

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSFIELD FIRST SCHOOL

Biddulph

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124059

Headteacher: Gordon Cartlidge

Lead inspector: David Marshall

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th February 2004

Inspection number: 256625

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	295
School address:	Gunn Street Biddulph Stoke-on-trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST8 6AY
Telephone number:	01782 297800
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G H Brown MBE
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kingsfield is a larger than average first school with 295 pupils on roll. Of these, 47 are part-time in the nursery. The number of pupils on the school roll has fallen from 342 in 1999. The school is located in the urban centre of Biddulph and takes its pupils from a wide socio-economic range. The school population is predominantly white British with only six pupils – two per cent – from differing ethnic groups, which is well below average. Eighteen percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is around the national average. Thirty-four pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. This is roughly 14 per cent, close to the national average figure. One pupil has a statement of educational needs, a smaller number than usual for a school of this size. There are two pupils with English as an additional language and at an early stage of language acquisition. There have been no exclusions in the last three years. On entry to the school, many children are ill-prepared for school and have underdeveloped social and linguistic skills. The school gained an Achievement award for progress, and for 'substantial improvement in results achieved by pupils from 1996 to 2000'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27681	David Marshall	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music English as an additional language Foundation Stage
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33237	Christine Haddock	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a sound school that is improving. Its caring ethos results in the effective personal development of all pupils. Although pupils achieve well overall and make good progress due to the good teaching, standards in many subjects are below average by the end of Year 2. However, pupils continue to progress well and achieve standards in line with expectations for their age by time they leave the school. The school is well led and managed satisfactorily. **The school provides satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- This is a caring school in which all pupils are included, made welcome and achieve well in their personal development.
- Pupils achieve well academically due to the good teaching. From a well below average start, standards in the core subjects¹ meet expectations by the time pupils leave the school.
- Good provision in the Foundation Stage means children make a good start to their education.
- The head teacher provides good leadership. He is well supported by the subject leaders.
- Standards in some of the non-core subjects are not high enough due to the inconsistent use of assessment information.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported
- The school has good links with parents and the local community.

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the rate of improvement has been satisfactory. Despite the falling roll, the head has created a strong sense of teamwork and they have worked hard to correct the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance have improved. Procedures for child protection and promoting the pupils' well-being, health and safety have been implemented well. Financial planning is now linked closely to intended developments within the curriculum, and there are good methods of financial control, but procedures for ensuring best value are still being developed. A school development plan to cover all major aspects of the school, with good priorities, is in place. Planning now identifies aims for lessons and teaching overall has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	E	D	D	D
Writing	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	D	D	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with pupils claiming free school meals.

Children start in the Foundation Stage with well below average skills in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical development. The children make good progress but most will not reach the early learning goals set for them. Children are well taught and achieve particularly well in their personal and social development. Pupils work hard in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well, but standards are still below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 and 4 the majority of pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 4, pupils' standards are in line with expectations for their age in English, mathematics and science.

¹ The core subjects of the primary curriculum are English, mathematics and science. The non-core subjects are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

In other subjects seen during the inspection, standards were in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and many attain average levels of attainment by the time they leave the school. Pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well. **Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Pupils are enthusiastic, have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is good at all times. They form good relationships, help each other well and enjoy each other's success. There are limited opportunities for pupils to appreciate their place in today's multi-cultural society. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good overall, although there are variations across the school. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is good and helps children to settle into school well so that they make good progress in their learning and develop good learning habits. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, and is good where the management of behaviour and the encouragement to learn given to pupils are consistent. In Years 3 and 4, teaching is good overall. Teachers use praise well to modify behaviour and reward good work. They give clear instructions to pupils and listen carefully to pupils' replies and questions, and show they value them all. Overall the school provides a satisfactory, well-balanced curriculum, with appropriate extra-curricular and additional activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well, but not consistently used in other subjects. Classroom computers are not planned to be used as frequently as they could be and pupils are missing the opportunity to practise the skills that they have learnt in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite. Partnerships with parents and the local community are good. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. The school provides effective care for all of its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The head teacher provides good leadership that promotes an ethos that supports and welcomes all pupils and has made the school popular in the community. He has established a clear school development plan that enables the management to be satisfactory. The staff work as a team who share a vision for future improvement. Their willingness to change class arrangements and take on new responsibilities demonstrates a good level of commitment to enhancing achievement. This has been successful for pupils' personal development. However, there has not yet been time for these changes to have been effective in raising standards in all subjects. The governors organise their work satisfactorily and make a sound contribution to school improvement, although they take few opportunities to monitor the school's performance or the outcomes of decisions they have made. Overall, **governance is satisfactory.**

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a good regard for the school and feel a part of the school's development. The pupils enjoy school and recognise that they are well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide targets for pupils' achievement in all subjects and review how work is planned in order to enable better use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects and to provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their place in today's multi-cultural society.
- Make sure the presentation of pupils' work is consistently as good as possible.
- Apply the school's marking policy consistently so that all pupils know where they have succeeded, what they need to do to improve, and what to do next.

- Build on the governors' current practice by firmly establishing procedures for them to monitor the impact of their decisions on standards and on pupils' welfare.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good throughout the school. Standards have maintained the position noted at the time of the last inspection and are average overall by the time pupils leave school. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In both the nursery and reception classes, children learn well but most will not reach the expected levels at the start of Year 1.
- Throughout the school all pupils achieve well.
- Standards in art and design are above expected levels.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their achievement is good.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0(14.8)	15.7(15.8)
Writing	14.8(14.8)	14.6(14.4)
Mathematics	16.0(16.2)	16.3(16.5)

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

1. Results of tests in reading, writing and mathematics taken by seven year olds in 2003 were broadly in line with those achieved in 2002. Children enter the school with prior attainment well below average for their age. When compared to the results in similar schools, pupils' attainment in 2003 was below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The number of pupils reaching the higher level in reading was below average, but the number who attained this higher level in writing was average.
2. The provision for children in the nursery and reception year is good. The recent rearrangement of classes is beginning to have a positive effect on achievement. All children make good progress from a well below average starting point. Their attainment is broadly average in physical development and in their personal development by the time they are ready to enter Year 1. They are below the expected levels in the goals set for them in the other areas of learning². Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and were making good progress in the lessons observed.
3. All pupils achieve well. They make good progress during their time in the school. A number of factors contribute to this: good teaching; pupils' good attitudes to learning; and the impact of the school's good atmosphere for learning that values all pupils, promotes their self-confidence and encourages them to work hard.
4. The school has focused on early identification and intervention to support and help pupils with special educational needs. This means these pupils are very well supported and make as good

² The Foundation Stage curriculum is based on learning goals in six areas. These are set for: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; creative development; physical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and personal, social and emotional development.

progress as their peers. Much of this good support is through the work of teaching assistants. The identified pupils are achieving well in lessons and over a longer period of time through carefully targeted work. Staff plan very effectively and work with smaller groups where appropriate. As a result, pupils also gain a lot in self-esteem and confidence. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. They are well supported and their progress is consistent with that of all other pupils in the school as a whole.

