knowledge, such as in mathematics, this, coupled with the past difficulties in the school, has affected pupils' achievement over time.
11. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and benefit from detailed, individual programmes of work. As a consequence, they are achieving well, overall, in relation to their capabilities. Traveller pupils, who sometimes arrive without records from previous schools, or who may have had little previous formal education, are also well supported. The school works very closely with outside agencies and parents to ensure that it identifies gaps in learning and offers relevant support. Parents of these pupils wrote specifically to the inspection team to express their delight at the caring way that the school supports their children and to acknowledge the good progress they are making. Evidence shows that these pupils are also achieving well and new pupils are beginning to settle into the school routines.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to their school and work, and their behaviour is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is good, whilst punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and enjoy coming to school.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

12. The school nurtures and encourages individual pupils very well so that the majority have a great deal of confidence and self-esteem. This leads to very good attitudes to their learning, whether in lessons, extra-curricular clubs or when out in the community. This is all the more commendable because, as one little girl commented when interviewed: "We've had lots of teachers!" The school has very good procedures for stimulating in pupils a desire to learn because most lessons are made interesting and challenging.
13. Pupils are given responsible jobs and they carry these out very well. The School Council meets regularly and sensibly discusses ways of improving their school, whilst Year 5/6 buddies are well appreciated by all younger children. Each day the whole-school assembly is partly run by the pupils and contains current school and international news, and even the day's weather forecast! This very effectively develops self-confidence and mature attitudes.
14. Pupils' relationships are very good; no bullying or harassment was witnessed during the inspection. Children and parents confirmed that this is the norm for the school because the school has very good procedures in place. The children confirmed that they are given confidence in personal and social education lessons and in assemblies to report any incidents. Staff are well aware of nipping potential situations in the bud. The school, as a result, has an orderly, friendly atmosphere. Behaviour overall is good and pupils cope well with the small size of the playground. Pupils are polite and open doors ahead of adults. They are also proud of their school and there have been no exclusions in the past twelve months.
15. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been developed well since the previous inspection owing to the hard work of the headteacher, staff and governors. Overall, the attitudes, values and other personal qualities of the pupils are very well developed and contribute very significantly towards the success of their learning.
16. The spiritual knowledge and self-awareness of the pupils is very good. Through subjects such as art and design and science, for example, or through prayer in assembly and regular quiet moments of reflection, they are making sense of their feelings and show a tangible sense of wonder for the world around them. Moral awareness is a high priority in the school, and assemblies are often used as a vehicle to discuss moral issues such as developing awareness of the Universal Children's Day. The children also experience responsible and reasoned moral dilemmas in drama such as 'what to do if someone is lost'. By working together, welcoming visitors, serving on the School Council and acting as buddies, pupils exhibit a very good awareness of democracy and their own social development. Cultural development is very good. Within their own village, pupils are involved in and help to run the Mayday celebrations and Tudor evening, which also make a significant contribution to their mature and responsible attitudes. They are developing a clear understanding that the world has many different cultures and styles of living through their studies of other faiths, visits from an African dancer, for example, or when sharing work and ideas with their partner schools in Europe. This is particularly important in a small rural school and ensures that pupils are

developing a clear understanding of their place in the world. There are several Traveller children in the school and all pupils are particularly interested in hearing about their specific culture. They are, as a result, valued members of the school community.

17. Attendance is good and above the national average. This compares well with the previous inspection. The majority of pupils are punctual; the school has good procedures to improve attendance; and parents are good at ensuring their child attends regularly and on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.2%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.5	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 quality of education provided by the school is good. This judgement is based on good teaching overall, the good use of assessment, the good curricular provision, the very effective support and guidance offered to pupils and the very good links with parents, which together encourage very good attitudes to school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. The quality of teaching is improving and this reflects the recent action of the headteacher to strengthen teaching and its impact on learning by relevant staff development initiatives, improved assessment procedures and a consistent approach to planning. Teaching is more effective in the Reception class and Year 1, resulting in pupils making rapid gains in their learning. New teachers have settled in well and value the support they receive. They are rapidly developing their skills and adjusting their planning for the benefit of the pupils in their classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff in the Reception class and Year 1 work very effectively as a team so that activities are interesting and children try hard as a result.
- Teaching is good overall in Years 2-6, but stronger where teachers are more experienced.
- Planning is thorough in all classes.
- Teachers are good at engaging pupils' interest.
- Staff have a very good relationship with pupils and this produces a very good learning environment.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning in all classes.
- There are very effective procedures for monitoring pupils' progress.
- Pupils' individual learning targets are detailed, but not all pupils use them to improve the quality of their work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	11	9	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

