

INSPECTION REPORT

LARKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southport

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104887

Headteacher: Mr T J P Baldwin

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: September 29th to October 2nd 2003

Inspection number: 256702

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	330
School address:	Preston New Road Southport
Postcode:	PR9 8PA
Telephone number:	01704 224720
Fax number:	01704 214786
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Helen Stead
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Number on roll	350 (bigger than most primary schools)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	8.8% (broadly average)
Pupils whose mother tongue is not English	0.6% (low)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	8.2% (below average)

This is a large primary school serving an area of mainly private housing and with few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is a designated school for pupils with physical and medical needs and of those with special educational needs (SEN) nearly one third have speech or communication problems, five have physical needs, and five have specific learning needs. There are very few pupils whose home language is other than English. The reduction in the number of pupils attending the school, because there are fewer young families living in the area, means that it has to have mixed age classes in some year groups. It won a healthy schools award in 2001 and has been involved in the travel wise initiative. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science
9928	Alan Dobson	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
19765	Pauleen Shannon	<i>Team inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language Geography History Religious education
25623	Ted Cox	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
10204	David Vincent	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education Ltd
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school well poised for further improvements. Achievement and standards of pupils in speaking and listening, mathematics and science are good by Year 6, but achievement in writing is not good enough at Year 2. Leadership is good with a clear commitment to help all pupils achieve as well as they can. While there are some strengths in management, the school has not been effective enough in identifying how to improve pupils' writing. Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching at Foundation Stage and Year 6. Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good by Year 6 with above average standards in mathematics and science, and an above average number of pupils gaining the higher levels in the national tests.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, although there is no separate outdoor play area.
- Leadership is good. A strong commitment to including all pupils, whatever their age, ability, disability or ethnic background, into the whole life of the school, results in very good attitudes and behaviour throughout the school.
- Standards and achievement in writing are not good enough by Year 2.
- While management procedures have some strengths, there are also weaknesses in linking school development planning to performance management of staff and to a rigorous assessment of how well the school is doing.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has successfully tackled the key issues by: raising standards in information and communication technology (ICT), improving the quality of teaching where it was weak; involving the senior staff more fully in checking how well the school is doing; improving the performance of the more able pupils by Year 2, and improving assessment procedures, although these are still not used effectively enough to set pupils individual targets for improvement. Parents say that the organisation of homework is better, there are more clubs after school and the building has been improved, but there are some concerns about the mixed age classes.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	B	B
mathematics	D	C	B	B
science	E	C	B	B

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

Achievement by Year 6 is good overall and in the national tests in 2002 standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. This showed good progress from the standards these pupils achieved in the tests they took in Year 2. Results at Year 6 have got better over recent years and a good number of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in the 2002 tests. The unconfirmed results for the 2003 test results suggest that standards in English and science are not quite as high as in 2002. In English this was because the pupils did not do well enough in the writing tasks. In science the dip was marginal. In mathematics, standards improved. In the national tests for Year 2 in 2002 achievement was satisfactory overall in English with average standards in reading and writing but standards in mathematics were below average. Compared with similar schools

standards were average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Boys attained better than girls in 2002 and this matches the results of tests given to those pupils when they first entered Reception, showing boys attaining better than girls at that stage. The unconfirmed results for the 2003 test results suggest that standards in mathematics were similar to those in 2002, while those in reading improved. However standards in writing dipped with fewer pupils gaining the expected Level 2. Achievement in mathematics and science is good by Year 6 currently and pupils attain above average standards. In English, achievement is good in speaking and listening, satisfactory in reading and in writing and pupils attain average standards overall. Achievement in religious education and ICT is satisfactory with average standards throughout the school. Achievement in art and design, geography and history is good with above average standards by Year 6. Children in Reception achieve well and are on target to achieve the goals expected by the end of Reception. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are very good and they are full of enthusiasm because provision for their moral and social development is very good. Provision for their spiritual development is good; for their cultural development it is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching in Foundation Stage and at Year 6, so that pupils achieve well in their learning. The exception is writing because teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their ideas or to write at length. While assessment is broadly satisfactory, the results of assessments are not used effectively enough to enable all pupils to achieve as much as they might, particularly in writing. The school provides a good curriculum overall, enriched by a very good range of well-supported after-school and lunchtime clubs and activities. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. The overall quality of care for pupils is good, although the school is not as effective as it might be in telling individuals how to make their work better and setting targets for them to achieve. The school has good links with parents and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good with a clear commitment from all staff and governors to include all pupils in every aspect of school life whatever their ability, disability, gender, or cultural background and to help them to achieve as well as they can. Management is satisfactory overall with some strengths, but it also has weaknesses in the procedures for linking performance management and school development planning to a rigorous system of checking how well the school is doing.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are good, although some are concerned about the move to mixed-age classes caused by the reduction in numbers attending the school. The pupils have very positive views of the school and in discussions could think of no improvements they would like to see.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' achievements and standards in writing, particularly in Years 1 and 2, by providing more opportunities for them to write at length and taking every opportunity to promote writing skills in all subjects.
- Base the school development plan more closely on a rigorous analysis of how well pupils are doing, setting clear and measurable targets for raising standards and achievement of all pupils.
- Link whole-school development planning more closely to performance management and staff development needs.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all the required information is published in the correct form in the governors' annual report to parents and in the prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement by Year 6 is **good** overall, though it seems to have fluctuated over recent years. In the national tests in 2002 standards were **above average** in English, mathematics and science, though the unconfirmed results of the 2003 tests suggest that standards in English and science dropped slightly, while those in mathematics improved. Achievement by Year 2 is **satisfactory** overall, except for writing. In the national tests for Year 2 in 2002 standards in reading and writing were **average** but standards in mathematics were **below average**. The unconfirmed 2003 results suggest that standards in reading improved, while in writing nearly twice as many pupils failed to reach the expected Level 2 than in 2002. Results in mathematics were broadly similar to the previous year.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement by Year 6 is good and standards are above average in mathematics, science, art, geography and history.
- Standards in reading have improved and are now good by Year 2.
- Achievement in writing is not good enough and standards are not high enough at Year 2.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (27.6)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.00 (26.9)	26.7 (26.6)
science	29.6 (28.7)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Achievement overall is judged to be good by Year 6 because:
 - Attainment on entry to the school is average and the national tests for Year 6 in 2002 show standards in English, mathematics and science were above average compared to all schools. The results in all three subjects were above average compared with schools that attained similar standards when these pupils took the Year 2 tests four years previously. Compared with schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in 2002 were well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Above average numbers of pupils gained the higher Level 5 in the national tests in 2002 in all three subjects. Standards have been rising broadly in line with national trends.
 - The unconfirmed 2003 test results show standards in English and science were average, which is a slight drop on the 2002 results, but standards in mathematics were well above average. The school's analysis of the results suggests that standards in English dropped because the pupils struggled with the writing tasks. In science the dip in results was very slight.
 - Work seen during the inspection confirms that the standards of the current Year 6 are average overall in English and above average in mathematics, science, art, geography and history. Achievement in speaking and listening is good by Year 6 and pupils conduct interesting and lively discussions among themselves and with adults, including visitors. Achievement in reading and writing is average by Year 6. However, pupils do not get enough opportunities to write at length in either English lessons or other subjects, so they do not get enough practice and are not set precise enough targets to know how to make their writing better. In mathematics and science