5. Standards in the current Year 4 are average overall in English, mathematics and science. The generally good teaching and good leadership of subjects ensure that pupils achieve expected levels in physical education, history, design and technology, music, ICT and religious education. In art and design, standards are above the levels expected for their age by the time pupils leave school. Achievement in most subjects is good. Classroom computers are not planned to be used as frequently as they could be and pupils are missing the opportunity to practise the skills that they have learnt in the ICT suite.
6. Standards in speaking and listening rise from well below average on entry to the school to average by the time they leave. Most pupils speak clearly and with confidence. Their pronunciation is good and they show willingness and spirit when answering questions in all classes. Standards in reading in Year 4 are also average because of the good teaching of basic reading skills. Writing progresses well and standards are also rising and are currently average in Year 4.
7. Standards in mathematics also rise well throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, they are below the national average. By the end of Year 4 they are average. This is because of the consistently good teaching in Years 3 and 4. Pupils achieve well since they generally enter the school with well below average standards and are on course to leave with average standards. Achievement by the end of both Years 2 and 4 is good. Boys and girls do equally well in the various strands of the subject, and using and applying mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum are particularly strong features.
8. In science, pupils have made good progress in understanding basic scientific skills and principles by the end of Year 2. They are especially good at knowing how to conduct experiments and record them. This work is carefully built on throughout the school with pupils acquiring a good range of understanding of fair tests, animal and plant habitats, and forces. Standards throughout the school are now in line with expectations by the time pupils leave school and there is a rising trend of improvement as pupils consolidate their skills well.
9. Targets set by the governors in consultation with the local education authority are challenging and high, but realistic, given the inspection findings. These targets are based on the pupil attainment leader's thorough analysis of what each pupil's potential is. Inspectors judge that there has been a good improvement all round in the performance of pupils so far this year, making the targets realistic and attainable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

As a result of the school's actions, the pupils' attendance is now moving closer to the national average for primary schools and is **satisfactory**. Punctuality is closely monitored and is also satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good** and there are no recorded exclusions. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **good**. Their cultural development is satisfactory in relation to their own culture, but unsatisfactory in relation to their knowledge of other cultures and their place in a multi-cultural society.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very strong ethos of good relationships between pupils results in the absence of bullying and any other form of harassment.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, show an interest in their work and try hard to please.

- Children in the nursery and reception classes make good early progress.
- Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and show respect for each other.
- Pupils have insufficient knowledge of the impact of growing up in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

10. The school promotes good relationships between pupils across all age groups. Pupils are encouraged to care for others and to ensure no one feels isolated or unwanted. This strong positive ethos provides an environment where pupils feel valued and where there is no bullying or other form of harassment. The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well. The good behaviour is a positive contribution to learning.
11. The good relationships can be seen in the playground and in classes. Pupils work well together in pairs or groups when required and wait turns or share resources sensibly. They show an interest in the lessons and activities provided and try hard to please. They showed that they enjoy the success of their classmates by the spontaneous applause noted in a number of lessons. Pupils are happy to talk about their work and explain what they have been doing. When asked to carry out any additional task or take responsibility such as helping to distribute the daily fruit, there is no shortage of volunteers. The younger children in the nursery and reception classes are very well cared for by the staff. This helps them to feel secure and they make good progress as a result.
12. The school provides good opportunities through assemblies, prayer, music and art for pupils to develop spiritual awareness and when this is added to the high expectations for behaviour, pupils acquire a good level of social and moral skills. Pupils play well together, particularly on the very popular new adventure play equipment. At the beginning of the school year, teachers encourage pupils to discuss the class rules and form their own opinions on the fairness of the requirements. Pupils show they understand by their knowledge of what will be tolerated. They meet the requirements and this results in an orderly community where mutual respect shows through and learning is supported.
13. Pupils who have special educational needs are developing confidence and positive self-esteem as they follow the good role models of their classmates. They relate well to the teachers and support assistants, developing an enthusiasm for their work and an increasing ability to concentrate.
14. The school uses offsite visits and visiting artists to illustrate the material taught in the curriculum and this helps pupils to develop a good insight into their own culture. A particularly good example was seen in the provision of Tudor music following lessons on Tudor dress and architecture in history and art and design. However, similar opportunities for pupils to develop a wider awareness of the contribution made to society by a multi-ethnic population are insufficient, and pupils' knowledge of cultures other than their own is limited.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **good**. The promotion of equality of opportunity is **good**. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **good**. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of day-to-day teaching in Years 1 to 4 is **good**. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Individual lesson planning is thorough, giving lessons purpose and drive.
- Teachers motivate and usually engage pupils well, securing their commitment to learning.
- Teachers manage pupils well, promoting good relationships and good behaviour.
- The overall use of the very good assessment information is unsatisfactory. This includes variation in the use of marking.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and promotes good achievement
- In a few lessons, teachers allow certain pupils with poor listening skills to reduce the quality of discussion.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2(6%)	21(58%)	12(33%)	1(3%)	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.