18. Children in the Reception class and in Year 1 learn very well because they greatly enjoy their lessons, which are very effectively planned. Staff work very effectively as a team and together they provide a wealth of interesting and varied learning activities that inspire these younger children to try very hard. Relationships are warm, supportive and encouraging, and there is always an element of fun and humour in lessons. As a result, they delight in learning within this stimulating learning environment, develop confidence and are always willing to 'have a go' in order to please their teachers. All groups of children make very good progress and achieve very well as a result.
19. Teaching and learning are good overall in Year 2-6. New teachers who have recently started in the school, or who are at the beginning of their teaching career are getting to know their classes and have settled well into the school routines. They are being well supported so that they are quickly developing their skills for the benefit of the pupils in their class. Planning in all classes is detailed and ensures that activities are interesting and generally well matched to the pupils' level of ability. Learning objectives are clearly explained so that pupils know what they are expected to learn and make connections between previous and current lessons. Teachers are particularly adept at evaluating how pupils are progressing in lessons and are quick to make changes and adapt planning if needed. This ensures that any misconceptions are clarified and that pupils make good progress overall.
20. In all classes, teachers have established a very good relationship with pupils. New teachers in particular have worked hard to ensure that they know individual pupils well. As a result, pupils have a growing respect for them and behave well in lessons. This ensures that there is a positive climate for learning in all classes. As a further result, pupils try hard, are not afraid to 'have a go' and achieve well in most lessons. In all classes, staff have high expectations of behaviour, and pupils respect the class rules and routines. Learning is orderly and, although some classrooms are small, pupils work together well and move around sensibly. In all classes there is a good work ethic and positive ethos that ensure that pupils value the efforts teachers have made to make lessons interesting and are supportive of each other. Pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils are not made to feel any different from their friends in lessons. They are listened to and have a good level of support when required so that they make the same progress as others in the class. In this respect, teaching assistants play a valuable part in lessons. They are professional in their work and are supportive without being overdirecting. Their expertise is used wisely by the school and they make a valuable contribution to learning in all lessons, especially in information and communication technology and art and design, where their particular skills are an invaluable asset to the school.
21. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. They have generally adapted their planning well to meet the learning needs of mixed-age classes, although the wide range of age and ability in each class makes this a challenging task. Where teachers are more experienced, they are more proficient at ensuring that pupils are challenged and ensure that lessons are pitched at the right level to match pupils' abilities. However, in some classes, especially when teaching mathematics, teachers do not always have high enough expectations and, as a result, lessons are pitched to the middle ability. More able pupils could be stretched to learn even more. Teachers are trying hard to address this factor. During the inspection it was evident that teachers are gaining in confidence to alter their planning and ensure that all pupils are being stretched. They are working hard to address gaps in learning. Progress and achievement are improving in mathematics as a result.
22. Since the appointment of the headteacher, very good progress has been made in improving how the school monitors and tracks pupils' progress. Teachers now have a powerful tool with which to monitor the progress of learning in their class in most subjects. Most are now using this information well to match activities to abilities. Where teachers are less experienced they are being well supported to make the best use of this information. Marking of pupils' work is thorough and effective and gives pupils a clear basis on which to move forward in their

learning. Pupils find this helpful and are clear about what the marking symbols mean. The school also uses assessment information well to establish individual learning targets, which are reviewed regularly in individual conferences. However, it is evident from observations and discussions with pupils that they are not very familiar with these targets, and are not using them consistently to improve the quality of their work. This is an aspect that the school is sensibly reviewing in order that pupils may have a clearer understanding of how they can improve their learning.

The Curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The opportunities provided for enrichment of the curriculum through clubs, visits and special events are very good. Accommodation and resources provided to support learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Action planning continues to promote curricular development.
- The curriculum is inclusive, and links between subjects are developing well.
- Innovative aspects of the curriculum support learning well.
- Support for learning outside the school day through after-school clubs is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Limited space is used well to support learning, which is enhanced by good resources.

Commentary

23. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The school meets all statutory requirements and satisfactorily implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Governors are currently revising their policy on sex education, relationships and drug awareness.
24. The previous inspection identified that 'curriculum planning required development'. The school has responded well to this. Planning is now good, and the school has carefully adapted the national guidelines to suit its own needs. This has contributed to the recent improvement in standards in many subjects. The school is not complacent and is striving for further improvements. Good quality action plans are in place to develop all areas of the curriculum. For example, in religious education, the school has sensibly decided to focus on spiritual aspects of the subject. This focus is already evident in lessons, assemblies and pupils' work. Therefore, leadership within the school is successfully maintaining its focus on curricular improvement.
25. The curriculum is inclusive and supports the school's ethos to promote fairness and respect. The small group of Traveller children are well integrated into the school. Their culture and lifestyle are actively celebrated, and a specialist support worker regularly visits the school to provide additional support. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is also good. It has been effectively led and managed by the headteacher during the long-term absence of the co-ordinator. She is alert to the individual needs of pupils; their progress is monitored carefully; and additional support is relevant. All groups of pupils are treated equally and fairly and have equal access to all the school has to offer.
26. Based on a two-yearly cycle, there are growing links between different subjects within the curriculum. For example, writing in literacy, based on the works of Charles Dickens, is linked well with the study of history. In addition, there are some good examples of effective innovations. Links with schools in other countries, for example, have been established for some time. These are used to develop pupils' understanding of different places and cultures. They also provide good opportunities for pupils to communicate effectively through e-mail.

