

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LAYER-DE-LA HAYE CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY  
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115080

Headteacher: Mr R Cole

Lead inspector: Mr N Hardy

Dates of inspection: 10-13 November 2003

Inspection number: 256709

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	191

School address:	High Road, Layer-de-la-Haye Colchester
Postcode:	CO2 0DS

Telephone number:	01206 734249
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Piper

Date of previous inspection:	2-5 June 1998
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## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school, which has Church of England Voluntary Controlled status, serves the village of Layer-de-la-Haye and the surrounding area. The school, which is of similar size to many other primary schools gained a school achievement award in 2001, and a Healthy School award in 2003. More boys attend the school than girls. A below average number of pupils are eligible to receive free school meals. Most pupils are from a white British heritage; there are no Traveller or refugee pupils in the school, and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has a below average number of pupils on the special educational needs list, a majority of whom have educational difficulties, while a small proportion experience behavioural problems. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. Pupils' mobility is at broadly expected levels, although at times it is adversely affected by the movement of the children of army personnel. Attainment on entry to the school is above expected levels.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
29262	Mr N Hardy	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Science, Information and communication technology, History, Geography, Physical education, Special educational needs
9505	Mr D Haynes	Lay inspector	
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English, English as an additional language, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Religious education.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, which provides **good** value for money. The standards reached by the end of Year 6 are well above average and pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. The standards achieved in the other subjects in the curriculum are also above expected levels and pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge. Standards achieved by Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well above average levels over a period of several years, indicating consistently good quality teaching. The school provides good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. The careful attention paid to the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics results in high standards. Good links are made between the different subjects of the curriculum so that pupils can apply the skills learned in one subject to a whole range of others. The headteacher provides good leadership with a clear focus on improving standards. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and consistently seek ways to improve standards in their subjects.

### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in both the infants and juniors. Pupils achieve well in the core curriculum subjects and in the other subjects of the curriculum, especially music and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The quality of teaching is good with particular strengths in Years 2, 3 and 6.
- The teachers make very good links between the different subjects and use the skills learned in one subject to benefit learning in others.
- The school improvement plan does not focus sufficiently on raising pupils' attainment.
- Improvement needs to be made to provision and the curriculum in the Foundation Stage where cramped conditions, limited classroom support, and limited teaching experience reduces learning opportunities.
- There is a very strong ethos across the whole school, with particular strengths in the care and attention given to pupils, the relationships between pupils and with adults, and in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- The provision for the health, care and welfare of pupils is very good.
- The contribution that parents make to their children's education is very good.
- There needs to be greater consistency in the quality of marking and the setting of targets to improve pupils' work.
- Pupils need to have opportunities to become better informed members of our multi-cultural society.

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils **achieve well** in the core subjects in both the infants and the juniors and make **good progress** in the other subjects. Standards are consistently well above average in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils make good progress. In 2002, pupils attained very well in writing, where results were amongst the top five per cent in the country. Inspection evidence confirms that standards remain well above average levels in Year 2.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A*	B	C
Mathematics	B	A*	C	D
Science	E	A	A	C

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

The lower results in Year 6 in 2003 were largely the result of more pupils with special educational needs and only average numbers of pupils attaining the more difficult Level 5. Results in science remained well above average because of recent improvements to the curriculum. Standards in other subjects in Year 6 are above expected levels at both the infants and the juniors.

Standards in the Foundation Stage are above average, with a majority of children reaching the expected early learning goals, Progress at this age is only satisfactory because of shortcomings in provision. Pupils across the school have good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is good, attendance levels are above average and punctuality is good.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of the education provided is good. The quality of teaching is good overall. A high percentage of teaching is very good and some is excellent. Pupils learn well because teaching is interesting and is delivered enthusiastically using a good range of strategies to retain pupils' attention. Teachers make good links between the various parts of the curriculum and ensure that the skills pupils have learned in one subject are effectively used in others, for example, the use of mathematics skills to record data on spreadsheets in information and communication technology. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is good. The help provided by parents is very good, but the school needs to reach out more to parents by providing greater levels of information so that they are better informed.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership of the headteacher, key staff and governors is good.** The headteacher has correctly focused on the improvement of standards, especially in English, mathematics and science, but has also ensured that improvements have been made in other areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology. Subject leaders are enthusiastic in the contributions they make to improve their subjects and receive good support from the headteacher and governors. Governors are well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school by the regular reports they receive from subject leaders. Together with the office manager, they monitor the school finances rigorously and ensure that the money received is spent wisely.

### PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**Parents are very supportive of the school.** They believe that their children are making good progress and are expected to work hard. This is because the teaching is good. Some parents would like more information about how their children are progressing and would like to be consulted to a greater degree about the education of their children. Pupils say that they enjoy attending the school and are very positive about their lessons and what they are expected to learn. Almost all agree that other children behave well and are friendly. The inspection team substantially agrees with both parents' and pupils' views of the school.

### IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The provision and accommodation for pupils in the Foundation Stage by ensuring that an appropriate curriculum is provided which ensures that the needs of all are met fully.

- To ensure that the school improvement plan is more clearly focused on specific improvements to pupils' attainment.
- To improve the quality of marking and the setting of targets so that pupils know what it is that they must do to improve the quality of their work.
- To increase opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of different cultures and faiths to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural world.

Of lesser importance:

- the school should consider improving its channels of communication with parents.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning.**

Standards in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science are all well above average by Year 6. Results attained by pupils in the Year 2 national tests have been consistently well above average for several years, and in the case of writing, was in the top five percent of results in the country in 2002. Standards for pupils at the end of the infant stage remain well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2003. Results for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 were very high with standards in English and mathematics within the top five percent of results in the country. Results in 2003 fell because of the higher number of pupils with special educational needs. However, results in science remained well above average because of the success of the revision of the curriculum, and a greater focus on investigational science. Pupils achieve well in all three subjects.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science in national tests were well above average levels in 2002, before falling in 2003.
- Standards in ICT, art and design, history, geography, music, design and technology, religious education and some aspects of physical education are above expected levels.
- Pupils achieve well, especially in the core curriculum subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Standards at the end of the infants have remained well above average in reading, writing and mathematics for several years.