Commentary

15. Day-to-day teaching is generally good. The care and enthusiasm shown by teachers in the lessons observed were enabling pupils to achieve well. All teachers and assistants have been working in the school for many years and their knowledge of pupils and their families is encyclopaedic. This knowledge, however, is more commonly applied to pupils' personal development, and therefore is more effective in this area, than to their academic development. Assessment arrangements and records for English, mathematics and science, collated by the pupil attainment leader, are very detailed and informative. While these procedures are very good, insufficient use is made of the information gained to set individual targets for pupils. For this reason the quality of education provided, which is satisfactory overall, could be further improved by better application and use of the information already available.
16. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage reflects good subject knowledge and skilled management. The teachers and classroom assistants provide a broad, interesting curriculum that engages children effectively. They draw on their knowledge of individual children to ensure that learning is relevant to children's developing needs. Expectations in terms of learning and social skills are consistent and the attention to detail results in good progress overall and suitable challenge for all children, including the most able. Classroom support is effective and well organised. This helps to ensure that the least able children also progress very well and gain satisfaction from learning. The organisation put in place this year where 36 reception children are taught with 19 Year 1 pupils is working well, thanks to the hard work and commitment of all the adults involved. Although it looks complicated, the arrangements enable the Year 1 pupils to be taught as a year group, except when their ability or skill requires the use of smaller groups. The good use of the nursery nurses – who take sole responsibility for the very good nursery – also enables the reception children to be divided into ability groups that cater for individual needs. As a result, all children are making good progress and achieving well.
17. The sound, and often good, teaching in Years 1 and 2 generally turns pupils' energy and enthusiasm to good account, to inspire progress in learning. Carefully targeted questioning and appreciation of the ideas they encounter motivate pupils and carry learning forward well. Teachers manage pupils well, insisting on and securing high standards of behaviour. However, in a few lessons, the more disruptive pupils are given too much attention. When this occurs, the quieter pupils have too little chance to speak and discussions are less productive than they should be. Pupils also do not become as independent or critical of their own work as they might because teachers tend to direct activities too closely, usually because they are anxious to manage the challenging behaviour of a few pupils

18. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good overall and includes some very good teaching. Teachers plan lessons carefully and make sure classroom assistants work very effectively in all classes, valuably enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. Again the use of assessment information is limited. Greater attention to individual pupils' needs as identified by the analysis of test results is required to make lessons more appropriately challenging. This would also provide the necessary improvement in the range of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects, and make the work more practical and interesting so that pupils' high levels of interest and enthusiasm show in all subjects.
19. There is a good school policy for marking pupils' written work that encourages the frequent use of feedback to pupils, which is related to the aims for learning in the lesson. However, this is not implemented consistently and some pupils benefit more than others and thus make better progress. This is especially true of the quality of presentation of their work in some pupils' books. Some teachers have higher expectations than others and so some pupils consistently achieve better as a result. Homework is used appropriately to support pupils' progress throughout the school.
20. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good overall. Teachers ensure that the pupils with special needs experience success in front of their peers. Class teaching is good when teachers try to draw in the weaker pupils by including them in questioning. It is also good when teachers provide pupils with challenging tasks that develop the specific skills and attitudes written in their individual education plans. In lessons, some teachers use a simple reminder system to ensure that the pupils' planned targets are referred to regularly. Teachers communicate well with classroom assistants, enabling them to give good support to pupils. Assessment within special needs is satisfactory. The school has developed an appropriate range of diagnostic tests to help it identify the pupils who have special educational needs. The school policy of early intervention works well. Children are monitored as early as the nursery class. The staff track progress well and so these pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Class teachers take responsibility for supporting pupils within classrooms, guided by the head teacher.

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a **satisfactory** curriculum that caters for the interests of, and ensures learning for, most of the pupils. The accommodation and resources for learning are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and enhanced through visits and visitors.
- The learning of the more able pupils is not always appropriately extended.
- Pupils achieve well in their personal development because the school provides a range of carefully planned experiences for them.

Commentary

21. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage because the activities are planned so that they learn through observation and exploration. There is a wide range of interesting things for the children to do that excite them, make them eager to start work and want to learn. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well embedded into the curriculum, although greater opportunity for pupils to use their learned skills in other subjects is required.
22. Provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. The curriculum for pupils who have special educational needs is well matched to their needs in most classes. The pupils have sound individual education plans. The targets in these plans have become more precise since

the previous inspection. However, there is still some inconsistency in their use. In the best examples, pupils are helped by the support assistants to make good progress towards achieving their targets in the basic skills of literacy.

23. Links between subjects are made through topic work. The school's provision of personal, social and health education helps pupils of all ages to develop positive attitudes to their own well-being and that of others. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs misuse and about personal safety, which helps them to develop a good appreciation of a safe and healthy lifestyle. The governing body have taken the decision that sex education will not be taught specifically but any issues raised by pupils will be dealt with as they arise. Nationally produced schemes of work are used to support the effective curriculum planning in other subjects and the local agreed syllabus supports work in religious education. However, the more able pupils are not always given work that challenges them well enough and this slows down their learning unnecessarily.
24. Regular visitors to the school and planned visits to places of interest provide valuable experiences to support pupils' learning. The school has made effective use of a Tudor music and dance specialist to enhance the history topic. Pupils also regularly take part in the 'Biddulph in Bloom' project. Opportunities such as these enrich the curriculum and make a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. Provision for pupils' support and guidance based on the monitoring of their progress is **satisfactory**. There are satisfactory arrangements for the involvement of pupils in the work and routines of the school. The school actively seeks pupils' views and acts on them whenever possible.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils can readily relate to an adult in school if worried or concerned and this helps them to feel secure.
- Good induction arrangements enable younger children make a good start to their education.
- The school ensures an effective provision of pastoral care and a safe environment for all its pupils.

Commentary

25. Staff know their pupils very well and this clearly shows both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Because of the genuine care shown, pupils develop trust in the staff and say they would not hesitate to approach teachers when in need of help or advice. They say teachers expect pupils to work hard but are friendly and fair and will always help if asked. This trusting relationship was well illustrated in a Year 3 'Circle Time' session, where pupils spoke in turn and expressed their views or concerns. Almost without exception, the class confirmed that they would look for help from the teacher.
26. The nursery staff maintain informal contacts with local pre-school playgroups and prospective parents are invited to bring their children into the nursery. The children can join in the activities and parents can see at first hand the quality and range of the facilities offered. The link between the reception class and the nursery is very effective. In the summer term, reception staff teach in the nursery to enable the children to become familiar with the adults. Parents in small groups are invited into the reception class to meet the staff, see the work done and to go through a comprehensive induction pack. The continuity of the progression through nursery into reception enables children to gain confidence quickly in the adults and they make good progress as a result. The school has developed good links with specialist support agencies. These work to the benefit of the pupils by giving them access to good guidance on behaviour and learning.