27. There is considerable enrichment of the curriculum. During the year, there are focused subject weeks; visits are used widely to support different curricular areas; and visitors come into the school on a regular basis. Examples include science, art and design, and design and technology weeks. There has also been a focus on multicultural aspects of the curriculum, most recently, in the summer, on Africa. After-school clubs cover many aspects of the curriculum and are well attended. During the inspection week an art club was attended by 21 pupils and included boys and girls of different ages. Four adults supported the club, which provided a good range of activities. Pupils clearly enjoyed this additional opportunity to support their learning. There are also residential trips, and lunchtime activities are supported well by play leaders.
28. The school has limited space and is restricted in improvements owing to its listed-building status. This has not prevented the headteacher and governors from being inventive. They have been astute in the development and improvement of the building; together with the creative use of timetabling, this has enhanced learning well. Resources have improved and are good throughout the school; they are used well to enhance the children's learning. For example, the newly created, half-size computer suite is well linked with the library so that pupils can undertake independent research. The Reception class now has access to a much improved outside area, with an improved range of equipment that is already enhancing the curriculum in this class. The staff now have more personal room in which to relax and prepare lessons, and the creation of a new headteacher's office from an old cupboard has provided a valuable space for private meetings with parents and others, and a larger office for the administrator. Although some rooms are a little small and could be hot in the summer, there is not much more that the school can do. The hall and playground are also small, but with little chance of enlargement; the employment of a lunchtime play leader has ensured that pupils are very orderly and organised during free time. Overall, the accommodation is good. The school is very well maintained, both inside and out, and it is a very welcoming place in which to learn.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are very good. The school values pupils' views and they are very effectively involved in the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are given high priority.
- Pupils' personal development and guidance are provided through a shared education process involving parents, pupils and teachers.
- Pupils' views are highly valued.

Commentary

29. This is a very caring school where the health, safety and welfare of the pupils are given very high priority by all staff and governors. Child protection procedures are very good. The headteacher is the named and trained person. All staff are very well briefed and there is very good liaison with outside agencies should the need arise.
30. Health and safety procedures are very good. With the named governor, the headteacher has ensured that up-to-date risk assessments are undertaken and any issues are addressed promptly. This is especially important in a building that dates back to the sixteenth century.
31. The strong family ethos in the school strengthens the care and support that all staff provide. From interviewing pupils it is clear that they are all very well known by all staff, and the children confirm that there are "loads of adults that they can turn to if they're sad or frightened". Pupils are very well advised on personal issues, progress in school or any other concerns. The headteacher releases teachers regularly to have individual conferences, with the pupils in their class concerning their work and personal development, and their individual progress is tracked

very carefully. At the beginning and end of every personal, social and health education unit, progress is noted on a sheet, and this is regularly reported to parents. The Traveller children are well looked after by the headteacher and the area service teacher. Their contribution to school life is valued enormously. All parents value this high quality care and support and willingness to discuss pupils' needs with them. They especially like the headteacher's surgeries, which are regular events. Pupils with special educational needs are equally well supported; this makes a valuable contribution to the progress they make.

32. The school values highly the views of its pupils and acts upon them. Pupils spoken to emphasised how the School Council had recently influenced improvements in the playground. In addition, all opinions are sought regularly by concise questionnaires. The way that the school welcomes and settles new pupils and younger children into the school is very effective, and the use of friendship buddies not only ensures that new pupils have someone to turn to, but this also is a very effective means of developing mature and caring relationships between pupils of all ages in the school.
33. Overall, the very good care, guidance and support that the school provides have improved from the already existing high standard seen at the previous inspection. It ensures a very safe and warm atmosphere within which the pupils' learning is successfully developing.

How well does the school work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community?

The school has very good links with its parents, other schools and the community. These contribute significantly towards the success of pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good quality information creates a successful home-school partnership.
- Very good links with the community, schools and colleges make a valuable contribution to school life.

Commentary

34. Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with a very good range of information that ensures that they make informed decisions and effectively support their children's learning. Individual reports are easy for parents to understand; they say what a child can do and give realistic targets. The school has a website for parents, a very detailed parent link diary and detailed and informative monthly newsletters. Through a weekly 'Big Picture', parents are provided with very useful details on literacy and numeracy programmes and are thus able to keep up to date with current topics and programmes of work.
35. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning is also very good. All parents are welcomed, whatever contribution they are able to make, and this only goes to add to the family atmosphere in the school. Several come into school regularly and help with reading, design topics and out-of-school visits. Recently, one mother designed and helped the children to make a tapestry, and a Traveller mother helped at the sports day. Parents like the home/school books, which keep them in contact with the school and many use the homework folders to help with projects and topics. The school has a very active Kenton School Association, which has raised considerable funding, for example, towards an interactive white board in Class 3.
36. The school very much appreciates its parents' views and likes to act upon them. By using an annual questionnaire, they have picked up on several ideas. As a result recently, extra-curricular activities have improved and home/school diaries have been amended. The school possesses a very clear, efficient, democratic, concerns-and-complaints procedure, which is well known to the parents but is rarely required.

37. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to form very good links, with both the community and other schools and colleges, which greatly enrich the quality of education provided by the school. In addition to strong links with the local church, a local radio station has sponsored the school's new interactive white board, and local businesses are often supporting school projects. The school is at the heart of the local community, which also appreciates being able to use the school's facilities. Very productive educational links are held with a variety of primary, secondary and special schools through the local academic council which effectively broaden the pupils' experiences. The link with the pre-school is particularly effective and ensures that staff get to know children well before they start school. Older pupils have a very carefully planned induction into the next stage of their education so that they make a successful transition from a small village school to their much larger secondary schools. Parents greatly value these initiatives. The school always welcomes work experience students from local secondary schools, and trainee teachers from college. These provide a welcome added dimension to the work of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall.

The governance of the school is very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and other staff, good leadership. The school is very well managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governors provide a high level of support and challenge, which has been very effective in moving the school forward during a period of turbulence.
- The headteacher and governing body are together shaping the future direction of the school very decisively.
- There is a high quality strategic plan in place, which is a very effective tool for change.
- The headteacher has built an effective team of teachers and governors and is driving innovation in the curriculum.
- School self-evaluation is very well established and has ensured that money is spent very well.