#### **Commentary**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (18.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.9 (16.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.5 (18.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. The school achieved very high results in 2002 with results in writing in Year 2, and in English and mathematics in Year 6, being amongst the top five per cent in the country. A very high percentage of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 at the end of the juniors in English, mathematics and science. In 2003 results at the end of the infant stage remained at well above average levels for the third consecutive year. Attainment at the end of the juniors fell from a high point in 2002, but was above average in English and well above average in science. Results in mathematics were at average levels. In both English and mathematics the number of pupils achieving Level 5 also fell, and are now at average levels. This fall has had a significant effect on the schools overall grades. The trend in the school's average points for all core subjects was above the national trend. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to achieve well, with many reaching the expected national levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (31.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (30.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. When children first enter the reception class, most have previously attended pre-school groups or nursery provision. The attainment on entry for a majority of children is above that expected for their age. The progress of most children is satisfactory in a majority of the different areas of the curriculum, so that by the end of their time in the reception class, almost all have achieved the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. There is evidence that some children, especially the youngest in the year group, do not spend sufficient time in the reception class and this limits the progress they make.
3. Standards by Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and pupils achieve well in these subjects. This is because the teaching is carefully planned and enthusiastically delivered and results in pupils who are interested, work hard and concentrate well. This enthusiasm and interest spills over into all the other subjects, resulting in standards that are above average in all other areas of the curriculum. Very careful attention is paid to the links between different subjects, for example, when pupils study history they are also encouraged to develop their mathematics skills in calculating timelines, their artistic skills through painting and modelling, and their writing skills in recording events.
4. By Year 6, pupils have acquired good levels of basic skills in English, mathematics and science. Progress is good for most pupils and they achieve well. Current levels of attainment in Year 6 are well above expected levels. This view is supported by the school's analysis of previous results and predictions of the standards likely to be achieved in 2004. As in the infant stage, standards in all subjects in the curriculum are above expected levels. For example, the quality of teaching and learning in ICT has improved since the last inspection, resulting in improved standards. As in the infant stage, careful attention is paid to the links between the different subjects of the curriculum. This was seen to advantage in a science lesson where good links were established with mathematics, through the collection of data and the use of ICT.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attendance is **very good** and punctuality is good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social development is very good and provision for cultural development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The majority of pupils are keen to learn and join in all activities with enthusiasm.
- The school promotes good relationships.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good.
- Attitudes and behaviour of a small number of older pupils can sometimes be unsatisfactory.
- The administration of registration lacks rigour.

## Commentary

5. The majority of pupils are interested in their lessons, show good concentration and work hard. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually very good, but for the youngest and oldest pupils this standard can fall below the high expectations of the school when a lesson or an assembly lacks interest.
6. Relationships between pupils are very good; they mainly play well together in mixed groups and no one is isolated. A friendship "buddy scheme" operates and the pupils take their responsibilities seriously, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take on more responsibilities for the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils develop respect for each other and there is little incidence of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment in school. Pupils maintain that bullying is rare, and if any unpleasant incidents do occur, they know what to do, and are confident that the staff will deal effectively with the problem. Pupils have good levels of self-esteem and achievements both in and outside school are regularly celebrated. They talk confidently with adults and are not afraid to express their views in classroom discussions or at the school council.
7. Attendance is very good and is well above the national average and punctuality is good; attendance is in the top ten percent of schools nationally. Parents are contacted on the first day of any unexplained absence.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.1
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.*

8. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, whilst cultural development is satisfactory. A very strong Christian ethic pervades the organisation and running of the school. This focuses on treating others with respect and consideration, and results in very good relationships between pupils and with adults. This also enhances pupils' moral development and their understanding of right and wrong. Moral issues are regularly discussed in assemblies, and in the time allocated to develop pupils' personal education. Pupils receive a wide range of opportunities to develop social skills through additional activities after school, and through their interaction with visitors who come to school to enrich the curriculum. Cultural development is satisfactorily developed through musical, artistic and literacy enrichment, but currently there are few opportunities for pupils to increase their understanding of different faiths. This is recognised by the school that is exploring opportunities to increase pupils' awareness.

## EXCLUSIONS

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
184	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of the education provided is **good**. There are many strengths and only a small number of areas that require improvement. Pupils benefit from good quality teaching in the infants and juniors. This ensures that pupils learn well, resulting in well above average attainment in English, mathematics and science over the last three years, and standards above expected levels in most other subjects. A broad curriculum ensures that pupils develop a wide range of knowledge and are given the opportunity to apply their skills in practical situations. The very positive Christian ethos of the school ensures that pupils are well cared for, and work in a safe environment where good attention is given to their social and personal needs. An area for improvement is the provision for the youngest children. Improvements are required to the curriculum, so that the needs of all children are met. Although many children in this age group attain above expected levels, and cope well with the curriculum, less able children require a more appropriate curriculum to meet their specific needs. This is not always provided.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. There are particular strengths in the teaching in Years 2, 3 and 6 and in the teaching of English. More than three quarters of the teaching is good or better in lessons across the infants and juniors.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use these skills well when teaching physical education, art and design and music.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies to ensure that pupils' interest is sustained.
- The skills and knowledge pupils have acquired in the full range of subjects are used very well across all the different areas of the curriculum.
- High standards of behaviour in almost all lessons ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn well.
- Homework is used very well to extend what pupils have learned in lessons.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils enjoy lessons and work hard.

### Commentary

9. The proportion of teaching that is judged to be good has improved since the last inspection. There are still some areas where improvement is required, notably in the quality of provision for pupils in the reception class, where there are shortcomings in the quality of planning. The school is aware of the need to increase the levels of support for these pupils and to ensure that good progress is made by them all.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (9%)	3 (9%)	20 (59%)	8 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

10. The teachers possess a very good range of skills and subject knowledge which are used well to enhance pupils' learning. There is particular expertise in music, ICT, and aspects of physical education. Most lessons are interesting, resulting in pupils who concentrate well, work hard and who are proud of the work they produce. In a small number of instances, the skills pupils have learned, for example in English, are not fully transferred to pupils' written work in other

subjects, reducing the quality of this work. Teachers employ a wide range of teaching strategies, for example, whole class, small group, and individual tuition, and this helps to keep pupils' interest levels high.