27. The school and the governing body ensure that the premises and equipment meet statutory requirements for health and safety issues. Annual risk assessments, testing and certification are systematically programmed and first aid arrangements are good. Details of all children requiring medication are individually recorded by the reception staff and medicines carefully stored and controlled. A reception staff member is also the designated officer for child protection arrangements and other staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and these duties are carried out well. These arrangements, including Internet security, are good.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are **good** and contribute to pupils' welfare and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good level of information for parents concerning the progress their children make. Parents have supportive views.
- Good links with the community and other schools and colleges provide additional support for learning.
- Good links with middle schools help to ensure a smooth transfer for the Year 4 leavers.

Commentary

28. The school has good arrangements in place for giving parents relevant information about the school, the work their children will be doing each term and the targets their children are expected to achieve. Parents of children in the reception class receive a comprehensive induction pack which details the help they can provide in literacy and numeracy. These parents are also encouraged to come into the reception class to observe a reading session, see how children are guided, and then to join in the weekly library sessions to support their children by helping them select books for home reading.
29. The school prospectus and the governing body's annual report are informative, and newsletters are issued regularly. Pupils' annual reports cover all the subjects of the curriculum and summarise personal development as well as giving details of what pupils have learnt and can do. Reading diaries are used as home/school communicators. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the care provided for their children. They are confident that the staff will listen to any concerns or complaints and try to help if they can. However, many parents are reluctant to make a regular commitment to give practical support to the school. The parent teacher association is not active and attempts by the school to seek parents' views by forming a focus group have met with little success so far.
30. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs value the commitment of the staff to care for their children. The school has sought to build up an increasingly close relationship with the parents, who are all invited to the important review meetings. The parents are now involved in the procedures at every stage. They find the school's information about the progress of their children very helpful.
31. The school has good links with the local community and allows the use of the school's facilities by several groups, all of whom pay rental and help the school budget. There is a strong link with the church and the curate gives very good support in assemblies. Local emergency services such as police and fire send personnel to instruct the pupils in personal and home safety matters. Local businesses, including a bank and a veterinary practice, help with resources and instruction on pet care. The curriculum is enhanced as a result.
32. Links with the local sports college have enabled the school to obtain the support of senior pupils from the college for physical education and games, given in school at popular lunchtime sessions. Qualified dance tuition is also obtained. Pupils on work experience are offered

placements by the school and this helps provide additional support in classrooms. By collaborating with other colleges, the school is also able to provide opportunities for graduate trainees and national vocational qualification trainees to attend the school to obtain practical experience. In turn, these students give valuable support to pupils' learning. The close links with the middle schools enable staff to plan the smooth transfer of the Year 4 leavers. Middle school staff visit the school and the Year 4 leavers spend a half-day session in either or both middle schools to help them become familiar with the work and facilities offered. These sessions also help pupils to make a choice of the school they would most like to attend.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the head teacher and other key staff is **good**. The school is managed **satisfactorily**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good leadership exercised by some of the key staff and their high aspirations are creating effective teams.
- The governors are not involved enough in monitoring, challenging and supporting senior managers.
- There is very good monitoring of performance data and reviewing patterns and trends, but this information is not being used effectively.
- There are good arrangements for the continuing professional development of staff.

Commentary

33. The head teacher gives good leadership in specific practical areas. For instance, there is good planning behind building work, such as the re-modelling of the schoolyard. He is also very well known and respected in the local community and this brings many benefits to the school in support and sponsorship. The structure of the senior management team has recently been changed. This has involved a re-organisation of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, including subject leaders. The purpose of this is to bring the subject leaders more closely in touch with their subjects throughout the school. The changes are too recent to have yet impacted widely on the work of the school. In some cases the leaders have a sufficiently strong vision of their area to make good use of the opportunities provided by the new arrangements. For example, the leaders of mathematics, assessment and the Foundation Stage have a clear sense of purpose and are creating effective teamwork that is driving their subjects and areas forward. They are undertaking monitoring that tracks standards and evaluates whether they are high enough. This guides them to promote the actions that result in raising standards. This aspect of leadership and management is good.
34. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator initiates and manages the training of the support staff well. Their expertise is growing steadily. The communication between the co-ordinator, special needs assistants and teachers is good. This contributes to good progress. Teachers in individual year groups have the responsibility for deploying the classroom assistants as they see fit. Some teachers are more creative than others. Year 1 teachers, for instance, plan for intensive support on particular days. In Year 2 there are occasions when an extra pair of hands is urgently needed. The co-ordinator does not yet monitor the outcomes systematically, for instance in order to prepare reports for the governors to use when making value for money judgements.
35. The governing body is committed to the prosperity and growth of the school. The governors ensure the proper application of statutory duties. However, they are not involved closely enough to know all the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Consequently they are not in a position

to help shape the vision and direction of the school. As a body they are not acting as 'critical friends', able to challenge as well as support the senior managers.

36. The school has set up very good systems for assessing pupils' attainment through the very good work of the pupil attainment leader. The senior managers use this particularly well to analyse performance data, review patterns and spot trends. Some of the needs identified, such as in teacher expertise, result in action. Thus the management runs an effective programme for the continuing professional development of all staff. Other identified trends or patterns do not trigger sufficiently precise action. For instance, the deployment of the support staff is more consistently effective in some year groups than others. The management of teachers' workload is not equal in all cases, because some co-ordinators have responsibilities for as many as five subjects and aspects. The school does not look closely enough at the best value implications of its activities and this is again a weakness that the governors need to address.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	617000
Total expenditure	606208
Expenditure per pupil	2341

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12540
Balance carried forward to the next	10792