Commentary

38. The current and future direction of the school is set out in the school improvement plan, which is highly detailed and identifies with clarity what the school intends to do to improve. The plan provides answers to four key questions with the aim of bringing about continuous improvement. These are: Where are we now? Where do we want to be? What do we need to get there? How will we know we have got there? It provides a very clear direction for the school and is a highly effective document that is underpinned by high expectations and a commitment to ensuring that all pupils achieve their true potential.
39. The headteacher and the governors have worked tirelessly to pull the school through a period of uncertainty caused by staff illness and prolonged absence. This is now behind them and the school is looking ahead to a more stable staffing position and secure future. Good quality new staff have been appointed, including those who are newly qualified, and recruitment, including that of the current headteacher, has been effective. Throughout this period of uncertainty, the governors and the headteacher have maintained a relentless focus on raising attainment in the school. The parents' confidence that the school 'has improved considerably' since the headteacher's appointment is well founded.
40. The headteacher is very committed to welcoming, including and supporting pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. She has established very effective systems and procedures to enable all pupils to benefit from the provision the school offers. Without the support of a deputy headteacher, and with few experienced staff, she has shouldered much of the responsibility of improving the curriculum, teachers' planning and assessment procedures

herself. Experienced staff support her well and are making their own mark on the quality of the school's provision. New staff and newly qualified teachers are being well supported. They value the headteachers' perceptive advice and support. As a result, they are quickly developing their skills for the benefit of the school. It is to their credit that they have settled quickly into their new roles and have already established good relationships with parents and pupils.

41. The school improvement plan is effectively based on school self-evaluation. A range of strategies has been used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school so that the way ahead is securely based. The headteacher has carried out a meticulous analysis of data. Teaching is effectively monitored by the headteacher, a visiting headteacher, and subject co-ordinators. Pupils' work is sampled across the school by staff. The information gathered from these activities has enabled the school to identify areas for development and its spending priorities with confidence. Recent decisions to install a computer suite, for example, have significantly improved provision, and standards in information and communication technology are rising quickly.
42. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have played an important role in planning for improvement. Working very effectively with the school staff they understand their distinct role and responsibilities. This understanding has provided an excellent basis for very good teamwork. Curricular innovation is developing well because of the effective leadership. For example, drama is used to develop speaking and listening skills, and links with schools in other countries are used to promote the use of information and communication technology.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	324417
Total expenditure	294521
Expenditure per pupil	2859

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30765
Balance carried forward to the next	29896

43. Since the previous inspection there has been very good improvement in governance, leadership and management. Financial planning is very good. The school's finances, placed under a strain due to long-term illness and supply teaching costs, have been efficiently managed. Specific grants are well targeted and used effectively. The governing body carefully considers all its options when purchasing resources and services.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception class is **very good** and has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Children start full-time in the class during the autumn or spring term, depending on their birthday. The children come from a wide range of backgrounds, but many have attended some form of pre-school provision. Very good teaching and a well-organised learning environment provide stimulating and enjoyable activities for all areas of learning. Staff work very effectively as a team, and because relationships are warm and supportive, children are very eager to learn in this environment. All children are welcomed into the class and all, including those with special educational needs and those from Traveller families, achieve very well and make very good progress. Very good management ensures that all staff have a clear sense of direction and are well informed. Individual needs are identified early and additional support is initiated quickly, if needed. The school has very good arrangements for children starting school, and very positive links with parents and the local pre-school setting. This ensures that children who are about to start in the class are eager and ready to learn. The outside learning environment has been developed well since the previous inspection so that it provides an added dimension to children's learning.

At the time of the inspection only three children were attending full-time. Work in three areas of learning was inspected in depth, but work in personal and social development, physical development and creative development was sampled. Planning of all lessons is very detailed and staff ensure that children have opportunities to learn at their own pace. They are encouraged to be independent and to make simple choices, be polite and have good manners. Activities are varied, and a wide range of resources and games ensures that children develop their imaginations and become confident to move around the outside area and use simple tools carefully. There is every indication that children make very good progress in these areas of learning and are in line to exceed the goals expected for children of this age.

Communication language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and inspires children to want to learn.
- There is very good team work and a wide range of interesting activities planned.
- Activities are very carefully matched to children's individual abilities.

Commentary

44. Teaching by all staff is very good. Every opportunity is taken to interact with the children, to question and to encourage them to discuss their activities. Children delighted in using masks to enact the story of the 'Gruffalo' and because of the very effective support from the teaching assistant and the fun way that learning is planned, could clearly identify the sequence of events and recognise sounds in a game of 'I spy' and confidently attempted to write words to accompany their pictures. Children are encouraged to make choices and often choose to act in role or practise their emerging reading and writing skills. They enjoy working alongside older pupils in the class and are rapidly growing in confidence to use their skills in other areas of learning. When playing in the sand or making models, for example, children are encouraged to talk about their activities and to use increasingly extended sentences. Staff continually provide interesting activities that are very carefully matched to the children's

individual abilities and this is a strength in teaching that very positively supports the very good progress that children make. As a result, most children are in line to exceed the goals set nationally for children of this age in this area of learning and they achieve very well in relation to their individual capabilities.

Mathematical development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher plans an extremely wide range of activities that ensures that children achieve very well.