pupils show a good grasp of the relevant facts. Standards in ICT and religious education are average.

- Pupils with SEN achieve well in lessons as they strive to reach their targets. The pupils with physical and medical needs make particularly good progress because they have regular specialist help.
- The few pupils for whom English is not their home language are well supported, and helped to take part in lessons so that they achieve the tasks set to the best of their ability.
- In the work seen during the inspection there were no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls.

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

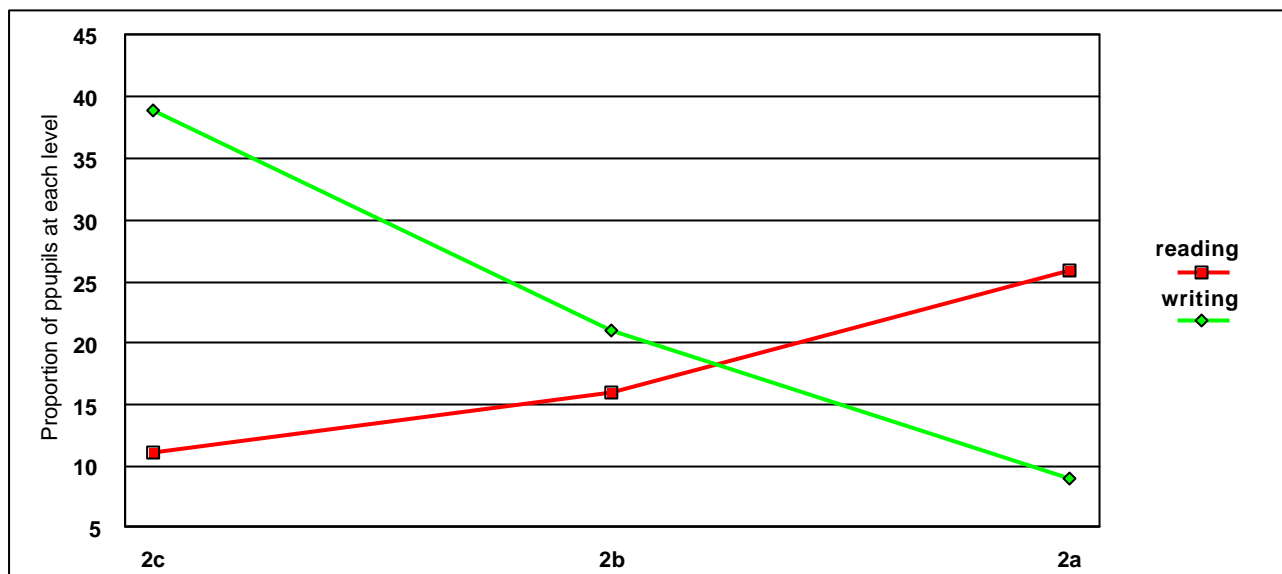
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (13.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.2 (13.0)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.0 (14.6)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Achievement by Year 2 is judged satisfactory overall because:

- Standards in the national tests for Year 2 in 2002 were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics.
- The results of the 2002 national tests show a good improvement over the results for 2001, when they were well below average in all three subjects.
- Apart from the dip in 2001 results have been average in reading over recent years. However the 2003 tests show an improvement on those taken in 2002 and all the pupils gained at least the expected Level 2. Achievement in reading of the current Year 2 pupils is good and standards are judged to be above average. Only 15 per cent of pupils gained the lower Level 2c and 32 per cent gained the higher than expected Level 3. In the previous year 18 per cent had only managed a Level 1. This is a marked improvement on the 2002 results.
- Test results in writing have fluctuated from average to well below average over the last four years. They were judged below average in the previous inspection report and, having risen to average in 2002, dipped again in 2003 because too few pupils gained the expected Level 2 or above.
- In writing in the 2002 tests too many pupils gained only a Level 2C, and too few gained the Levels 2B, and 2A, while in reading the pattern was reversed with more pupils succeeding at the upper end of the level than at the lower end. This is shown in the graph below. The school's analysis of pupils' performance has not been rigorous enough to pinpoint the need to focus on the numbers only attaining at the 2C Level and provide the very precise targets they need to improve their work.

Graph showing the proportions of pupils gaining Levels 2c to 2a in reading and writing in 2002



- The 2003 results for writing show slightly more pupils achieving the Level 2B than in the previous year but the number who achieved only Level 1 doubled. The proportions gaining the Levels 2A and 3 were very similar to the previous year.
 - The inspection evidence is that writing is below average because teachers do not use all the opportunities to encourage pupils to record their learning across all subjects. Consequently pupils do not get the opportunities or encouragement to practise their writing skills as often as they should.
 - Test results in mathematics have been consistently below or well below average since 1999, but work seen during the inspection shows that standards are currently average at Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory.
 - The achievement of the more able in reading and mathematics is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection when higher attaining pupils were judged to be under-performing.
 - In the mathematics test in 2003, the numbers achieving each level broadly matched the 2002 results.
 - Standards in science are judged to be average, which is a slight improvement on the results of the 2002 teacher assessments which were below average. The number gaining the higher than expected Level 3 in 2002 was average.
 - Standards in ICT and religious education are average. This shows a good improvement in standards in ICT, which were judged below average by the previous inspection.
 - Achievement in art is good by Year 2 with standards above average. In all other subjects achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average.
 - As in the junior classes, pupils with SEN, and those for whom English is not their home language, are supported well by classroom assistants and make good progress. There were no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls in the work seen during the inspection. Although boys attained better than girls in the 2002 national tests this matched the results of tests given when these pupils first started school, showing boys attaining better than girls at that stage.
3. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is judged to be good because:
- Children enter Reception with broadly average attainment, but with a wide spread of ability, and make good progress in their learning so that they achieve well, and reach the expected goals in all areas of learning with some exceeding them.
 - Teachers settle children in well, and the strong focus on personal, emotional and social development ensures that children grow in confidence and achieve well with most exceeding the expected goals in this area.