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

37. Provision in the nursery and reception classes is good, enabling children to make a good start to their learning in a stimulating environment. The organisation put in place this year where 36 reception children are taught with 19 Year 1 pupils is working well. The arrangements enable the Year 1 pupils to be taught as a year group, except when their ability or skill requires the use of smaller groups. The good use of the nursery nurses – who take sole responsibility for the very good nursery – also enables the reception children to be divided into ability groups that cater for individual needs. As a result, all children are making good progress and achieving well. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
38. Standards on entry to the nursery are well below average levels, linguistically, physically, socially and emotionally. The level of care is good and all children make good progress through the Foundation Stage, and achieve well in the six areas of learning. The breadth of the curriculum is good. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage match those expected for children of their age in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. However, only around 20 per cent of children achieve the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Eighty per cent of children are below the expected standards in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and well below the expected standard in communication, language and literacy. However, they make very good progress against their prior attainment.
39. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The nursery and reception leaders demonstrate a very good sense of purpose and clarity of vision. They provide very good role models for staff and children and have created a very effective staff team. Teaching is good and leads to good learning. Strengths of teaching are good planning, the encouragement and engagement of children, insistence on high standards of behaviour, promotion of equality of opportunity and the very good contribution of the education assistants. Thorough assessment procedures enable staff to respond to children's individual needs. Accommodation in the nursery and the outdoor area are good, but the gloomy lighting in some classrooms is a problem and does not help children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective induction procedures help children to adapt to new routines.

Commentary

40. Personal, social and emotional development is a planned element of all areas of the nursery curriculum. Children are encouraged to dress and undress independently and to manage their own hygiene. They are very well taught to listen carefully, and to take part in group discussions and activities. Freedom of choice within carefully prepared and selected tasks encourages independence and social development. Very good teamwork between all staff makes a valuable contribution to the quality of learning.
41. This good teaching continues in the reception classes where children respond well to what is provided and, with direction and support, become independent users of the classroom and the

outdoor area. The strong emphasis on inclusion ensures equality of access to the curriculum, for all children. Staff use the accommodation imaginatively and displays are stimulating. Good resources are readily accessible and encourage independence. Children's good attitudes and very good behaviour and relationships contribute significantly to their good learning. Their concern for their own needs begins to incorporate sensitivity towards others. They develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and recognise the need for a common code of behaviour.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Family Literacy Projects help parents to support their children's learning.
- Most children are not able to recognise or record their names, on entry.

Commentary

42. In both the nursery and reception classes the good teaching is characterised by a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the very well organised and exciting activities that motivate them. The high level of adult support and very good teaching ensure that children, in the nursery, are given every opportunity to develop their language skills. When children start school their level of attainment is well below average. Children soon develop positive attitudes towards books, and confidence in telling stories. Parents are encouraged to read with their children at home. Direct teaching is followed by focused activities that support what has been learnt. Sessions are structured to provide time for adult-directed activities and individual choice. Children's language is developed through role-play, for example with a toy village. The session observed where the children heard themselves singing familiar nursery rhymes from a tape recorder was spell-binding for all concerned.
43. Children's language development continues in the reception classes, as they interact with others and explore the meanings and sounds of new words. Most children listen carefully, extend their vocabulary and use a widening range of words to express their ideas. They develop their reading skills through phonics practice, listening to stories, sharing books with adults and joining in familiar refrains. They re-tell familiar stories, such as *The Kite* – a frog and toad story. Good letter formation is developed through practical experience, and children have many opportunities to apply their writing skills. The National Literacy Strategy is introduced gradually. Classrooms are rich in displayed vocabulary and annotated displays of children's work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of practical activities helps to develop mathematical skills.
- Few children have had any counting experience, prior to entry.

Commentary

44. Through often very good teaching, children in the nursery and reception classes develop mathematical concepts and language through focused play. In each lesson, oral work is reinforced through practical activities. With adult support, children explore the properties of sand, soil and water. Adults use appropriate language to encourage children to describe their activities, such as 'full', 'half-full', and 'empty', in relation to capacity. In this way, children

gradually gain an understanding of their meaning. The vocabulary used and the questions asked are adjusted according to individual understanding.

45. The National Numeracy Strategy is introduced gradually into the reception classes. Most children recognise numerals to ten and count to 20 accurately. They find one more or one less than a number from one to ten. They compare two groups of objects saying whether they have the same number, or 'more than' or 'less than'. Their understanding of capacity and weight is developed through their experience with sand and water, using words such as 'heavier' and 'lighter'. They sequence objects in order of size, using vocabulary such as 'shorter' and 'taller', and develop positional language, such as 'next to', 'in front of', and 'behind'. Most children are able to name and describe some of the properties of flat and solid shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of activities develops children's understanding and use of the senses.
- Children enter the nursery with a limited general knowledge.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world but most will not achieve the expected level by the time they go into Year 1 despite the good teaching and learning. Children in the nursery become familiar with the local environment, as they walk in the local neighbourhood. They are visited by people, such as the local fire brigade, who talk about their work. They investigate objects and materials by using all their senses, as appropriate. They develop mouse control on the computer and independently access programs that are linked to the six areas of learning.
47. Reception children show interest in why things happen and how things work. They go on listening walks, identify types of buildings and look for shapes in the environment. Their care for living creatures develops as they explore the school grounds. They begin to look more closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. Their knowledge of the past develops as they think about events in their own lives and those of their families. They visit shops in the locality. Computer skills are developed progressively. Children competently use a range of software to support the development of reading, phonics, writing, number, sorting and matching. They begin to understand a little about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people, as they learn about special times, places and people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's are given opportunities to respond to rhythm and music.
- Physical skills and the use of tools in the classroom are taught very well.

Commentary

48. Although teaching is very good in this area of learning and this ensures that children's achievement is very good, most will not achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Children in the nursery learn to respond to rhythm, music and stories through movement. They negotiate space, in the outdoor area, adjusting the speed of their

vehicles and changing direction to avoid obstacles. Their ability to move with confidence, imagination and control gradually develops. They use climbing and balancing equipment safely. With support, they engage in activities requiring hand/eye co-ordination and use one-handed tools and equipment safely.

49. Children in the reception classes move with confidence, imagination, control and co-ordination, with an awareness of others, in the hall and outside. They use a range of body parts to travel along, under and over equipment. They recognise the importance of exercise and the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. Physical skills in the classroom are taught well. Children show increasing skill and control in handling tools, objects and malleable materials safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for children to explore a variety of media in art, to make and listen to music and to use their imagination.
- The level of children's creative experience is very low, on entry.