Commentary

45. Very good teaching supports this area of learning very effectively; children of all abilities make very good progress and achieve very well. One of the strengths is the way that staff promote mathematical language and skills through exciting activities and play. During the inspection, children used all their senses in a counting game that required them close their eyes and listen carefully to the coins being dropped into a can. They screwed up their eyes, listened intently and counted quietly to themselves. They then proceeded to move their counters correctly along a board, most recognising the numerals 1-10. They then moved outside to continue counting the number of times they succeeded in throwing a bag through a hoop. Delighting in the challenge, they eagerly tried to outdo each other. Staff used this opportunity very effectively to encourage the children not only to develop their understanding of numbers and sequencing, but also to understand and use the concept of 'more than' and 'less than'. One girl delighted in telling her teacher that she had scored "two more than her friend". Everyday activities are also used very well by staff to encourage understanding of shape and measure. As a result, most children are in line to exceed the expected goals when they start in Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning.
- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance children's knowledge of the world around them.

Commentary

46. Very good teaching and a wide range of carefully planned activities encourage children to use all of their senses when introduced to a world of meaningful experiences which they enjoy, and from which they learn very well. Through carefully planned lessons children are provided with activities that are not only interesting but very well matched to their level of understanding. This is another key factor in the very good progress they make. Joining their older friends in a science lesson, for example, children listened to the discussions and then talked about 'alive' and 'not alive' before sorting items into groups. They have looked at photographs and recognise how they have changed since they were a baby. They are also beginning to recognise that many items in their homes provide information, and because they have regular opportunities and are encouraged to be independent, can move a cursor on a computer screen. They make links in their learning and talk in simple terms about different faith festivals such as 'Sukkot' or 'harvest'. Throughout all activities, staff are supportive

without being overdirecting. As a result, children are not only eager to explore for themselves,

but are also challenged to extend their thinking. Children make rapid progress and most children are in line to exceed the expected goals in this area of learning when they start in Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. The quality of teaching is good and this ensures that pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are above average at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The use of drama to develop pupils' confidence and their understanding of language is very good.
- Pupils with language difficulties receive good support.
- Assessment of pupils' work is very detailed, but pupils do not always use their writing targets to improve their work.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are improving, but could be higher.
- Pupils have a limited range of spelling strategies.

Commentary

47. Observed standards in reading and writing are above the national expectations at the end of Year 6 and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds enjoy literacy and try hard. As a result, they are achieving well and make good progress in relation to their capabilities. The number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4, at the end of Year 6, was very high in the 2003 national tests, and in the top five per cent of schools in the country. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is on target to maintain this position. All pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to attain expected standards, with more able pupils already working at the higher Level 5. This is because the school is alert to their level of competency and is challenging them well. Whilst this is a positive picture, there is the potential for standards in writing to be even higher, but pupils' spelling is relatively weak and is preventing some pupils from attaining the higher Level 5. Many older pupils are confused by spelling rules. Although they make good attempts to spell more complex words using their knowledge of letter sounds, they also make basic errors and this spoils their efforts and standards attained. The school is aware of this issue and the introduction of 'spelling logs' and regular homework is beginning to bear fruit. Pupils are developing confidence to spell more difficult words, but there is not yet a consistent, whole-school approach to the development of spelling which would ensure that pupils' skills are consistently and progressively developed.
48. Standards in writing are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2. This represents a significant improvement on the standards attained in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, which were well below the national average overall. As in the 2003 tests, it is the fact that no pupil is currently in line to attain the higher Level 3 that is preventing overall writing standards from being higher. Pupils' reluctance to extend their ideas and include more detail is preventing many pupils from attaining the higher level. As with older pupils, they do not have secure understanding of spelling patterns or letter sounds. Key words are not spelt correctly and this is also a factor that is impacting on overall standards. This class has had an unsettled start to their education and this appears to have affected their confidence. A new teacher, who has recently started, is already working hard and to good effect to improve this situation. She has recognised that pupils are not confident when asked to write. During the inspection, more able pupils in Year 2 initially struggled when asked to plan a story based on friendship. They were reluctant to put words onto paper. However, by the end of the week they had made good progress and had succeeded in writing a short, but quite detailed story, with a simple beginning, middle and end.

49. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are stronger where staff have more experience. Standards in Year 1, for example, are already well above average in reading and writing because of the use of very interesting and varied teaching approaches that inspire younger pupils to strive to please their teacher and not to be afraid to have another go if they make mistakes. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have adapted the literacy strategy well in order to meet the wide age range and ability in each class. Teaching assistants are well deployed and are effective and professional in their work. They offer good support to pupils with special educational needs and make every effort to ensure that all are included in every learning activity. As a result, this group of pupils is eager to improve and attain expected standards despite some specific difficulties with language. This has been influential in driving up standards. Teachers have very good systems for checking the progress of pupils and mark their work carefully so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. However, although individual targets are set, these are not yet clearly understood or used by pupils to improve their work. This is also a factor that is preventing overall standards from being even higher.
50. The recent decision to introduce drama into the curriculum is particularly beneficial. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons, which are carefully planned to make links with all aspects of their learning. Pupils are gaining confidence to speak and communicate in a range of situations and this is already having a knock-on effect on the quality of their writing. Pupils enjoy reading and are often seen researching facts for other subjects. They have regular opportunities to read and to discuss the text, so that many pupils are beginning to recognise how an author uses phrases to grab the readers' attention and illuminate the characters. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average in reading as a result. Pupils are making good progress and are achieving well.
51. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher. She has acted decisively to halt the slide in standards. There has been very good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. Initiatives, such as improved guidance to parents, drama, very detailed assessment procedures, improved planning and new resources, are all helping to raise standards and pupils' enjoyment of learning. She is not complacent, and, although standards are rising, the school is sensibly continuing to target writing for improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Pupils use their language skills well in other subjects. Geography, history and science, for example, are used extensively to enhance pupils' skills and to provide opportunities to write in a range of styles or as a vehicle to research facts. This adds to pupils' enjoyment and recognition that literacy is a key skill that can be developed in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good in Year 1.
- Standards in mathematics could be higher if pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills were improved.
- More able pupils are not always sufficiently extended in lessons.
- Prioritised action is beginning to impact on standards.