- The emphasis on developing language, and number skills helps children to make good progress and achieve the expected levels in these areas, with some exceeding them by the end of Reception.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very positive** attitudes to school and their behaviour is **very good**. Their social and moral development is **very good**, their spiritual development is **good** and their cultural development is **satisfactory**. These judgements represent an **improvement** since the previous inspection. Attendance is broadly similar to the national **average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils have a very positive attitude to school life and learning.
- They behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships in the school are very good.
- Pupils develop into sensible, articulate and confident individuals.

Commentary

4. Pupils very much enjoy school and learning because:

- They feel part of a very friendly community where they are amongst people they like and with whom they feel comfortable working or playing.
- Teachers succeed in capturing their interest by making lessons interesting and encouraging them to join in.
- Their hard work is recognised and appreciated by awards that are presented in assemblies and displayed on the classroom walls or in the corridors.
- They feel valued as individuals, as is shown by the large number of photographs of pupils in corridors and in the halls.

5. Behaviour in the school is very good, resulting in an atmosphere that is very conducive to learning because:

- Lessons are not disrupted and all the allocated time can be devoted to learning rather than to managing behaviour.
- The rules are clear, well publicised and consistently applied.
- High standards are expected and achieved. There have been no exclusions during the last year.
- Pupils think the rules are fair and that their point of view will always be listened to.
- Bullying and racism are not problems. There is some occasional name-calling but pupils have confidence in the teachers' ability to sort out any problems. Play areas have a very happy feel, where pupils play and mix very well together.

6. Relationships are very good and this results in:

- A good rapport between adults and pupils based on mutual respect leading to effective teaching and learning.
- An atmosphere in classrooms where pupils listen well, are keen to give opinions and happy to applaud others' good work.
- A strong caring instinct which is apparent in the way pupils respond to and play with those pupils who are physically disabled or have very limited knowledge of English.
- A very civilised feeling in the school where pupils smile, open doors and say 'please' and 'thank you' quite naturally. Their politeness is particularly apparent in the way they speak to visitors and the catering staff.

- Lunchtime being a civilised and orderly social occasion when table manners are good and noise levels allow easy conversation.
7. Pupils mature very well during their time in school as a result of:
- Being treated as individuals with opinions from an early age. This encourages speaking skills and develops self-confidence.
 - Being given opportunities to show independence and take responsibility ranging from class duties when young to being reading buddies to younger pupils when older.
 - Being expected to respect their school and its environment. This results in careful handling of books and equipment and grounds that are free from litter.
 - Taking responsibility, for instance in having some say through class discussions and the school council, in the way the school plans to develop.
 - Realising that learning is not confined to the classroom. Pupils take homework very seriously.
 - Participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. School clubs are very popular and these are enjoyed by the pupils.
 - Having a good grounding in right and wrong through assemblies and teachers' sensible guidance in lessons.
 - A good appreciation of the role of Christianity and other faiths in our society.
 - A good knowledge of their own culture, though knowledge of other cultures is not so well developed.

Attendance

Attendance is **broadly similar** to the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

8. The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching is **good** overall, with some **very good** teaching in the Foundation Stage and Year 6, so that pupils **achieve well** in their learning. The school provides a **good** curriculum overall, enriched by a very **good** range of well supported after school and lunchtime clubs and activities. Provision for pupils with SEN is **good**. The overall quality of care for pupils is **good**, although the school is **not as effective as it might be** in telling individuals how to make their work better and setting targets for them to achieve. The school has **good** links with parents and the local community.

Teaching and learning

9. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. While assessment is broadly **satisfactory** the results of assessments are not used effectively enough to enable all pupils to achieve as much as they might in their writing.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good at the Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is good overall in the rest of the school with some very good teaching at Year 6.
- There are some good assessment systems in place but they are recent and have not been developed enough to enable the results to be used to set individual targets for pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8 (20%)	23 (57%)	9 (23%)	0	0	0

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

10. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because:

- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the national requirements for the Foundation Stage and plan children's learning to meet those requirements.
- Teaching focuses heavily on personal, social, and emotional development in the early part of the new school year so that children settle quickly and feel comfortable in school. Parents think that arrangements for settling children are good.
- Teachers check regularly what children can do, know and understand so that they can plan activities to take their learning forward at a good pace and help them to achieve well.
- Lessons are well balanced between teaching basic skills, particularly in literacy, and number, and providing opportunities for self-chosen activities through which children can practise those skills and develop social and physical skills.
- Support assistants work very closely with teachers to make sure that all children receive the help and guidance they need to achieve well and feel safe and secure.

11. Teaching is good overall in the rest of the school with some very good teaching at Year 6 because:

- Teachers provide a lot of practical activities so that pupils are motivated and enjoy their lessons. Pupils say they particularly like practical lessons and speak enthusiastically about what they have learned in them.
- Pupils have some good opportunities to plan and conduct their own investigations in lessons so that they improve not just their knowledge of the subject but also their investigational or research skills. However, teachers sometimes miss such opportunities and dictate too precisely what pupils will do, how they will do it and what equipment they will use.
- Teachers expect pupils to work in groups, share equipment and work on tasks together at times so that they develop very good social skills.
- Pupils have to explain their work to others so that they get more confident in speaking and listening, and appreciate and respect others' points of view. Parents agree that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.
- In the best lessons teachers expect a lot from pupils and they respond well, achieving very good results, as in the lesson where Year 6 pupils used spreadsheets for the first time and all produced accurate graphs of the results of science investigations. Parents think that staff expect their children to work hard and do their best.
- In the best lessons teachers tell pupils how good their work is and what they need to do to make it better so that they can improve it. However, not all marking is of this high standard and too often pupils are not sure how well they have done or how to make their work better.
- Classroom assistants effectively help pupils with SEN and those for whom English is not their home language so that they achieve well in the tasks they are set and take a full part in lessons in line with the school's policies of including all pupils in the whole life of the school.

- In some lessons teachers encourage pupils to be imaginative and creative in how they record their work so that they develop their writing skills but too often good opportunities to develop writing in all subjects are missed.