Commentary

50. Good teaching ensures that children begin to develop an understanding of their learning. However, few are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Children's creativity in the nursery is developed within stimulating learning areas that are well organised and resourced. With guidance and support, they learn to use primary colours and to differentiate and mix colours. Their ability to cut and join a variety of materials develops through practical experiences. As adults work alongside children, they encourage them to talk about their work, using appropriate vocabulary.
51. Children in the reception classes develop their ability to draw and paint, as they produce portraits of themselves and others. Classroom displays demonstrate clear progress over time, in the use of colour and in pencil and brush work. The lesson observed on colour mixing was notable not only for the wonderful experience offered and the lovely results, but also for the very wide range of ability on show. The children enjoy music. They create high and low sounds with their hands, voices and instruments, create music and listen to music from other cultures. Adults encourage them successfully to use their imaginations and communicate ideas through music, dance and role-play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, although standards are below average in Year 2.
- There is good teaching in most Year 3 and 4 classes.
- The data from a good range of assessment procedures is not used effectively, and there are limited opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects.
- There is good support given by classroom assistants.
- The pupils do not have a well-developed knowledge of their own learning.

Commentary

52. Standards in Year 2 are below average. However, the pupils achieve well because they are coming from a well below average starting point on entry to the school. Standards in Year 4 are appropriate for the pupils' ages. Year 4 pupils are on track to reach national average standards in Year 6. Pupils here make good progress in lessons and also achieve well in relation to their starting points. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they get from classroom assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well.
53. The planning for literacy provision has improved since the previous inspection. It enables many teachers to deliver well-structured, interesting lessons. However, some teachers keep closely to the rigid pattern of introduction, activity and plenary. The lesson introductions then are too long and pupils lose interest. The school has a good system for recording the assessments made of pupils' work, but the data gathered is not used effectively to influence the planning of individual and blocks of lessons. Consequently some teachers do not set tasks that are challenging enough for all groups of pupils. The setting that occurs in some year groups is helpful in allowing each set to progress at a good pace. However, some teachers of the top sets regard the set as broadly the same in attainment, and plan accordingly. In practice in all the sets there is a considerable range of ability. The management of the subject fails to ensure a system of evaluating whether standards are high enough in any given year.
54. Day-to-day teaching in English is good overall. The work given to Year 4 pupils is more challenging than elsewhere in the school. Teachers of Year 2 classes put much thought into the preparation of pupil and group target cards. These give pupils a good idea of what they need to do to improve, but they do not know where the levels are leading them. The longer-term planning tends to range widely over the possible topics. It does not tie down precisely enough how the topics lead to specific progress through the attainment criteria levels. Each year group selects how to use the classroom assistants. In some years the intensive support given by the assistants on particular days leads to good progress. It enables the teacher to concentrate on the pupils who have special educational needs. In one Year 3 lesson, these pupils made very good gains in story writing, using good spelling, speech marks and interesting adjectives. The arrangement in Year 2 does not give the teachers this scope, and a group of unruly boys takes up too much of the teachers' attention.
55. Overall the balance given to the four strands of English is appropriate, as teachers are anxious to raise standards in all of them. There is no formal tracking of standards of speaking, however, and standards in this strand tend to lag behind those in reading and writing. Similarly the lack of oversight of handwriting is leading to inconsistent quality.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Teachers use a sound range of opportunities to enable pupils to practise and use their language skills. For instance, Year 4 pupils use reading well to research information about the Tudors from books and computer programs. They also use writing well for a variety of purposes in history. Sometimes they write descriptions and accounts. At other times they write interpretations or as characters in the events. Such opportunities are not planned in a sufficiently systematic way in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 2 are below the national average but pupils do well from starting school to leaving.
- Although teaching overall is satisfactory, assessment is not well used and the quality of marking throughout the school is inconsistent.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented consistently.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

57. Standards are below the national average by the end of Year 2 but by the end of Year 4 standards are in line with the national average. Achievement is satisfactory.
58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some of the best teaching was seen when pupils were involved productively and were enjoying participating in suitable activities. In these lessons pupils used their own ideas and understood what they were expected to do. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics and the majority enjoy their lessons. They enjoy the brisk oral and mental starters, which are interesting and challenging. This prompts them to work hard. By Year 2 pupils know '10 more than' and 'less than', they can count in twos and can name two-dimensional shapes, and they also have an understanding of time. By Year 4, pupils know doubling and halving and are aware of what can be measured in centimetres and kilometres, and they are also able to describe three-dimensional shapes.
59. Although detailed information is kept on what the pupils know, understand and can do, it is not used by all of the teachers to amend day-to-day planning in order to meet the needs of the individual pupils. This leads in particular to a lack of challenge for the more able pupils. Nevertheless, throughout the school, lessons are well structured and teachers are clear about what to teach and when to teach it because of their effective use of the national subject guidelines.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the National Numeracy Strategy is embedded in the curriculum. Subject monitoring has taken place and additional guidance has been given where it is needed. Pupils' work and test results are carefully scrutinised and there is a clear drive to improve standards in the subject. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. There is some use of mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to apply the skills they have learnt in mathematics lessons to activities in other subjects, for example, reading temperature scales in science and timelines in history. These, however, are limited and do not contribute significantly enough to raising standards in mathematics. Limited use is made of computers to support activities during lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, and continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and achieve levels in line with expectations for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils enjoy their science lessons and behave well because teachers forge good relationships with them and plan work that they find interesting.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their skills in investigations. This is a priority of the new co-ordinator.
- Pupils sometimes do not achieve as well as they might because teachers make too little use of the information they have about how well pupils are achieving to adapt activities for the different ability levels in their class.