11. Much of the teaching is enthusiastic and results in pupils being interested in what they are asked to do and being keen to complete their tasks. In almost all lessons teachers used good questioning skills. They use praise and encouragement well and ensure that pupils' answers are valued, even when incorrect. Teaching resources are used well. In many lessons a wide range of visual stimuli is used to increase interest, and visits and visitors are used well to further increase the scope of what pupils experience and can do. Expectations of the quality of work and behaviour are high and pupils understand these well. Full explanations are provided, and ensure that pupils fully understand what they have learned. When given the opportunity, pupils collaborate well in lessons, sharing views and opinions and maturely discussing their ideas. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and enables them to make good progress, often attaining the expected Level 4 in national tests at eleven. Homework is used very well to enhance pupils' education. It is regularly set and marked, and forms an important part of pupils' learning, for example in Year 4 where pupils were asked to find out about William Shakespeare, producing some very good extended pieces of work.
12. Some teaching is of a very high standard, especially where the teacher has some particular expertise. This was seen to advantage in particularly good music and physical education lessons, but also in an English lesson where the teacher's expertise fired the imagination of the pupils and resulted in very good progress being made.
13. The assessment of pupils' work is good in English, mathematics and science and information is used well by teachers to plan what pupils should learn next. A careful analysis is made of results so that areas of strength and weakness can be accurately identified, and where required, the curriculum can be modified. This has been particularly effective in science, and has resulted in raising standards. Systems to record pupils' progress in other subjects are being explored and are proving useful in recording what pupils know and can do. In many areas these are being translated into targets for pupils to improve the quality of their work. However, not all pupils are clear about what they should do next to improve.

### **The curriculum**

14. The quality of the curriculum is good overall. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which enriches pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources support the delivery of the curriculum effectively, except in the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage curriculum planning does not meet requirements and there are insufficient staff and resources to match the learning needs of the children.

### **The main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- Effective planning ensures a well balanced curriculum for Years 1 to 6.
- There is good support for learning outside the curriculum, particularly in music and sport.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- Planning to meet requirements in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Accommodation to provide adventurous outdoor play for reception children is poorly developed.
- There is a lack of an experienced Foundation Stage practitioner in the reception class and inadequate teacher support for most of the week.
- There is insufficient curriculum emphasis on preparing children to be well-informed members of a multi-cultural society.

### **Commentary**

15. The school does not use the national advice on planning for the Foundation Stage and there are shortcomings in the opportunities planned for children in the reception class. However, the children's progress, to and beyond the early learning goals, ensures a smooth transition to the National Curriculum in Year 1. The provision and planning for out-door activities is limited. The limited experience of the reception teacher, the very limited adult support and the cramped space, have resulted in a restricted curriculum. Although children's attainment on entry to the reception class is above expected levels, there is still a need to provide a broad range of activities. Planning does not take account of the broad range of children's experience and maturity.
16. The school has a clear curriculum framework for Years 1 to 6, which ensures a well balanced timetable, and includes religious education, and personal, social and health education. Teachers plan well, ensuring that pupils are systematically building on what they already know. Careful "hand-over" time is planned at the end of each academic year to ensure that the pupils' next teacher understands what each individual has achieved and the range of work covered. This important activity includes the identification of fresh targets in literacy and numeracy.
17. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well. Work has been completed to reorganise topics so that good links can be made between pupils' learning in different subjects. For example pastel drawings of the cross-section of fruit enhanced the scientific study of seed dispersal, and a very moving Remembrance Day service brought together history and war poetry in Year 6. Such links in learning bring cohesion to their studies and allow pupils to develop greater understanding of the work covered.
18. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and very good opportunities for music and sport. The appointment of very knowledgeable staff in ICT, music, and art, and the strong leadership of the headteacher in physical education, has resulted in greater achievement by the pupils. In music, for example, pupils have opportunities to join a choir, an orchestra, a recorder group, and music tuition from the peripatetic tuition services. They also take part in a range of performances in school and in the wider community.
19. The school places high priority on ensuring that pupils have equal opportunities to enjoy the curriculum and all aspects of school life. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and none are disapplied. Less experienced and lower attaining pupils are supported by well-trained and briefed teaching assistants. Pupils at all stages of special educational needs are well provided for and the school procedures comply fully with the SEN code of practice. Higher attaining pupils are given more challenging tasks in most lessons, but need to have more opportunities to work independently.
20. The school has appropriate accommodation and sufficient learning resources to cover the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 but there are limitations in the Foundation Stage. The development of a computer suite has raised standards and opportunities in information and communication technology. The appointment of specialist teachers in ICT, art and music has led to some imaginative deployment of staff which has raised the profile of these subjects and supported less experienced teachers. The organisation of the library and an improvement in the quality of books provides a good facility for personal study.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Provision is **very good**. The school cares very well for its pupils and there is a high level of attention to matters of welfare and health and safety. Parents are very happy with the care and welfare the school provides for their children.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Members of staff know pupils and families very well.
- There is a high level of personal support.

- Child protection procedures are very good.
- First Aid records lack detail.

### Commentary

21. Child protection procedures are very good and all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff in school are aware of their responsibilities. First Aid provision is good, although records of accidents omit those considered minor and this is inconsistent with national guidance. A good selection of play equipment is available for lunchtime and supervisors encourage pupils in structured play. Playtime “buddies” and a “friendship bench” operate and no inappropriate behaviour was observed when pupils were at play.
22. Attention to health and safety matters and standards of maintenance and cleanliness are very good. Vandalism and graffiti are not serious problems. The pupils show respect for property and resources. Teachers know their pupils and families very well and provide a very good level of personal support, involving parents when necessary. Pupils are confident in approaching adults in the school, they know that they will be listened to, and their concerns will be dealt with. Regular celebration assemblies and the award of certificates encourage and recognise good achievement in all aspects of personal and academic development.
23. Induction arrangements for pupils entering the reception class are satisfactory and help to establish a good home-school relationship. The school council operates on a formal basis with even the youngest pupils taking an active part. It is proving to be an effective way of valuing, and acting on, pupils’ views. Pupils support local and international charities and are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

### Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school’s links with parents, the community and other schools is **satisfactory**. The views of parents were **very positive** in the parents’ questionnaire and at the parents’ meeting. The contribution of parents to children’s learning at school and at home is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- There is an active school association which raises considerable funds for the school.
- Parents are regularly welcomed into school to participate in assemblies.
- The open door policy and access to teachers is very good.
- Information on the content of the curriculum is too infrequent to be effective.
- Links with wider community could be improved.