12. Assessment has some strengths but is judged satisfactory overall because:

- The school is developing a good range of systems to check how well pupils are learning, including the national tests at Year 2 and Year 6, the optional tests at Years 3 to 5, standardised tests, end of unit assessments and ongoing teacher assessments supported by portfolios of pupils' work to show what work at particular National Curriculum levels looks like.
- The assessment co-ordinator is very good at analysing what the test results show and which aspects of the national tests pupils found most difficult so that teachers know what to focus on in general terms in future years.
- The analysis of test information now enables the school to identify groups of pupils who are not achieving as well as they might so that it can address any issues of underperformance by particular groups of pupils in line with the governors' policies to ensure that all pupils, whatever their ability, disability, race, or gender achieve as well as they can.
- Teachers do not use the results of assessments effectively enough yet to identify individual's needs and to set them regular and precise targets to improve their learning and raise their achievement.

The curriculum

Provision for meeting the curricular needs of pupils is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school provides a particularly broad curriculum with a good level of enrichment through after-school clubs and activities, educational visits and school productions.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils who have SEN is good.
- The school provides a good level of opportunity and access for all its pupils.
- A good level of resources enhances the curriculum of a number of subjects.

Commentary

13. Curriculum provision is judged to be good because:

- The curriculum covers all the subjects required by the National Curriculum, with a good balance between subjects and elements of subjects.
- Long term planning guidance helps to ensure pupils build upon earlier learning in a systematic way.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good so that pupils display very good social skills and are well aware of what their bodies need to stay healthy and fit.
- The governing body is fully involved and informed on curricular matters and has approved appropriate policies for the teaching of sex education and drugs awareness. These are implemented effectively.
- The personal and social development of pupils is integral to the ethos of the school and a programme that deals with a range of important and sensitive issues is successfully delivered.
- Considerable efforts are made to develop pupils' self-esteem, to enrich their experiences and to develop them as capable, responsible people. As a result pupils act and behave in a very mature responsible way and parents believe the school does well in this respect.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities that embraces artistic, sporting, language, computer and other clubs and these are well supported by pupils who speak about them with great enthusiasm.

- There is considerable enrichment of the curriculum made possible by the voluntary efforts of staff, parents and friends of the school. All pupils benefit from the regular visits to places of educational interest. Productions, performances and school assemblies provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop self-confidence and a range of talents. Pupils are very keen to participate in these extra activities.
- All pupils are given good access to the curriculum whatever their ability, disability, gender, cultural or social background in line with the school's commitment to meet the particular needs of each individual, and staff are sensitive to the personal circumstances and characteristics of each pupil so that every child is valued.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. As a designated school for pupils with physical and medical needs, staff take great care to provide a curriculum all pupils can access so that all pupils are fully incorporated into the everyday life and work of the school. Materials are adapted so that there are no barriers to pupils' participation because of their special educational needs. Good use is made of the local authority specialist teachers to assess pupils and to support teachers in drawing up suitably challenging targets.
- Although there is no specialist support, staff consider children's language needs when planning work so that provision for pupils for whom English is not their home language is satisfactory.
- Resources available to support English, art, history, geography and physical education are good and have a positive impact on learning because pupils' full participation is not limited by lack of books or equipment. There are no subjects for which resources are unsatisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good** care of the pupils' welfare, health and safety. Support and guidance on academic and personal development are **satisfactory** overall. **Good** opportunities exist for pupils to air their views on the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good levels of care result in happy and safe pupils.
- Good monitoring of personal development helps pupils feel secure and valued.
- School council is effective.
- Pupils lack well-focused support for academic development.

Commentary

14. Pupils are well looked after because:

- The school has a strong caring ethos where pupils are valued as individuals whatever their ability, disability, gender or cultural background.
- Staff know the pupils well and are prepared to listen to their concerns.
- Procedures for child protection are taken seriously with the named person being correctly trained and classroom staff being aware of current good practice.
- Supervision, although often low-key, is good at all times.
- The school has sound health and safety procedures and these are well supported by a governor knowledgeable in the subject.

15. The school is in a position to give good support for each pupil's personal development as a result of keeping, and regularly updating, good quality individual records of:

- Attitudes to school life.
- Attitudes to others.
- Attendance.
- Participation in extra curricular activities.
- Personal achievements, both in and out of school.

16. The school council is becoming increasingly effective as a means of involving all pupils in the way the school develops because:

- It gives all pupils an opportunity once a year to be a council member. Nominations were open during the inspection and there was a very high degree of interest. For instance in a class of 26 pupils, nine were standing for election to the school council.
- It has something tangible to show for its first year of operation. Pupils were proud to show the inspectors the new bike shed installed as a result of school council lobbying, and the recent introduction of a 'worry box' for pupils to write anonymously about any concerns they may have is seen as a good idea.
- It has good procedures for reporting up from the classroom to the council and vice versa, thus ensuring that all pupils can feel involved and informed on the way the school develops.
- It ensures that the headteacher is aware of what has been discussed by always having two pupils give a personal report after each meeting.

17. Guidance and support for pupils' academic development require a higher profile because:

- Pupils do not know how well they are doing in relation to national expectations (apart from the Year 2 and Year 6 assessment tests), or what the school expects of them and thus have no clear targets to aim for.
- Individual targets in English and Mathematics would give pupils a greater involvement in their own learning and help to drive up standards.
- Parents would be in a better position to monitor progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

18. The school has **good** links with parents and the community and **satisfactory** links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The partnership between home and school is effective.
- Pupils benefit from good links with the community.
- Better information would allow parents to be more directly involved in their children's learning.
- Parents are not consulted enough on the way the school develops.

Commentary

19. The home/school partnership is effective because:

- Parents have a good opinion of the school and find the headteacher and staff very approachable.
- Parents are kept well informed on the life of the school, for instance, through monthly newsletters.
- Parents attend parents' evenings regularly, are involved in their children's homework and many write comments about pupils' reports.
- Parents help in the classroom, on trips and with school clubs.

20. Links with the community enrich the pupils' learning by:

- Having a number of local clergy regularly take assemblies.
- Having tournaments and competitions with local schools in football, netball, cricket and cross-country.
- Providing additional income by hiring out school facilities.

21. Parents are not as fully informed about their children's learning as they might be because:

- The school does not provide details of what is going to be taught.
- Many of the targets in pupils' reports are not written in such a way as to allow parents to understand exactly what needs to be done to improve.
- There have been no recent workshops for parents explaining how subjects such as literacy and numeracy are now taught.