Commentary

62. Standards are similar to those found when the school was last inspected. Standards in Year 2 are below those expected for pupils by the age of seven, but the latest results show an improvement in the last two years. Pupils do well compared with the results in similar schools. From a lower than average starting point, their achievements and progress are good. Standards in Year 4 are in line with the levels expected for pupils of this age.
63. The school has not had a co-ordinator for a while, but the head teacher has identified the right priorities and taken suitable action that is beginning to improve teaching. A greater time allocated for teaching, more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in scientific investigations, clearer lesson objectives and better resources are all improving the quality and range of pupils' learning experiences. However, the impact of these changes to enable teachers to deliver suitably challenging work in each year group has not yet had time to have a beneficial impact on standards. In particular, more able pupils in Year 1 and 2 do not always work at the higher levels of which they are capable. This slows their progress, and acts as a brake on the school's drive to improve standards.
64. The teaching of science is satisfactory throughout the school. Well-managed introductions and discussions, stimulated by teachers' clear explanations and effective questioning, mean that pupils have a sound grasp of science topics. Activities involving concepts such as dissolving and evaporation successfully engage pupils' interest so that they become absorbed and work hard. Due to relationships being good, pupils behave well in lessons. They listen and watch closely and make thoughtful comments when explaining what they notice. Most pupils work co-operatively when asked to work together because tasks are explained clearly. However, they do not become as independent as they might because teachers still direct activities too closely. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson pupils copied the class teacher's model of their investigation from the board rather than offering ideas of their own. In this, and other aspects of science, teachers do not make enough use of their knowledge of pupils' existing skills when they plan activities. When similar work and challenges are set for all pupils in Years 3 and 4, the more able sometimes mark time and do not achieve as well as they might. The need for pupils to record their work neatly is also not a high priority for some teachers and this leads to occasional inaccuracies that invalidate the conclusions reached in investigations.
65. The co-ordinator's role has recently been re-introduced. She has a list of appropriate priorities, such as a complete review of science across the school, to build on the good work currently in place. She also recognises the need to make sure the systems for checking on pupils' attainments, which also provide valuable information about the quality of teaching and learning, are implemented as effectively as possible. At present, because of other pressing priorities, the

monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not yet thorough enough in establishing what works well and what needs to be improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good.
- A good range of equipment is used well to promote learning but this needs to be regularly updated.
- Teachers use the national guidelines for ICT and therefore know what to teach and when to teach it.

Commentary

66. Pupils achieve standards that are in line with expectations in Year 2 and Year 4. In direct teaching in the ICT suite, pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to program a moveable toy and record their writing in a word-processing program. They are also able to put data into a graph and use interactive programs. By the time they reach Year 4 they are able to complete tasks such as producing a front cover for a newspaper article on Samson and Delilah. They are able to search on a CD-ROM for information useful to them in a class topic such as the Tudors. Work on data handling is at a level in line with that expected for their age. Pupils are able to use the Internet well and safely due to the care taken by the school. They send and receive email and make musical compositions with the help of computers. Conversations with pupils and examples of their work show that they are confident and enthusiastic about ICT. They clearly enjoy their lessons and work well with partners or groups to complete set tasks.
67. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge; they use national guidelines and have appropriate expectations of what they want the pupils to achieve. They successfully plan for pupils to meet the range of activities outlined in the scheme of work. The present assessment system does record what a pupil has done and this is passed to the next teacher. Pupils have still to develop skills of working independently and the ability to use ICT on their own initiative.
68. The school has a wide range of ICT equipment such as video cameras, tape recorders, CD players and a digital camera. These are used satisfactorily but pupils have limited planned use of all of these items and all ICT equipment must be regularly updated in order to maintain the provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. During the inspection little use was seen of ICT outside the direct teaching sessions. Within the classroom, computers are available to enhance topic work and several programs are available, including those for literacy and numeracy. However, they are not used as frequently as they could be and pupils are missing the opportunity to practise the skills that they have learnt in the ICT suite.

HUMANITIES

Geography

70. Work was sampled in geography but no lessons were observed. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in this subject. A study of the Year 2 and 4 pupils'

work indicates that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and that the skills related to this subject are developed year by year in a smooth sequence of steps. The short-term planning sets a reasonable expectation for pupils to use study skills, particularly reading, writing and numeracy. Presentation of work is not consistently high. Teachers use field study trips well. These make the subject more interesting, and give pupils appropriate experience to use in their work. The pupils' work is assessed at the end of topics. There is no systematic monitoring to indicate to staff if standards are high enough.

History

Provision in the subject is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 4 are achieving particularly well.
- Study skills are developed progressively through the school.
- The presentation of pupils' work is not consistently high.

Commentary

71. Pupils reach standards appropriate for their age at the end of Year 2. They achieve well and make satisfactory progress. In Year 4 pupils are achieving particularly well and are on track to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. They make good progress in lessons. This is an improvement on the standards found in the previous inspection. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to develop the skills of historical enquiry. They give pupils sound opportunities to use their reading to look up information, and their writing for recording it in simple ways. The teaching of the junior pupils is especially rigorous. The teachers expect pupils to apply themselves at the peak of their abilities. They expect good listening, concentration and creative thinking. They use resources particularly well, so that pupils often have first hand experiences to guide their reasoning. For instance, the Year 4 pupils had experience of Tudor instruments, music and dancing. The lessons are planned so that all pupils are challenged fully, the strongest are stretched, and the weakest are well supported.
72. The pupils respond well to this. Consequently they are interested, have very positive attitudes and work hard. Pupils who have special educational needs find the practical approach very valuable. For example, the Year 3 pupils played the role of a Victorian classroom. All pupils felt the dread and doom of Victorian rigidity equally. It gave them a lot to think and write about. Consequently the juniors are good at comparing the present with past times, and interpreting what they hear and read. Through the experiences presented they learn to empathise well. Only their chronology, the sense of exactly when these things happened, is relatively weak. Year 4 pupils present their work neatly, but this is not the case in all classes. Teachers use study trips well. These add even more interest and help to bring the subject alive. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of topics. There is no systematic monitoring to indicate to staff if standards are high enough in particular years. The pupils do not themselves know the levels they are working at.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education contributes well to pupils' personal and social development and to their spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils have sound knowledge of different faiths.
- Teaching is sound overall and this leads to satisfactory achievement.
- There are missed opportunities for writing.