### Commentary

24. Parents’ responses to the inspection questionnaire show that they are very happy about almost all that the school has to offer and particularly value the caring Christian ethos. An active school association supports the school well by providing good social opportunities for parents and their children and by providing good financial support for learning resources.
25. The school has also sought parents’ views through a general questionnaire, but this is not a regular feature. Whilst information for parents is readily available, there is a reliance on individuals asking for information and advice, rather than the school providing information for all parents. Reports include the level that the pupil has attained, but do not provide parents with a clear statement about what their child needs to learn next to make progress. Pupils have targets in specific subjects, but some are uncertain what they need to do to progress from one level to the next. Parents are welcome in school and attend a wide range of events and activities, including special events, parent evenings, and the regular parents’ assemblies. The

school values the help given by parents who regularly help in the classroom. Procedures for pupils who enter the reception class are satisfactory; members of staff make visits to playgroups, and parents are invited to discuss any problems shortly after their child has started school. There are good procedures in place to deal with any concerns parents have and access to staff to discuss these is readily available.

26. Links with the church are strong and the Christian ethos in the school permeates all aspects of school life. The school maintains satisfactory relationships with local secondary schools and this helps pupils transfer smoothly. Links with the local community are satisfactory and the school is aware that wider links would be beneficial as part of a pupil's preparation for living in a multi-cultural society.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers and governing body are **good**. This has ensured that the school has focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, so that in most years they are well above average. Areas for improvement identified in the last inspection, for example, information and communication technology, have been tackled well and standards in this, and in several other subjects, are now above average. The very caring Christian ethos of the school has been maintained and is a very strong feature. The management of the school is effective and provides good support for both pupils and staff. The governing body is well informed and very supportive of the school and its work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective consultation between the headteacher and governing body ensures that there is a clear sense of purpose.
- Senior teaching staff and subject co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and work well as an effective team to improve standards in all subjects across the school.
- The school's development plan is an extensive and comprehensive document, but does not focus specifically on improving pupils' attainment.
- The governors and the senior management team are aware that the provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage, including the curriculum and accommodation, is in need of improvement.
- The headteacher provides, through strong leadership and caring attitudes, a very positive role model that inspires a desire in pupils to learn and care for others.
- The day-to-day management of the school is effective and the schools finances are spent wisely.

### **Commentary**

27. The governing body support the school well through informed advice and guidance. Regular contact is maintained between governors and subject co-ordinators through classroom visits and progress reports on subject development. This effectively increases the governors' understanding of the school's strengths and helps them to identify areas where improvement is needed, for example, in improved accommodation for children in the reception year. Effective systems are in place to ensure that governors fulfil their statutory duties and that child protection, and health and safety issues, are carefully checked.
28. The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and management of the school. The deputy headteacher provides good support and leads effectively through the very good example of her teaching. Roles and responsibilities for all staff are clearly defined and are helping to provide a clear focus for improvements in the work of the school. Regular checks are kept on the curriculum through subject co-ordinator action plans, and these contribute to the school's development plan. This is a useful document, but does not focus sufficiently on specific areas for development. The strengths identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained at high levels, for example, the very positive Christian ethos that pervades the



school. This has resulted in pupils who are generally well behaved, interested in what they are asked to do and work hard. A major focus of the school's recent work has been to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, especially over the previous three years. Rigorous action has been taken on areas for improvement, for example, in ICT, where facilities have been improved, and the staff's skills have increased, resulting in a marked improvement in the standards of pupils' work.

29. Arrangements for monitoring the schools performance are good. A detailed analysis of the school's performance is completed and improvements in pupils' performance are carefully checked. This has helped the school to make improvements in specific areas, such as problem solving in mathematics, and in the quality of investigative science. The success of these initiatives can be clearly seen in the improvement in standards. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are regularly observed by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, and planning and the quality of pupils' work are also regularly checked. If needed, additional training is provided for staff.

### Financial information

#### *Financial information for the year April [year] to March [year]*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	484,686
Total expenditure	487,181
Expenditure per pupil	2,400

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	59,982
Balance carried forward to the next	57,487

30. Financial management of the school is good. The administrative members of staff are efficient and ensure that the needs of staff and pupils are well met. Future financial planning by governors and the headteacher is well developed, focusing on strengthening the quality of teaching, the provision of classroom support staff, and the development of the curriculum.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, although there are significant shortcomings in curriculum planning, personal, social and physical development, accommodation and resources.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- Strong relationships between reception children and their teacher.
- Good emphasis on communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development.
- Effective record-keeping systems.
- Unsatisfactory planning which does not meet the needs of all children, and which does not ensure full coverage of all six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.
- There are too few opportunities for children to make their own learning choices.
- Insufficient classroom support for the reception teacher.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation and resources for the outdoor curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

31. There are only 12 children in the reception class, with a teacher who is inexperienced in teaching this age group. No appropriately trained classroom assistant is available for most of the week. Much of children's learning is highly directed and provides too few opportunities for them to make choices of their own. The reception classroom is cramped. There are limited opportunities for children to use a small playground which is located away from the reception classroom.
32. The reception class teacher has good relationships with the children, which motivates them to enjoy learning. She expects them to ask questions, to speak well in groups, and to develop good relationships with each other. Some of the teacher's planning brings ideas together well so that the children's topic on "mini-beasts" includes a wide range of activities.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

33. The provision is satisfactory overall, but there are some significant shortcomings because of the limited opportunities for children to take initiative for their own learning. A high priority is placed on this area of learning and this emphasis is effective in helping children to become settled, happy and eager learners. They clearly enjoy school and have warm relationships with the class teacher and with each other. The children work well together, share resources, and take turns when required to do so.
34. Children work with the class teacher on highly directed tasks with limited choices of follow-up activities. They have few opportunities to choose what they will learn because there is usually only one member of staff and her attention has to be on the whole group, which limits more spontaneous activities.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LEARNING**

The provision for children in this area of learning is **very good**.