22. The procedures for seeking the views of parents on the way the school develops are not good enough and do not reflect the school's ethos as well as they might resulting in:

- Parents feeling that they received insufficient notice of the introduction of mixed aged classes to Years 3 and 4.
- Parents not understanding how teaching mixed aged classes can be effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership by the governors, head and senior staff is **good** and management is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The governors, head and senior staff share a very strong commitment to including all pupils, whatever their ability, race, gender or background in the whole life of the school.
- The head, senior staff and governors show good leadership with a determination to improve the school.
- The links between long term planning, staff development, performance management and a rigorous analysis of how well the school is doing could be better.

Commentary

23. Leadership and governance are good because:

- The governors, head and senior staff share a very strong commitment to including all pupils, whatever their ability, race, gender or background in the whole life of the school and set policies to reflect that commitment so that the school is a happy and harmonious community.

- Governors ensure that all statutory policies are in place, including those on race equality and SEN, but they have omitted some required information from their annual report to parents and from the school prospectus.
- Governors understand how well the school is doing in the national tests, how the results compare with other schools, and seek explanations from the head and senior staff on the reasons for the school's performance so that they can work with staff to identify priorities for development.
- The head and senior staff have a clear vision for the future of the school and a real desire to continually improve it. They share this vision effectively with all staff, and with governors. The parents think the school is well led and managed.
- The head and governors have assembled a strong senior management team who understand their roles and responsibilities, complement each other's strengths and know what impact their role is having on school improvement. However, the senior management team does not include any representation from Foundation Stage.

24. Management is satisfactory because:

- The school has good day-to-day systems to ensure that it runs smoothly.
- The staff and governors manage the school budget well. They are dealing effectively with reductions in the amount the school has to spend because of the reducing numbers of pupils it is taking.
- The management of SEN is good. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership. She supports staff by having good systems in place, organising training and by providing useful materials. The co-ordinator organises regular meetings with external agencies and keeps the governor with responsibility for SEN, up to date.
- The management of pupils for whom English is not their home language is satisfactory. Care is taken to ensure pupils are well supported in class. However the school has no written policy and therefore teachers have no specific guidance.
- The governors ensure that money allocated for pupils with SEN, is used appropriately for its intended purposes and as a consequence those pupils are well supported and achieving well.
- The school makes effective use of the local authority finance officer to support its own office staff in the day-to-day budget administration and ensure that up to date spending information is always available so that it works within its allocated budget. The school provides good value for money.
- The analysis of information on how well pupils are doing has improved so that staff know how well groups of pupils of different gender, ability or cultural background are performing.
- The analysis of assessment information has not been used effectively enough to pinpoint the performance of individuals, identify their specific needs and set them targets for improvement.
- The school has used its improved systems for analysing test results to show that achievement in reading, mathematics and science is better than in writing. However it has not been effective enough in checking whether the cause of those differences lies with the quality of teaching, of learning resources or of some other aspect of provision.
- The school has not based its school development plan firmly enough on knowing precisely where it is currently (how well it is performing), why it is there (the reasons for that level of performance) and what it needs to do to accelerate its performance, particularly where it has identified weaknesses, as in writing.
- The senior management team have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in performance management but the school has not kept up the cycle, although the policy and procedures are fully in place.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£727,279.00
Total expenditure	£786,633.00
Expenditure per pupil	£2247.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£94,640.00
Balance carried forward to the next	£35,286.00

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation stage is one of the school's main strengths. Children settle in quickly and work from a rich curriculum.

The main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good and as a result children achieve well.
- The staff are very knowledgeable and work well as a team.
- Induction arrangements are good so that children are helped to settle easily.
- The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.
- The school does not have an outside area resourced for the Reception children.

Commentary

25. Admission arrangements are effective and ensure children settle easily. Staff quickly help children establish known routines which give them confidence. Parents are made to feel welcome and their contributions valued.

26. A particular strength is the way all the staff use their regular assessments within lessons to plan the next activities. This ensures that all children have work with the right amount of challenge. Given the wide range of attainment on entry this ensures that all children are encouraged to achieve well, whatever their ability.

27. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator plans effectively with the team to deliver a coherent curriculum. She organises meetings with outside agencies and ensures that children with SEN are well supported.

28. Accommodation, while satisfactory overall, has some weaknesses. The indoor area is spacious and used well to support learning. However, there is no separate outside area for the Foundation Stage. Consequently, children miss out on daily opportunities to use large equipment or to use the outside area regularly for learning activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on promoting children's confidence and independence.

Commentary

29. Achievement is very good because:

- Teaching is very good and as a result children make very good progress and achieve well in their social development. By the end of Reception most children will exceed their early learning goals and achieve more than might be expected.

- Most children enter Reception with a wide range of ability and experience. Reception staff establish secure routines so that children feel safe and confident. This particularly helps less confident children.
- The staff are very caring and use every opportunity to praise children's independence. As a result, many children work successfully both alone and in small groups.
- Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children respond well to this and their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy school and work hard to receive reward stickers.

Communication, Language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through an interesting curriculum.
- Not enough attention is given to improving some weak handwriting.

Commentary

30. Achievement is very good because:

- Most children enter with the expected level of communication skills, but some are below expectations. As a result of very good teaching, most children are on course to achieve their early learning goals, with a significant minority exceeding them.
- Children are taught to listen carefully. Staff encourage less confident children to talk in sentences, and more fluent communicators to extend their vocabulary.
- Teachers consistently establish very good reading habits. They promote a love of books by using appealing books such as *Each Peach Pear Plum*. They share books in a lively way which really captures the children's interest.
- Support staff are used very well. They sit with the children and actively encourage less confident children to participate.
- Many interesting opportunities are provided for children to write for a range of purposes so that children are positive and eager to record their own ideas. For example one boy made an extensive shopping list of his favourite breakfast food.
- Last year's work shows that a minority have difficulty forming their letters fluently and develop poor writing habits that are not always corrected by staff.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a practical curriculum.
- Some children do not have enough opportunities to record their number work.

Commentary

31. Achievement is good because:

- Most children enter with the expected skills in mathematical development and a wide range of experience. This area is well taught, with a focus on first-hand practical activities. As a result, most children are on course to achieve their early learning goals by the end of Reception, with a significant minority likely to exceed them.
- Reception staff take every opportunity to reinforce and extend children's mathematical skills and language. For example children take an active role in counting numbers for the register.
- A range of water, sand and larger mathematical equipment is in constant use so that children extend their mathematical language.
- Last year's work, shows that some children with well-developed skills do not have enough opportunities to record their work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a practical curriculum.
- There is no investigation area set up for children to explore informally.