Commentary

53. In the 2003 tests for Year 2, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level was broadly average. In Year 6, results were below average overall because fewer pupils than

expected attained the higher Level 5. Results at the higher level were significantly lower than in either English or science. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work indicate that current levels of attainment are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement in standards at the end of Year 6. Overall, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in summer 2004 is likely to be lower than the national average. This is because problem-solving skills are weaker in Years 2 to 6, which prevents pupils from reaching the higher levels.

54. In Year 1, pupils get a very good start. In this class pupils are able to solve simple problems because teaching is very well planned and uses a variety of interesting approaches to make learning interesting. In finding different ways to make 10, for example, the children thought creatively and came up with solutions such as $30 - 20 = 10$ and $10 + 0 = 10$. Encouraged by the teacher's high expectations the pupils explored different types of sum confidently. The pupils made very good progress and standards in this class are well above those normally seen because pupils are achieving very well.
55. Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress when developing their numeracy skills, but their ability to work out simple problems is less well developed. Pupils find it more difficult to work out answers to questions in their minds because many do not have a quick recall of number facts. This prevents standards from being higher. This class has experienced many changes of teacher and pupils had an unsettled start to their education. They are now more settled, and progress, as a result, is improving.
56. By Year 6, pupils have continued to make steady progress. Scrutiny of work shows that older pupils confidently use formal methods for doing calculations. Pupils, however, are reluctant to use their reasoning skills or informal strategies which might involve jottings and notes to explore different solutions to mathematical problems. As a result, standards in this aspect of their learning are currently slightly below what is expected. The school has recently participated in a research project. As a direct result of this, teachers are more confident when teaching problem-solving skills, but it is too soon for this to have had a significant impact on the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5.
57. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In all the teaching observed, the pupils were effectively managed. Pupils behaved well and had positive attitudes to learning. Teachers provide a good range of activities, and lessons are well structured. Where teaching is less effective, learning is restricted because of limited challenge in some parts of lessons, particularly for the more able pupils. This is most evident at the start and end of lessons. Teachers are working hard to develop their skills. It was evident during the inspection that teachers are evaluating their teaching and learning in lessons well. As a result, they are quick to adapt their plans to ensure that the gaps in pupils' learning are plugged. However, in some instances pupils do not have a clear enough view about what they need to do to improve, and this also impacts on overall standards attained.
58. The school and subject leader are aware of the need to improve standards of attainment in mathematics – it is a key priority in the 2003 plan. Action includes: monitoring pupils' progress, developing mental/oral 'starters', using jottings to support pupils' thinking and increasing the use of information and communication technology. The school has, sensibly, used expert external support to guide its work. Therefore, leadership and management of the subject by the recently appointed subject leader are now effective. Planned strategies for improvement are pertinent and just beginning to make a difference. During the previous inspection, teaching, and progress were good. There has been a decline since then and progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. The subject leader recognises, therefore, that there is some ground to make up.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The application of numeracy skills cross the curriculum is satisfactory. This could be developed further by ensuring that pupils have opportunities to develop and use their skills in a broad range of activities. There is, however, a growing use of information and communication technology in the subject to support data handling and calculation, for example, through the use of spreadsheets in Years 5 and 6, which is already having a beneficial impact on standards.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, teaching is good.
- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and work well together.
- Pupils are taught how to apply their understanding.
- Good practical experiences make lessons memorable for pupils.
- Action planning is good.

Commentary

60. In the 2003 Teacher Assessments, standards were broadly average in Year 2 and very high in Year 6 in national tests. In Year 6, more than half of the pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Discussion with the current Years 2 and 6 and scrutiny of their work, indicate that by summer 2004 standards are likely to be average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Given the small numbers of pupils and the good quality of the teaching in Year 6, these results may be even higher. Achievement is good.
61. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are currently studying topics on electricity. Good teaching in Year 4 encourages pupils to develop their understanding of how electricity flows through materials. Teaching links practical testing of circuits with ideas about 'how electricity works'. This linkage encourages good quality discussion and pupils use their understanding to evaluate and draw conclusions. For example, a Year 4 pupil used her understanding of electricity to conclude that "it didn't matter which way the battery was turned round because the electricity could still flow from one end, round the circuit to the other". In Year 6, encouraged by the teacher, pupils discussed together how switches could be applied in different circuits in everyday use. All pupils were included well by the teacher and they explained their understanding in small groups and to the rest of the class.
62. Good teaching over time has developed pupils who are very confident, articulate and making good progress. Lessons are creative and memorable. In Year 1, good teaching motivates pupils well. The teacher's good subject knowledge and careful planning ensure that the pupils are well motivated and enjoy learning. Discussion is used well to challenge pupils to think through ideas. They make good progress which continues in all classes because teaching links well with previous learning and uses the Internet to research specific information. A good range of resources is provided. In all lessons, pupils' enthusiasm for science is very apparent. They work together well and respect each other's views and ideas. The pupils have a curiosity about the world around them and are eager to develop their understanding because of enthusiasm generated by teachers and support staff.
63. Discussion with the oldest pupils confirms that they apply understanding well. Investigative skills are well established and, crucially, the pupils come to a collective view about the best way to plan or present information. Their knowledge and understanding across all areas of science is secure, although forces and motion is the weakest aspect of physical processes.