#### **Commentary**

35. Children enter the reception class with attainment which is above expected levels and they make good progress towards the early learning goals. They speak confidently about what they are doing, including a bi-lingual pupil who was working on the computer. In role-play activities,

children act out known and imaginary scenarios. For example, they held animated conversations about their illnesses in a role-play activity set in a doctor's waiting room, whilst taking on the roles of patient, doctor and nurse with confidence, and exceptional social awareness. They listen attentively to stories, take part in discussions, ask questions confidently, and listen to each other's contribution in a group. They enjoy story-telling activities and engage in conversations eagerly. Many pupils were alert to details in a book, recognising a repeating sequence in a story about woodland animals, and were aware that each page focused on an animal living in a different part of the same tree. They anticipated correctly that this would be a feature of subsequent pages and indicated pleasure when this idea was subsequently confirmed. Children handle books well, understand how a story is sequenced, and already recognise important words, including their own names. The children hear and say initial sounds in words, and use this knowledge when they write. They make sure they write their names on their completed work and attempt written commentaries under their drawings. Many have already achieved the early learning goals in writing and some are able to write some of the more common words which underpin writing activities.

## **MATHEMATICS DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Commentary**

36. Children use mathematical ideas in a range of well planned practical activities and in number songs and rhymes. They begin the day by using registration to compare numbers of school dinners and packed lunches. Such regular and simple mathematical calculations allow them to be confident in manipulating numbers from an early age. Children recognise and count numbers to ten, and some to twenty. They can count backwards and know that particular numbers can be made up of different sets, for example, an eight made up of five plus three, two plus six, four plus four, etc. In the outdoor play area children played with skittles and understood that the number knocked down and the number still standing could be added to achieve the original total. Children print with 2-D shapes and create repeating patterns accurately.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

The provision for this area of learning is satisfactory.

### **Commentary**

37. Children enjoy investigating their environment and do so with great interest, but there are limited opportunities to do so in the outside playground. They have good opportunities to go for environmental walks, to explore a fire-engine which came into the school grounds, and to talk to fire-fighters about their work. They record their findings through drawing and painting, and details of their pictures indicate close observation. Children are becoming confident users of information and communication technology. They use different programmes to support other areas of learning, including mathematics and language and literacy, and to respond artistically through paint programmes. They also use other technology with confidence. For example they are able to play tape machines and listen to, and follow, taped instructions appropriately. They are given opportunities to investigate the world around them, for example, planting bulbs, spider-watching and worm-hunting. They blow bubbles and watch them flying across the sky with a great sense of wonder. They chart the calendar of events in their world in a range of ways, painting late summer flowers, autumn leaves and their Halloween and firework celebrations.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for this area of learning is **good**.

### **Commentary**

38. The children play with different materials, and record their activities and visits artistically using a range of colours and textures. They mix paint to achieve appropriate colours for their impression of an autumn walk. They draw well and use their imagination to record from memory the details of their week-end and family activities. They enjoy music and sing well, responding to rhythm and different sounds through clapping, for example, to add further layers of sound to musical activities. The lack of supervision when the teacher was involved with another group led to three children spending a considerable part of a session rubbing out their drawings, leaving a very poor overall impression at the end of the activity.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for this area of learning is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

39. The children handle a variety of tools and equipment safely and with care. They show considerable dexterity when handling scissors, pencils and paintbrushes of different sizes, and the control needed in information and communication technology work. They do not have enough opportunity to enjoy adventurous play through a well-planned outdoor curriculum. They therefore do not develop good control of their bodies or an awareness of space. The children have well planned physical education lessons to promote strong physical movement, but the more spontaneous opportunities to run, swing, and balance on climbing equipment are not available.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good** and pupils' attainment is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are higher than national expectations.
- Standards of attainment are well above national expectations at seven and eleven.
- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good, and one excellent lesson was observed.
- Good use is made of assessment data to inform planning and set targets.
- Strong subject leadership, which demonstrates faith in the school's ability to raise standards even further.
- Insufficient evidence of consistent transfer of literacy skills to other subjects of the curriculum.
- Insufficient opportunities for higher attaining pupils to work independently and develop their personal capability beyond the limits of the planned lesson.

#### Commentary

40. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are highly developed. The attainment of pupils owes much to the high standards already achieved on entry, and also to regular opportunities provided by the teaching for pupils to share their ideas and explain their thinking in most subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' personal vocabulary is extensive, and teachers' sensitive questioning allows them to demonstrate their current knowledge and their understanding in new areas of learning.
41. Reading standards are well above average. Pupils learn a wide range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Frequent opportunities to talk about what they read with the teacher make a significant contribution to the pupils' ability to understand beyond the literal meaning. For example, in Year 1, through talking with their teacher, pupils recognised the humour of a story about a duck in an eggshell hat and the implied mockery in the other animals' admiring remarks. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to appreciate the language of poetry, understanding that the spikes of a dragon can be compared to a range of mountain peaks and his tail to a flowing stream of blue water. In Years 3 to 6 teachers continue to extend pupils' reading strategies and skills to help them understand authors' meanings. Pupils are aware of the function of punctuation and the authors' careful choice of words to bring their writing alive. Pupils are learning to identify how character and settings are created by authors, and this helps them in their own writing. Teachers across the whole school use guided reading to help pupils understand how to infer meaning or recognise a particular viewpoint in the books they are reading. Such specific support in reading also helps pupils make significant progress in writing.
42. The school's good achievements in writing are supported by the clear links teachers consistently make between reading and writing. At seven and eleven, pupils are given the opportunity to create pieces of writing with their teachers. These shared writing activities help pupils draw on newly learned skills to set out their own writing effectively. In Year 4 pupils built up their knowledge of style, by writing a play-script based on Romeo and Juliet. In Year 6, they worked towards the detached style characteristic of journalism, where facts rather than opinions are reported with due regard for libel laws. Here, pupils investigated a murder at a mansion, interviewing suspects and checking alibis. This was a very effective lesson where pupils developed their detection skills before completing the less engaging task of reporting the heinous crime.

43. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and often very good. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to contribute in plenary sessions by organising discussion in small groups. These activities help teachers to assess the pupils' understanding and the progress being made.
44. The assessment of pupils' work is very thorough. Teachers use performance data from tests to chart pupils' progress and to identify targets, particularly in writing. Most teachers mark pupils' work effectively. They include appreciative comments and pointers for improvement. This good practice helps pupils to understand what they need to do to make progress. Targets are shared with pupils and displayed on pupils' desks. In Year 2, pupils were reminded to read their targets and check that they had achieved them in their completed writing tasks. Such expectation keeps targets in the forefront of pupils' minds and contributes to the raising of achievement.
45. Curriculum co-ordination of the subject is strong. The co-ordinator has analysed pupils' test results and initiated an action plan to identify what the school needs to do to improve overall attainment. While standards are well above those typically found nationally, attainment on entry is above average and achievement is therefore good rather than very good.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

46. Pupils are given many opportunities for speaking and listening across the curriculum, for example to talk together about ideas raised before feeding back to the rest of the class. For example, in Year 2, pupils discussed a particular poem focusing on its humour, its rhyme and rhythm and the meaning of particular words. In Year 5, pupils discussed Henry VIII's motive in disposing of wives and remarrying. They considered whether it was pure evil or expediency in securing an heir and weighed the conflicting views with impressive detachment. The development of literacy skills in other subjects is not always given enough prominence, for example handwriting and spelling skills are not as rigorously promoted as in literacy lessons, and the layout of texts in paragraphs, with well chosen punctuation, is not always expected.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the end of Year 6 and Year 2 pupils achieve well above average results in national tests.
- Pupils' mental mathematics skills and their ability to solve mathematical problems are well above average.
- Teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of the work pupils produce.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in mathematics.
- The curriculum leadership of mathematics is good and has helped the school to focus on improving standards.
- Regular assessments of what pupils know, and can do, have helped the school to identify areas of weakness in the mathematics curriculum and to remedy them

### **Commentary**

47. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be above average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are well above average levels by the time pupils reach Year 6 and attainment at Level 5 is above average. Standards in Year 2 have been consistently above, and well above, average levels over the last four years, and are a consequence of good teaching. Pupils across the school make good progress in mathematics, especially in extending their mental mathematics skills and applying these to solving problems.

48. The quality of teaching mathematics is good overall. Lessons successfully follow the national planning framework and ensure that pupils build on what they already know and understand. Good attention is paid to the learning of multiplication tables and number facts and ensuring that pupils understand and can explain the methods they use in solving problems. In almost all lessons pupils receive a good level of challenge which helps them extend their skills and enables them to make good progress. Where the challenge is not always appropriate, progress slows. Teachers questioning skills are good, the pace of lessons is almost always brisk and the marking of pupils' work is effective, with guidance given on how to improve their work. Procedures for testing what pupils know are well established.
49. The leadership of the subject is efficient. A thorough analysis of national and school tests is completed and this helps the school to identify any areas of weakness. Effective remedial action is then taken. Standards of teaching are regularly checked by the subject co-ordinator, planning is monitored to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered, and pupils' work is examined to ensure that agreed policies, for example, marking are in place.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. A feature of the school is the way that skills learned in other subjects are used across the curriculum. Examples of how mathematics is used in this way can be seen in science where data is regularly collected and recorded in investigational science lessons and in geography where co-ordinates are used to locate positions on maps. In a very good history lesson seen in Year 2 the teacher helped pupils to calculate how much time had passed since the Fire of London, and helped pupils to understand how time passes.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average and pupils demonstrate a good understanding of scientific principles.
- Investigative science is a significant part of the science curriculum and pupils have a very good understanding of how to carry out scientific tests.
- Most teachers are confident and knowledgeable in teaching science.
- Skills learned in English, mathematics and ICT are used well in science.
- Worksheets are used too much in a small number of classes.

#### **Commentary**

51. Results in science have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be above average. Standards in the national tests in 2003 were well above average and were an improvement on 2002. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
52. Although there was a limited opportunity to observe the teaching of science during the inspection, an examination of pupils' previous work illustrates teaching of good quality. In most classes, good attention is focused on investigative science. Pupils as young as seven, attain high standards, and know what comprises a fair test. In a very good lesson seen in Year 2, pupils predicted, and then tested, how far a toy car would travel, whilst changing the variables in their investigation. Their observations were carefully recorded, making good use of their English and mathematics skills. Pupils in Year 5 used the local environment to search for, and classify, mini-beasts. There is however, too much dependence on worksheets in these activities, and this restricts the development of the pupils' ability to record observations. By Year 6 pupils are able to organise and complete their own investigations, for example, when carrying out an investigation into the rate of dissolving of different sweeteners, and recording

their findings clearly. To extend and improve their writing skills, pupils complete draft versions of their written science work, and improve the quality of their final scripts. Careful attention is paid to how pupils learn and to the use of correct scientific vocabulary.

53. Links with ICT and mathematics are good. Pupils regularly collect and display their findings, and use their computer skills to draw up tables showing changes in temperature, or the time taken for change to take place. Pupils also have access to a digital microscope and a digital camera which enhance pupils' interest and enthusiasm for science.
54. The leadership of the subject is good. The quality of teaching is regularly checked, along with planning, and the quality of pupils' work. The science curriculum has been reviewed and revised, so that it fits more logically with other areas of the school's curriculum. These have all helped to raise standards and to ensure that the skills learned in other subjects are utilised.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in ICT are good and have improved significantly from the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory.
- Teachers have good levels of skill in teaching ICT.
- The subject co-ordinator has high levels of skill in ICT and is able to provide good quality training for staff.
- The school is being innovative in the development of the subject by providing intranet facilities for the collection, storage and display of pupils' work.
- ICT resources have been improved significantly so that all relevant areas of the curriculum are now covered.
- The use of ICT is now a planned aspect of most lessons.