Commentary

32. Achievement is good because:

- Most children enter Reception with the expected skills in their understanding of the world, but with some having less knowledge and experience. This area is well taught, with a focus on first-hand practical activities. As a result, most children are on course to achieve their early learning goals by the end of Reception, with a significant minority exceeding them.
- Curriculum plans show that staff provide an interesting range of experiences and visits, with a range of topics, such as *Homes, Pets and the Toyshop*, that help children to build up their picture of the world. Visitors such as fire officers with a fire engine add real excitement to lessons.
- However, within the classroom there is no investigation table with objects such as kaleidoscopes for children to handle informally.
- Staff extend children's knowledge of different cultures through books and toys, and computer skills are well taught.
- Staff build up children's pleasure and confidence. As a result, boys and girls have positive attitudes and display equally good skills.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**, although facilities outdoors are **limited**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's creative response and physical skills.
- There is no outside equipment to promote physical development.

Commentary

33. Achievement is good because:

- Most children enter with the expected skills in their physical development. Teaching is good and as a result children achieve well in lessons. Most children are on course to exceed their early learning goals by the end of Reception.
- Children have regular sessions in the hall to help them develop their physical skills and to learn to respond to music.
- However, the school does not have any fixed outdoor climbing equipment or three-wheeled vehicles. As a result some children who lack confidence miss out on daily opportunities to improve their skills and ability.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

No judgements about teaching and learning, standards and achievement are made in this area of learning, due to lack of evidence.

Commentary

34. Planning shows that staff develop children's skills and creativity through a range of topics and role-play experiences. There is daily access a range of materials, with many opportunities to paint and draw. Evidence from last year shows that many children entered Year 1 having exceeded their goals in painting and drawing skills. Children are also provided with a music area where they can handle and explore a range of musical instruments informally. Many occasions are provided for children to join in well-known rhymes, which they do with gusto!

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is currently **satisfactory**. Standards have fluctuated between average and above average at Year 6 over recent years suggesting that provision is not as consistent from year to year as it could be and that it is less effective now than it was in 2002 when standards were above average in the national tests at Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- In speaking and listening standards by Year 6 are above average, although overall standards in English are average.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is some good marking in Year 6, but this quality of marking is not used consistently throughout the school.
- Teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' skills in writing through other subjects so that achievement is unsatisfactory at Year 2 and standards are below average.
- The school does not use the results of assessments of pupils' work effectively enough to set individual targets for raising standards and achievement, particularly in writing.

Commentary

35. Achievement is satisfactory by Year 6 because:

- Overall standards in English are average by Year 6. Standards of speaking and listening are good. Those in reading and writing are average. The current Year 6 pupils attained average standards in the national tests they took in Year 2 in reading and writing and have made satisfactory progress since then. Achievement, therefore, is judged satisfactory for these pupils in reading and writing and is good in speaking and listening. The pupils who took the national tests for Year 6 in 2003 also made satisfactory progress and achieved satisfactorily over their junior years in reading and writing, compared with their results at Year 2.
- The standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are good in reading but below average in writing. This is because teachers have a good focus on teaching reading skills but do not encourage pupils to record their learning in writing across all subjects so that they can develop and practise their writing enough to make the improvements they need to.
- The teaching seen during the inspection was good overall but the work in pupils' books indicates that this high level is not necessarily maintained over time. The books also show some good examples of teachers' marking telling pupils what was good about their work and how to improve it, particularly in Year 6, but this quality of marking is not consistent. Consequently too often pupils do not know precisely enough how to make their written work better.
- In the best lessons, teachers capture pupils' interest by providing imaginative activities. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn, behave well and work enthusiastically. For example, in a lesson about 'Oliver Twist', the teacher showed the class the amount of bread and gruel that Oliver was given in the workhouse.
- Teachers develop pupils' knowledge and use of words when they introduce new vocabulary, such as 'veteran', and help them to learn the subtleties of the English language by considering the order of words such as cold, raw, nippy and chilly. Consequently, pupils improve their descriptive skills, as seen when a Year 2 pupil described leaves 'withering in a windy scene.'

- However, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing when they ask pupils to complete too many worksheets in subjects such as religious education. By Year 2, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write longer pieces of work. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not given enough opportunities to write in depth in subjects such as history and geography. Consequently, they sometimes struggle to write interestingly and at length or to match the writing to the audience.
- Pupils do not make enough progress with handwriting by Year 2. This is because teachers do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve so that some pupils, including some higher achieving pupils, still make mistakes in forming letters at the end of the school year. In some cases, the teachers' own handwriting does not set a good example for pupils to follow.
- Standards are above average in speaking and listening by Year 6 because teachers give pupils opportunities for discussion about what they learn, particularly in history and geography as well as in English lessons and this boosts their confidence. Teachers expect pupils in Year 6 to justify their answers when explaining the meanings of words such as 'porringer'. They also get good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through circle time, and through meetings related to the school council. Here they have to discuss issues of importance to themselves and justify any ideas they put forward through the school council for improvements.
- Teachers make very good use of classroom assistants so that pupils who need extra help and those with SEN are supported effectively and achieve well.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement but the management systems are not yet rigorous enough to ensure that school improvement planning is based firmly upon an audit of how well pupils are doing, or of the quality of the provision, including teaching.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

36. While there are some good examples of teachers developing English through other subjects, as in the effective use of discussion in geography and history, too often they miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing in a similar way. Too often teachers resort to a worksheet when they could expect pupils to write at more length and in more detail about the topic being studied. In Years 1 and 2, too many opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to record what they have learned and improve their achievement in writing in the process.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and by the time pupils leave the school the overall standards are above the national average.
- Teaching is good throughout the school so that pupils' attitudes are very good, they learn effectively and make good progress.
- The subject is led well by an enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator who has accurately identified ways in which the mathematics programme can be improved and is taking suitable steps to address them.
- Procedures are in place to monitor teaching and learning in mathematics but these are not as focused as they could be.
- Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Commentary