64. Overall, leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has monitored lessons and has determined, rightly, that teaching encourages the pupils to think carefully and that discussion about science is a strength. Analysis of tests in Year 6 is comprehensive. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory and developing. The subject is enriched well through a focused science week and after-school clubs. There is an effective plan for further development. Since the previous inspection, development has been sound.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory** and improving rapidly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new computer suite is supporting rapid progress.
- Action planning for further development is very good.
- The use of information and communication technology across all areas of the curriculum is developing well.

Commentary

65. The school has recently made a major investment in resources resulting in the development of a new computer suite. The suite has been well planned and utilises all of the space currently available in the school. All classes use the suite on a timetabled basis. The new provision has led to a significant increase in the use of computers by pupils and they are rapidly gaining in confidence about using the Internet and the available software. Given the small size of the school, this development is very significant. It has come about because of the determined leadership of the headteacher and the governing body.
66. Attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. In Year 2, basic skills are in place. Pupils create images in the style of modern painters and word process their work. Year 6 pupils have only recently benefited from the improved provision and there are some gaps in their learning. However, they are very clear that they have made good progress in the use of the Internet and data-handling software to draw graphs. They are developing appropriate skills in entering data into spreadsheets and using formulae for calculations. Consequently, they are making steady progress. Pupils say that the “teaching is clear and they are learning a lot”.
67. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe teaching for short amounts of time. Teaching is currently undertaken mainly by a teaching assistant who has a special interest in the subject. Pupils are confident and teaching ensures that skills are secure before moving on. Overall, throughout the school, teaching and achievement are judged to be satisfactory.
68. The subject is well led. The co-coordinator has planned well for the use of the new resources and relevant developments, and improvements are well thought out. Once implemented, these plans have the potential to further enhance provision. There are some innovative uses of information and communication technology, for example in developing effective communication with schools in other countries. The school has purchased an interactive whiteboard to support teaching, funded by the Parents Association. This development, although very recent, has already captured the interest of pupils.
69. Overall, progress since the previous inspection is good. The use of the teaching assistant to deliver some of the curriculum is providing very good value for money.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Samples of work seen in books and on display, from across all curricular areas, show a satisfactory and improving use of information and communication technology.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

One lesson of history and one lesson of geography were seen. Teachers' planning and pupils' work were scrutinised and discussions were held with the co-ordinator.

Provision in history is **good** and in geography **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- History is taught well and there are good links with literacy.
- Geography utilises links with other schools to bring the subject alive.

Commentary

71. Attainment in history is above the expected level in Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning is good, especially in the use of resources to help capture the imagination of the pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective links with literacy in gleaning information from texts and making notes. An activity in which pupils took different roles, such as country people, hotel owners and farmers, was very effective in promoting good quality discussion and writing. The level of challenge in lessons is good, with class teachers and teaching assistant working well together. A recent visit to Coldharbour Mill supported the learning of the pupils well and stimulated their interest in the past.
72. In geography, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations. Year 6 pupils design a questionnaire to collect data from schools in Romania, Italy, France, Belgium and Finland. This is a real exercise for the pupils and they set about it with enthusiasm. There is a good level of discussion about the 'best ways' to communicate through Fax or e-mail. Pupils have good knowledge of the other schools and how they are both similar and different.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning from religion is developing well.
- Pupils' knowledge of Christianity and Judaism is stronger than other religions.

Commentary

73. During the inspection one lesson was observed. Evidence from this, from assemblies, talking to pupils and looking at their work indicates that standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. During one assembly, pupils joined in a role play to think about the ways different people might have felt during the war. Pupils considered the different perspectives of German soldiers and Jewish and Polish people. Following on from previous assemblies, the pupils responded with feelings of sadness, shock, anger and fear. A strong moral and spiritual message was provided.
74. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although overall standards are broadly average, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the Christian and Jewish faiths. In Year 2, for example, pupils confidently discussed the story of David and Goliath. They made good progress in the lesson and achieved well because teaching made effective links between the story and what can be learned from the story. Pupils were challenged to make links with their own lives. As a result, ideas about bravery and courage were developed effectively. Year 6 pupils are knowledgeable about Judaism. They spoke with a good knowledge about the Hebrew Bible,

the Torah, and the 'Shield of David'. They were aware of how the key tenets of this faith influence the daily lives of the followers and how this is different from their own faith. However, in all year groups pupils' specific knowledge of Hinduism, and of other faith groups studied, is less secure. Progress is steady and achievement is satisfactory overall.