### **Commentary**

55. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above expected levels in Year 2 and in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in developing their skills. Boys and girls attain equally well, they co-operate well when required, and share skills with one another.
56. By Year 2, pupils confidently compose text directly onto the screen, change colour, font and size, and are able to combine simple text and pictures to produce effective pieces of work. Data is collected and organised into graphs. In Year 6 pupils are able to produce programs to control and operate traffic lights. Good links were made with mathematics, when pupils used spreadsheets to calculate areas and perimeters of shapes, and to calculate the takings, profit and loss in the costs of running a restaurant. Pupils make effective use of graphs of many different types, which are created using information collected from around the school, for example, the height of pupils and their shoe size. Pupils produce good quality presentations using hyperlink, which combines text and pictures. Many pupils have access to computers at home and this helps to improve skills and standards. Good links have been established with an inner city multi-ethnic school and pupils regularly exchange e-mails. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of different environments and cultures. Other aspects of communication technology, for example, the use of digital cameras, digital microscopes and video presentations, are also used well to develop pupils' learning and to record their efforts.
57. The leadership of the subject is very good, and has enabled the school to make considerable improvements during the last two years. The co-ordinator, ably supported by another teacher, is developing an intranet facility for the school. This is being used increasingly to keep a record of pupils' work, and to provide examples of good practice for others to emulate. Systems to



record the pupils' skills are well advanced. Extensive staff training has increased teaching skills, and is helping to ensure that standards continue to improve.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

58. ICT is used well in subjects across the school. Pupils' English work is often composed directly onto a computer screen and is saved in their personal files. The collection of data, using spreadsheets in mathematics and science to create graphs and tables is a regular feature of pupils' work. ICT also features strongly in music, and in artwork when pupils examine the work of famous artists and use paint programs to create works of art. Teachers enliven their lessons through the use of ICT, for example, in history, when a teacher used the visual images of the Fire of London to increase pupils' understanding of the plight of the victims.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By Year 6, pupils have a wide-ranging knowledge of history, resulting in standards that are above expected levels.
- Visits and visitors are used well to enhance pupils' interest in history.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to extend their writing skills when recording historical fact and opinion.
- Homework is used well in history to extend pupils' knowledge.

### **Commentary**

59. Interviews with pupils in Year 6 demonstrated the depth of knowledge that they possess in history. They are able to discuss reasons why Britain was invaded by the Romans, Saxons and Vikings and to provide detail on the impact the invaders left on our towns and countryside. Pupils have a good understanding of the use of primary and secondary evidence and appreciate how historical artefacts can increase our knowledge of the past.
60. Pupils achieve well in history because lessons are interesting and are presented in a way that inspires their interest. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils learned about the Fire of London. The introduction to the lesson stimulated pupils' interest through the use of a descriptive text and of ICT, ensuring that the pupils could empathise with the plight of the people involved in the fire. Pupils were eager to begin their well-chosen tasks, working hard and co-operating very well when exchanging views and ideas. By Year 5, pupils are able to link the personal characteristics of Henry VIII, and the reasons for why he married six times. They also consider why some accounts written at the time are likely to contain bias, and could explain why. Good links are made between geography and history through the study of the importance of the River Nile and life in Ancient Egypt in Year 6. Links are also made to other cultures, for example, Christianity and Hinduism. Good use is made of video clips and ICT to help to clarify pupils' thoughts and ideas, resulting in the pupils developing a good understanding of the period. Writing skills are also developed well through note taking, and the recording of the pupils' ideas of historical events. However, in some classes insufficient care is taken by pupils to put into action what they have learned in English, for example, in the quality of presentation and punctuation.
61. The leadership of the subject is good. Regular checking of planning is completed, together with, and examination of, pupils' work. A start has been made on recording pupils' progress and plans are in place to develop this further. The quality of teaching is also checked, although not as regularly as in English, mathematics and science.



## Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good geographical knowledge by Year 6.
- Geography is a regular part of the school's curriculum.
- Good use is made of the local environment to enhance pupils' knowledge of geography.
- Good links are made between geography, English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

### Commentary

62. Standards of geographical knowledge are above expected levels. By Year 6, pupils have a broad geographical knowledge. Although no geography lessons were on the school's timetable during the inspection, interviews with pupils reveal that they have undertaken practical fieldwork. This has included investigating the speed of flow in a river. Pupils use geographical vocabulary accurately, for example, erosion, deposition, and meander, and are able to explain these terms. They also show a considerable understanding of the local village environment and have examined how land is used for a variety of purposes. In a good link with science, pupils visited the local water treatment works and learned how water is cleaned and purified. Pupils later used this knowledge in a science lesson on separating substances. Useful links with history and art and design are also made. In their study of Ancient Egypt, pupils learn about the importance of the River Nile and its annual flooding. In art and design, pupils linked the patterns made by streets to the work of the artist Paul Klee and produced imaginative and colourful work. Studies of the wider world include the comparison of their own lives with those of children in Kenya, and pupils show a good understanding of the differences in foodstuffs, schooling, education and landscape in comparison with their own lifestyles.
63. Pupils have good mapping skills. They understand how the scale of maps can change and recognise a good number of the symbols used in maps. They can also explain how co-ordinates are used to locate different features. Their knowledge of why cities, towns and villages are in certain locations is good and they relate this well to transport links, farming and trade routes. Pupils also show a good factual knowledge of the location of oceans, continents and countries.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- School life is conducted in the light of faith and Christian principles.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils enjoy religious education.
- Pupils know about the principal world religions such as Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity.
- Assemblies are not always planned to engage the interest of the youngest children, particularly in reception classes.

## Commentary

64. The school intends to provide education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief. The meaning and significance of faith is promoted well, and pupils regularly consider the meanings of Christ's teachings and their continuing significance in their own lives.
65. Standards in religious education in Years 2 and 6 are above the level expected for these ages. In Year 2, pupils focused on the importance of considering people's feelings in the way we conduct our lives. They drew on the story of "Cinderella" to identify which of these well known characters had shown consideration to others. This established a common level of understanding which allowed them to discuss the parable of the Good Samaritan and Christ's teaching on the importance of loving one's neighbour. By using a contemporary story, the teacher helped pupils to understand that consideration for others applies to everyone, whatever faith or race. In discussion, Year 6 pupils asserted that religious education is a regular and important part of school life and that important teachings of the principal religions, such as Islam and Judaism, are guides to the way different people conduct their lives.
66. Teaching is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are able to recall the deeper meanings and moral issues presented in stories from the holy books of different religions. They recognise messages that Christ conveyed through parables and the importance of symbolism in religious teaching. For example, in Year 4, pupils listened to the story of Moses and the burning bush and recognised fire as an important symbol of God's love for Jewish people. The teacher lit a candle and as it flickered he talked about the importance of light in most world religions, including Christianity.
67. The assembly programme supports the religious education curriculum, although occasionally, not enough thought is given to the needs of the youngest children. For example, in the infant assembly a parable was translated into a modern setting which was difficult for reception class pupils to understand.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- High standards of work achieved.
- Good teaching of key skills.
- Strong subject leadership.
- Good cross-curricular opportunities.
- Pupils enjoy art, and are proud of their work.
- Assessment and record-keeping systems are at the early stages of development.