37. Achievement is good by Year 6 because:

- Pupils' attainment on entry to school is broadly average and by the time they leave Year 6 attainment is above average. This shows good overall progress, although achievement is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. Junior age pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
- Teaching is consistently good and teachers provide a range of tasks that ensure that most pupils are working at a level suited to their needs.
- Teachers, especially of the older classes, make high demands upon their pupils and expect them to work hard and achieve well.
- Although achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, good teaching is laying the foundations for future learning and this enables pupils to advance more briskly as they get older.
- In all parts of the school lower achieving pupils do well due to the careful match of work to their capabilities, the sensitive support from teachers and teaching assistants, and the accurate recognition of what is required to help them improve.
- Teachers are keenly aware of the needs of pupils in the mixed-year classes and plan tasks which reflect their ages and capabilities.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject; manage the pupils well, and employ a range of interesting techniques in their lessons. Consequently pupils are well motivated; enjoy their lessons; work hard, and behave well. They work well in groups and this helps to ensure good moral and social development.
- Leadership is good. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her responsibilities; has carefully and thoughtfully analysed the information on standards and achievement, and has instigated a range of initiatives designed to improve the school's performance in mathematics. However, there is a need to ensure that the agreed initiatives are introduced with the consistency and rigour required to further improve standards.
- Pupils are not always aware enough of what precisely they need to do to improve. They do not have their own measurable targets to work to.
- The school has responded well to the shortcomings identified at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved; teaching is now good; most pupils make good overall progress, and higher achievers are provided with more challenging work and do well as a result.

Mathematics across the curriculum

38. The use of numeracy skills to support the work in other subjects is generally satisfactory. The school is developing ways in which this can be further strengthened so that numeracy skills can be reinforced and used as a tool to advance standards across the wider curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is good by Year 6 resulting in above average standards.
- Above average numbers of pupils gain the higher levels in the national tests at Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6.
- The results of assessments are not used effectively enough to tell individuals precisely how to improve their work and what they need to learn next.

Commentary

39. Achievement is good in science by Year 6 and satisfactory by Year 2 because:

- Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, so that pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning up to Year 2 and good progress through their junior years.
- Teachers throughout the school capture pupils' interest in science by providing practical, enjoyable activities in lessons. As a result, pupils are very keen to learn, behave well, and talk very enthusiastically about the science work they do. However, in Years 1 and 2, teachers miss opportunities to get pupils to record their work and enhance their writing skills in the process.
- In the best lessons teachers expect pupils to plan and conduct their own tests and experiments so that they develop good skills of scientific investigation. However, in too many lessons teachers tell pupils exactly what to do, how to do it and what equipment to use, so that their investigative skills are not so well developed.
- Teachers are confident in their own knowledge of science and they give pupils accurate factual information and use correct scientific terminology. Consequently pupils expand their own knowledge, understanding and vocabulary.
- Teachers encourage group and collaborative work to ensure that pupils learn good social skills, get on very well together and work very responsibly in lessons.
- In the best lessons, particularly in Year 6, teachers tell pupils clearly how good their work is and how to make it better, and write helpful comments on their books to encourage them to improve next time. However, this does not happen consistently throughout the school.
- The school is developing some good systems for checking how well pupils are doing but these are relatively new and the information they provide is not being used effectively enough yet to set individual targets and tell pupils, and their parents, precisely what they need to learn next.
- At Year 6, the best lessons make very good use of, and help to develop, pupils' skills in numeracy and ICT, as in the lesson where they used spreadsheets to produce graphs showing the results of investigations from an earlier lesson. However, such opportunities are not always grasped in other classes.
- In the best lessons, particularly in Year 6, pupils are encouraged to be creative in the way they record their work so that they develop their writing skills, but too often teachers throughout the school dictate how work will be recorded and miss such opportunities.
- Teaching and support staff work very closely to ensure that pupils with SEN, and those whose home language is not English, are well supported, take a full part in lessons and achieve well. For example, the classroom assistant constantly included a pupil with no English in the activities in the lesson so that she appeared to enjoy the tasks thoroughly alongside the rest of the group.
- All staff work hard to make sure that all pupils, whatever their ability, gender, race or background, are fully involved in all lessons so that they develop a healthy respect for, and understanding of people from different backgrounds.
- There is a clear commitment to continuous improvement in science but the systems for checking how well pupils are doing and the quality of teaching and curriculum are not applied rigorously enough.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement and standards have improved since the last inspection and are now broadly average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- The co-ordinator provides the good leadership that has led to this improvement.
- Teachers are more confident because the guidance for them has been well defined and this is helping to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are built systematically.
- A significant investment in resources, teacher training and procedures has made a good impact upon standards.
- The availability of the computer suite makes an important contribution to the effectiveness of learning but the lack of air conditioning makes it uncomfortable for staff and pupils at times.

Commentary

40. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average throughout the school because:

- Skills and knowledge are built incrementally as pupils move through the school and all the elements required within the National Curriculum are securely covered.
- Leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is committed to continued improvement and demonstrates a clear, longer-term vision for the subject. She has thoughtfully analysed the requirements of the subject and has instigated a number of initiatives designed to improve standards. Despite significant recent improvement in the provision for ICT, there is no sense of complacency.
- The school has put detailed guidance in place for teachers. This itemises what is to be taught, and when, and contains a structure that supports the delivery of a systematic programme.
- A sound and manageable process of assessing pupils' progress is also being introduced which, if applied consistently, will help to track pupils' progress and measure the effectiveness of learning.
- The availability of the computer suite makes an important contribution to the effectiveness of learning since it allows direct teaching of skills, followed by immediate, practical experience for all pupils in the class. At times the heat generated by the machines leads to uncomfortable working conditions.
- The school has made a good response to the shortcomings identified at the time of the last inspection. Standards are higher; progress is now satisfactory; the programme is well defined and resources have been considerably improved. These measures have made a good impact on standards and achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

41. The use of ICT to support the work in other subjects is satisfactory. Graphical work in mathematics and the use of the Internet to research historical topics provide examples of how ICT skills can be reinforced whilst also making an important contribution to learning across the curriculum. The school is in the process of improving this aspect of its work by specifying more precisely places in the programmes of each subject where ICT should be used by augmenting the range of associated software, and by linking all the computers in classrooms.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Religious education is delivered in a way that promotes respect and interest in different faiths and beliefs.
- Pupils with SEN and also those whose home language is not English achieve well.
- At times the work is not matched to the different needs of pupils. Consequently, a minority of able pupils does not have enough challenge to achieve as well as they might.