Commentary

73. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are similar to those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils' learning is built up satisfactorily over time and so by Year 4 pupils have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the major faiths. By the end of Year 2 pupils know a range of stories from the Bible. For example, pupils in Year 2 talked about the life of Jesus and the miracles he performed. They linked these stories to their own feelings and opinions. Pupils in Year 4 talked enthusiastically of work they had covered. Two examples of this were Hinduism and Sacred Texts. There are significant links between religious education and personal, health and social education as well as other topic work taught in school. Religious education also makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
74. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and therefore not enough was seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Teachers, however, do handle issues sensitively and this has a positive impact on the pupils' personal, social and moral development. There are missed opportunities, however, for pupils to practise the writing skills taught and learnt in the literacy lessons due to the use of worksheets that require one-word or short phrase answers.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator offers help and advice to colleagues. She is aware that monitoring procedures need to be implemented but has had insufficient opportunity to do this.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Skills are developed progressively and pupils achieve above expectations for their age by the time they leave school.
- Cross-curricular links are good.
- The use of computers could be developed further.

Commentary

76. Standards in art and design are in line with those expected of pupils in Year 2 and above expectations in Year 4. All pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' work over time demonstrates good progress in their development of skills in drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, textiles and print-making. They demonstrate sensitivity as they study the works of great artists, observe their painting techniques and try to emulate their style in paint and oil pastels. There are many examples of high quality work in displays around the school, and in the useful portfolio kept by the co-ordinator. These include representations of gales and breezes in relation to work in geography that are black and moody. Very realistic, if unflattering, self-portraits are completed in Year 3. Pastels are used well to develop clear, observational drawings of buildings and still life drawings of lamps and candles. Landscape pictures using pencils and wax crayons are particularly effective. There are many opportunities for three-dimensional work. This is particularly effective in Year 4, with felt work in the jungle scenes.
77. Teaching is good and leads to good learning. The major factors in pupils' good acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding are teachers' good subject knowledge and the teaching of basic skills, the promotion of equality of opportunity, the insistence on high standards of work

and behaviour and the teachers' ability to engage and retain pupils' interest. In particular the insistence on neatness that does not appear to be carried over into other aspects of the curriculum is an excellent feature. Through opportunities to appraise their own work and the work of others, pupils develop a good knowledge of their own learning in this subject.

78. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The scheme of work provides good guidance to teachers. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through opportunities to appreciate great works of art and to express their own feelings through art. Opportunities are taken for pupils to sketch during school visits. A flourishing art club makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' skills.
79. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The curriculum has been broadened and teaching has improved, representing good improvement, overall, since the last inspection.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good planning framework.
- Skills are developed progressively.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

80. Pupils in the present Year 4 attain standards in line with the national expectation. They are able to talk about different modelling that they have done and how they designed and assembled the models. They are not clear as to why they have chosen particular designs because they have not had sufficient opportunity to take models apart and discuss what has been successful in the design stage.
81. Teaching and learning are good. The strength of teaching is the strong emphasis on skills and techniques, which leads to the good development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Good management of pupils engages their interest and concentration and inspires them to put creative effort into their work. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good, teaching methods are effective, and time, teaching assistants, parents and resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning.
82. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched through some cross-curricular links that could be extended. Pupils develop their literacy skills as they complete their design sheets and written evaluations and discuss their finished products. They develop their mathematical skills as they measure and make templates. Overall, resources are good.
83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader is experienced and enthusiastic, and demonstrates a clear sense of educational direction, but has many other responsibilities in the school and design and technology is currently a low priority. Although the scheme of work provides a clear learning structure to ensure the progression of skills, the assessment and recording procedures are still being developed.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn.
- Singing is of a good standard.
- The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to perform.
- Pupils are enabled to listen to a wide variety of music every week.

Commentary

84. Standards in music are in line with those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. All pupils make good progress against their prior attainment and achieve well. Pupils' singing is of a good standard. The active participation of pupils is encouraged on many occasions as assemblies seen during the inspection showed. These were typical of the good quality and range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is enriched through extra-curricular activities, such as a singing club and recorder groups.
85. Teaching in music is good and leads to good learning for all pupils. The strengths of teaching are the teachers' good subject knowledge, their ability to engage and challenge pupils, their high expectations of work and behaviour, and careful use of time. Strengths of learning are the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, their application and productivity and their capacity to contribute independently and collaboratively. The Year 3 lesson, taken by the current co-ordinator, was very good. The way she was able to offer a recorder to all 26 pupils in the class and then teach them two new notes was impressive. In order to use their own efforts to 'describe' animals in a story, pupils listened attentively and learned and recalled sounds well. They combined pitch, dynamics, duration, tempo and silence simply and expressively. The enjoyment of music is evident throughout the school.
86. Pupils perform at church services and school productions. Leadership by the co-ordinator, and that currently being provided by the enthusiastic deputy head teacher, is good. The deputy head provides a good role model for other staff and pupils. There is a strong tradition of performance that is very much a part of school life.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outside help in the teaching of physical education is effective.
- Pupils are eager learners, enjoying this practical subject, but at certain times during the lessons a few pupils become boisterous.

Commentary

87. Standards in physical education are in line with expectations and the teaching observed was good. During the inspection a visiting specialist teacher taught medieval dance; this was linked to the Tudor topic that the pupils were studying and made cross-curricular links with history, music and art as well as physical education. This was very effective. The pupils participated with confidence and performed the 'Pavane' in front of the rest of Years 3 and 4. During the long session the pupils' behaviour was good and they displayed excellent levels of physical effort

because of the good pace of the lesson. However, during other lessons observed, a few pupils became restless and rather noisy which had a detrimental effect on the learning of the group.

88. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has enlisted the help of parents who give their time to support the school's football club, swimming gala and 'Superskills' programme. Although the school's priorities have rightly been on the core subjects, the creative, aesthetic, practical and physical areas of the curriculum have not been neglected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good policy that is consistently well applied throughout the school.

Commentary

89. The positive care within classes and by teaching staff contributes very well to the security and welfare of all pupils and plays a strong part in their positive attitudes to school and staff. All teachers are very aware of the social needs of individual pupils and how they can all be a part of the school. No pupil is left to feel alone or vulnerable throughout the day. There is a good system for ensuring that a pupil's request or wish can be taken through the school council, to the head and on to the governing body for consideration.
90. The class discussions, known as Circle Time, in a Year 3 class seen during the inspection were typical of the care and thought being applied to this aspect of pupils' learning. The theme was 'empathy'. After a good warm-up, the question posed was, "I feel worried when I...?" The way that staff generated a very supportive atmosphere to enable the more nervous pupils to speak when it came to their turn was impressive.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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