## Commentary

68. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are above those expected for pupils of these ages, and achievement across the whole school is good. Only three art lessons were seen, but examples from pupils' art portfolios indicate standards are above average. One teacher has high levels of skill which is being used to support less experienced teachers and different age groups. Evidence of high standards in sketching, painting, portraiture and still life were on display. Pupils have the opportunity of appraising artists' work to encourage their own efforts and improve their techniques. In Year 3, pupils produced self-portraits of very high quality by drawing on the work of Mary Cassatt, an American impressionist painter, who specialised in portraits of family groups. For example one pupil did a fine portrait of himself and his baby brother, the presentation of their relationship enhanced the overall effect of the self-portrait.

69. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan carefully, use resources effectively, and pupils' skills are built up progressively. For example, in Year 4, a range of portraits was available to help pupils understand that artists can convey a mood and emotion as well as physical detail. Pupils were encouraged to express ideas about these artists' skills, which they did with great confidence. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils studied the work of Arcimboldo, who used fruit and vegetables in portraiture. The teacher encouraged them to make preparatory sketches before using real fruit to create their own faces. The portraits produced by four groups were interestingly varied because of the different decisions made by each set of pupils. The work was photographed, which allowed pupils to appraise each other's work and to use this record for the next stage in a sequence of lessons, which was to paint the portraits in the style of Arcimboldo.
70. Subject leadership is strong. The co-ordinator is a trained artist and has clearly raised the quality of teaching, learning and standards achieved, which is well demonstrated in displays around the school.
71. Art is used across different areas of the curriculum to enhance learning, for example, in Year 5; pupils used wax crayons to produce the beauty and natural design in the cross-section in pieces of fruit. This enhanced their understanding of seed dispersal and plant growth.

### **Design and technology**

Provision for design technology is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Good teaching that meets the full requirements of the subject.
- Good use of evaluation.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards in design technology are good. The school has adapted a commercial scheme which ensures appropriate links with other subjects. Good planning allows the pupils to develop their skills progressively to cover all aspects of the programme of study. Only three lessons were observed in the week of inspection. Achievement is high and the pupils' work indicates that there is appropriate coverage of this subject, including evaluation of their designs. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the quality of teaching, and the practical and visual dimension of the work covered.
73. Standards in Year 2 are well above those found typically at this age. Pupils made dragon puppets and were given the opportunity to discuss the quality of the work produced. They were proud of the work and were able to evaluate it using appropriate subject vocabulary and very good judgement. Good links are made with other aspects of the curriculum including literacy, art and mathematics. Pupils understand that things might go wrong at the making stage and that this is an important part of the learning process. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson, one pupil's simple mechanism for making a pop-up book failed to produce a desired effect and was seen as a useful learning point. The teacher used this example, to confirm the importance of working on a simple prototype, before going on to the final product. The pupils' reactions were positive.
74. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan well to ensure that pupils understand the importance of designing against a particular specification. Work in books indicates that pupils are learning the important elements of the subject, including evaluation. Resources are well used, for example in Year 2, to achieve the detail of the dragon puppets. In a very effective Year 3 lesson, pupils brought in a huge array of photograph frames to investigate how such products can be assembled, and how design features enhance the photographs they frame.

Such investigations allowed pupils to design their own frames with very good knowledge and creativity.

## Music

Provision for music is **very good**, and pupils' achievements are high.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Strong leadership of the subject.
- Good extra-curricular opportunities.
- High standards in choir and orchestra.

### Commentary

75. Only one full music lesson was observed in the week of inspection, and it is not possible to judge the overall standards of teaching and learning. The school provides a range of curricular opportunities outside the school day, and in assemblies, which allow the pupils to develop good musical skills. For example, there is a choir, an orchestra and a recorder group, and pupils have regular opportunities to perform to the rest of the school or in the community. Observation of these activities indicates high standards of achievement.
76. The one music lesson observed was exceptional. Pupils in Year 3 sat in a circle and sang a well-loved song from their assembly repertoire, but without an accompaniment. Pupils were immediately conscious of the contrast, and from this opening the teacher took them step-by-step to an understanding that instrumental accompaniments and particular arrangements greatly enhance a melody. He did this with an excellent choice of music featuring a diverse range of musicians. The rhythm of the chosen music was so infectious that the pupils responded by moving their bodies in time with it. The teacher's excellent questioning helped pupils understand what made it exciting, including beat, different levels of sound, and the mood certain music evoked. The pupils felt the jazz sounded as if "it might be a snake-charmer", and "a bit Egyptian".
77. The leadership of the subject is very strong. The co-ordinator has great vision for the development of all aspects of music in the school. Staff are trialling a new scheme of work and will adapt it to meet their own needs, following a whole-staff evaluation. The co-ordinator supports music development at every level. He supports less confident colleagues, helping them to plan within each unit of work. Where possible, he helps them to evaluate pupils' attainment, for example, by listening to taped outcomes of the song-writing units in Year 6. He is working with staff to identify gifted and talented pupils to ensure that they are supported at the appropriate level. The co-ordinator directs the choir and orchestra and different ensemble groups with great skill and enthusiasm. He works with pupils as a fellow musician as well as a teacher, and his inspiration has put music at the heart of the school's life.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**. The range of sporting and curricular enrichment activities is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of gymnastics is of excellent quality.
- Although all the required areas of physical education are covered, some, such as swimming and outdoor adventurous activities, are not taught in sufficient depth.

## Commentary

78. There were limited opportunities to observe physical education lessons during the inspection. However, the extent of after-school activities and opportunities to practice physical skills during school breaks, added appreciably to pupils' skills. The after-school activities, which included football and netball, were well attended and enjoyed by pupils.
79. The teaching of a gymnastics lesson by the subject co-ordinator was excellent. All pupils were fully involved and improved and extended their skills. The effort of all pupils was recognised and consequently motivated them to improve standards. Very good relationships with pupils were a noticeable feature of the lesson, and the desire of pupils to excel led to high quality movement.
80. Discussions with the headteacher and an examination of pupils' records revealed that the school tries to ensure that all pupils learn to swim and this aim is well supported by parents. Although the school's physical education curriculum includes orienteering, there is little opportunity for pupils to undertake other adventurous activities.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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