75. The subject is well led. Despite having a heavy workload, the subject leader has monitored the subject carefully. She has identified the need to promote the spiritual areas of the subject and to ensure that pupils make links to their own lives. This is clearly beginning to impact on teaching and learning. The action plan identifies a clear way forward for the development of the subject. Steady progress has been made since the previous inspection but standards in the subject are improving quickly.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson, art and design was inspected in greater depth throughout as the school is rightly proud of its achievements in this subject. Design and technology, physical education and music were sampled. Work was analysed, discussions with pupils held, and two lessons in physical education were observed.
77. Pupils state that they enjoy design and technology. No judgement was made in the previous inspection report about overall standards. It is evident from the quality of the work and the detailed evaluations older pupils make that standards are above those normally seen by the end of Year 6. Pupils experience a wide range of opportunities to use a variety of materials and techniques in their work. The special weeks that focus on the creative arts provide an effective means of developing skills and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the work they had undertaken during the previous year. It is evident that the subject is used effectively as a vehicle to promote links with other subjects and to promote social and cultural development. Car designs, for example, undertaken by Year 5 and 6 pupils, were detailed and used their scientific knowledge and understanding well. Careful research had been undertaken, and designs were clearly labelled, while each step in the process was explained in detail. Final models were tested and evaluated against the original design criteria and were of a high standard. Explanations were mature and logical and supported the development of pupils' literacy skills effectively.
78. In physical education, the school has worked hard to overcome the limitations of the small school hall that impacted on standards in gymnastics noted in the previous inspection. Careful timetabling and judicious use of teaching assistants mean that small groups now have sufficient space to develop their gymnastic skills. Standards, as a result, are now in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. Pupils now have sufficient space to develop a sequence of movements with balances, enjoy the lessons more and have a good awareness of how to improve their performance following evaluations of each other's work. Very good links have been established with outside groups, through participation in the school sport programme. These very effectively enhance the range of sporting activities available to the school and also provide additional training for staff. This enables them to offer a wider range of outside coaching opportunities, such as Tag Rugby. The provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection as a consequence.
79. In music no lessons were observed and no secure judgment can be made about standards. Pupils obviously enjoy singing in assembly and listen to a wide range of music, which they recognise and compare. They sing in tune and with enthusiasm. The headteacher, an accomplished musician, takes recorder lessons, and pupils are developing their skills of composition and improvisation satisfactorily. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the guitar and other instruments, while regular concerts and performances also contribute well to pupils' overall musical experience. The quality of provision has at least been maintained since the previous inspection.

Art and Design

Provision in art and design is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection. The school is rightly proud of its work and has applied for an Arts Mark award.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- The school offers a very good range of curricular activities.
- Good use is made of specialist teaching skills and artists from the local community.

Commentary

80. Standards in art have improved since the last inspection and are above those normally seen by the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils in the school state that they greatly enjoy art and design, and most pupils say it is their favourite subject. It is evident in the quality of their work that they continually strive to improve their skills and take great care and, as a result, they make good progress and achieve well.
81. As they move through the school, pupils have a great many opportunities to practise using a wide range of media. Specialist curriculum weeks and the support from many visiting artists and craft workers not only serve to increase their enthusiasm but also develop their skills effectively. This also has a significant impact on pupils' cultural development. Pupils of all ages exercise a great deal of skill and care when drawing, painting or when making three-dimensional models. Younger pupils, for example, created interesting effects using natural materials or crunched-up paper that aroused their curiosity in the natural world, while older pupils' large models of the human form show maturity and a developing original style. Drawing skills are effectively developed and pupils' use of sketch books is developing well so that they increasingly use them to test out their ideas and evaluate their finished work. Work on perspective and the depiction of movement is testing pupils' skills. High quality displays of pupils' work around the school add greatly to the quality of the learning environment and encourage pupils to have pride in their achievements.
82. The school uses the skills of staff with particular aptitude in the subject well to support non-specialist staff and to enhance the curriculum. Staff make good links with other subjects when planning work and this ensures that learning is meaningful. In the one lesson observed, for example, good use was made of pupils' developing information and communication technology skills to create Pointillism-style pictures of the rainforest they were studying in geography. All staff in the lesson encouraged pupils to think like artists and to use their knowledge of line, shade and tone to add depth to their work. Pupils rose to this challenge and emerging ideas were imaginative and of a good standard.
83. The subject is very well led by the headteacher, who, despite having numerous responsibilities, has, in a short time, effectively raised the profile of the subject in the school so that standards are rising. Specialist curriculum weeks, the use of local artists and an improved range of resources add to the quality of learning opportunities in the school. The school has exhibited work from its' link schools in Europe and this is a highly effective way for pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures and ensures they are motivated to seek higher levels of achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Only one lesson was observed in this area of the school's work but from talking to pupils, discussions with staff and examining documents and other evidence, provision is judged to be **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are valued and respected.
- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to take personal decisions.
- The use of outside agencies to support pupils' learning is good.

Commentary

84. The provision for personal, social and health education is a strong driving force in the school, which places a good deal of emphasis on the importance of creating an environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-esteem and feel valued and respected as individuals. There are regular good quality opportunities for pupils to meet where they can discuss their innermost feelings and air their views. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to participate in the School Council and there is a good range of opportunities to take responsibility within the school. Increasingly, pupils' views are listened to and they take all their responsibilities seriously. They consider that the school treats them fairly and provides relevant training and support. Older pupils, for example, take their responsibilities as 'buddies' to the youngest children in the school seriously, and all pupils take responsibility for planning and delivering part of the daily assemblies. All these opportunities ensure that pupils achieve well, make good progress and become mature and thoughtful young citizens.
85. The school has a good scheme of work and often uses other subjects to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Work in science, for example, effectively supports pupils' knowledge of developing a healthy lifestyle, and the value of exercise is reinforced in physical education. The school makes good use of outside expertise in raising pupils' awareness of issues relating to their health, safety and wellbeing. Three-day workshops are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding about keeping safe. Parents and staff are also involved in these well-thought-out initiatives. They value the good quality support their children receive.
86. This aspect of learning is well led by a recently appointed co-ordinator who has worked hard to develop this subject. The school is involved in a number of healthy school initiatives and has applied for a Healthy School award.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	3
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	2
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	2

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