Commentary

42. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory because:

- The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development, with pupils' views respected and valued. However, opportunities are missed to display work around the school and there are few visits to non-Christian places of worship.
- Teaching and support staff work very closely to ensure that pupils with SEN and those whose home language is not English are well supported. Consequently, they take a full part in lessons and achieve well.
- Teaching is satisfactory across the school, with some good features. For example, relationships with staff are consistently good and pupils are encouraged to share their ideas. As a result they respond well in lessons.
- While the school covers the Agreed Syllabus, last year's work shows a lack of depth in some classes. Year 3 had an over reliance on worksheets. Year 6 had limited opportunities to extend their writing.
- Pupils' books show that work is not always sufficiently matched to the knowledge of different groups of pupils. As a result, while most pupils achieve appropriately, a minority of able pupils underachieve because opportunities are missed to give them further challenge.
- In discussion, Year 6 pupils show a clear understanding of what it means to belong to a religious community. While most have appropriate knowledge, some children struggle to use the correct religious vocabulary.
- In the best lessons, teachers extend pupils' understanding because they use well thought out questions. This helped Year 6 pupils to transfer their understanding of God as a father figure, into relevant every day experiences. Teachers also provide interesting resources and experiences that motivate children to learn. For example, in a class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, the children were enthralled as they listened to a mother talk about her baby's christening while the baby lay asleep in her arms.
- However, this is not always the case and, while teaching is generally satisfactory, some teachers do not expect enough of the more able pupils. For example, in a lesson with a class of Years 3 and 4 pupils, the work set was not sufficiently challenging for some more able pupils. Consequently they did not achieve as well as they could.
- The subject is well led. The relatively new co-ordinator has modified the curriculum to ensure better coverage across the school. She monitors the planning and gives regular advice to colleagues.

History and geography

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is good by Year 6 and satisfactory by Year 2.
- While coverage is adequate in Years 1 and 2, some opportunities are missed for pupils to record their work in depth and extend their writing skills.
- Pupils with SEN, and those for whom English is not their home language, achieve well throughout the school.
- Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

Commentary

43. Provision for history and geography was not a focus area for this inspection. Sampling of current work shows that standards have improved for older pupils. There was too little evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. No lessons were observed in geography and only three in history. All three were well taught.

- In both subjects pupils' achievement is good by Year 6 and satisfactory by Year 2. Pupils attain standards above the national expectation by Year 6, and attain the expected standards by the end of Year 2. There is a clear focus on building pupils' skills progressively, through the use of good resources.
- The school provides an interesting curriculum that captures the pupils' imagination. Consequently, Year 6 pupils talk with real enthusiasm about their work on the Tudors and Victorians. They have a good grasp of map work and understand the significance of tourism to the local area and the wider world.
- Speaking skills are well promoted in history lessons. Pupils are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. For example, in a well-taught lesson good questioning drew less confident Year 2 pupils into the discussion about Florence Nightingale. Writing and number skills are generally used appropriately, with examples of pupils using their reading texts to extract historical information. There are some opportunities to write expressively about the experiences of people in the past. Less use is made of computer skills to research either geography or history.
- Last year's work shows that Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are given an interesting curriculum. For example, they researched the great fire of London and learned about distant places through Barnaby Bear's travels. However, there is a limited amount of recorded work. Some pupils have weak handwriting skills and opportunities are missed to extend pupils' writing skills.
- Teaching and support staff work very closely to ensure that the pupils with SEN and those whose home language is not English are well supported. Consequently, they take a full part in lessons and achieve well.
- Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development and awareness of the wider world. Events such as `the Vikings to school` and `Tudor days` help bring history to life. Although pupils practise their mapping skills and undertake traffic surveys, there are few trips and no residential experiences to help them to apply or practice their geography skills in a more practical setting.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision in art is **good**. In physical education it is **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6. There was too little evidence to make judgements about provision in design and technology or music or in physical education in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good in art.
- Achievement and standards in art are above average.
- Pupils study the work of a range of artists.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably about some aspects of design and technology.
- In music, good use is made of visiting music teachers.
- Resources in all four subjects are good.

Commentary

44. Achievement is good in art by Year 2 and Year 6 and is satisfactory by Year 6 in physical education because:

- Teaching in the two art lessons seen was good so that pupils made good progress and achieved well.
- In art, teachers make the work interesting for pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard. Teachers use classroom assistants well to ensure that all groups of pupils work hard. Teachers give good guidance in the use of various media and techniques so that pupils learn how to create the effects they want. This results in pupils producing above average work, such as the pencil and pastel shading by pupils in Year 5.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of different styles and cultures when they study the work of European artists such as Van Gogh, and artists from other cultures such as the Japanese artist, Hokusai.
- Although there was not enough evidence to judge standards in design and technology, pupils talked knowledgeably and enthusiastically about their work, including how they used a cam to make objects move.
- Teaching in the physical education lessons seen was satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress by Year 6.
- Teachers make sound use of guidance provided with sets of equipment to plan lessons that enable pupils to learn new skills. However, not all teachers understand the technical aspects of some sports such as hockey, and this means that pupils do not achieve as much in those sports as they could.
- There was not enough evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning in music, but the school makes good use of visiting musicians to enable pupils to learn new skills. In the one lesson seen, a visiting drum teacher enthralled pupils with the drumming techniques she taught them and the stories she told about the importance of drums in the culture of people in parts of Africa. Consequently, pupils put a great deal of effort into building up a welcoming dance and, by the end of the lesson, had mastered the different rhythms and achieved very well.
- Pupils' singing in assembly is tuneful and melodic.
- The school is well equipped to teach all four subjects. This means that pupils benefit from using good quality materials and equipment. In art, for instance, pupils were able to make good representations of the work of Mondrian because they were given bright, strong paper to use in a collage.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There is a strong policy of including all pupils regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability or disability, and of developing an appreciation of the needs of others.
- The school has an elected school council.
- Policies and procedures are all in place and effectively implemented.
- Children have a sense of maturity beyond their years.

Commentary

45. Provision for PSHE and citizenship is good because:

- All the required policies and procedures are in place and effectively implemented so that pupils know what they need for healthy growth.
- Teachers give pupils the chance to work in groups in lessons so that they develop good social skills and learn to collaborate well. As a result pupils are very mature by Year 6.
- In the best lessons, teachers expect pupils to take some responsibility for planning their own work and devising and carrying out investigations, so that they learn to accept responsibility.
- The school council is formally elected and works effectively to represent the views of pupils. It has achieved tangible results like the provision of the bicycle shed.
- Through the policy of including all pupils in the whole life of the school, able-bodied pupils and those with disabilities work and play together so that each has a greater awareness and understanding of the needs of others.
- The harmonious and happy nature of the school is testament to the effective provision of PSHE.

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	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	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).