

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG MELFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Long Melford, Sudbury

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124707

Headteacher: Mr G Gardner

Lead inspector: Mr C D Loizou

Dates of inspection: 2-5 February 2004

Inspection number: 256769

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	149
School address:	Cordell Road Long Melford Sudbury Suffolk
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Aldhouse
Date of previous inspection:	22 April, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Long Melford Primary School is a small Voluntary Controlled Church of England school with 149 pupils on roll from the age of three to nine. This includes 21 part-time children in the Nursery most of whom transfer into the Reception year in the term they reach their fifth birthday. The Nursery provides part-time (mornings) provision. There is one Reception class which admits children at the start of each term. In addition, there are four mixed-age classes, two with Years 1 and 2 pupils and two with Year 3 and 4 pupils and one single age Year 1 class of pupils who transferred from the Reception year to Year 1 in January. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than the usual time of admission to the Reception year or transfer to middle schools is very low compared with most schools. The large majority of pupils are of white British heritage and there are a very small number of pupils of mixed heritage. Nearly all the pupils speak English as their main language and only one pupil requires additional support. Nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average (nine per cent) and only one pupil has a Statement of special educational needs. The children's attainment on entry to the school is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18645	Mr C D Loizou	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Music Religious education
9958	Mr T Page	Lay inspector	
11419	Mrs P J Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good education. The headteacher and staff have developed an ethos where the pupils feel confident and can thrive. **The pupils achieve well overall** because the teaching is good. As a result, standards are above average. The school is **well led and managed** and provides good value for money. Teaching and support staff are constantly seeking improvement and are very committed to the needs of the pupils and this is demonstrated in their achievement in nearly all subjects.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The headteacher, staff and governors have high aspirations and this has resulted in very good achievement in English where standards are improving very well.
- The teaching is good and so the pupils are highly motivated, very well behaved in lessons and try hard.
- Although the school provides a good curriculum that engages the pupils in practical and interesting tasks, Year 1 and 2 pupils could do better in mathematics and science.
- Literacy and information and communication skills are used very well to support the pupils' learning in many subjects.
- Target setting and assessments of Year 1 and 2 pupils are not always accurate enough and could start earlier in the Foundation Stage.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Standards have improved markedly in English and are now improving steadily in mathematics and science. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is much improved. Assessment procedures are now effective and systematic although some improvement is needed in the assessment of pupils in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. Monitoring is much more effective. Accommodation and resources have been improved, particularly those in information and communication technology.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	C	B	B
writing	B	C	B	B
mathematics	A	D	D	D

*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*

The pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is reflected particularly in the results of the 2003 tests at the end of Year 2 and the optional tests in Year 4. Although mathematics and science results by the end of Year 2 last year were below average, standards have improved this year and are now in line with those expected. Inaccurate teacher assessment and target setting in Years 1 and 2 partly explain this but recent improvements are also having a positive impact on the pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2. The results of optional tests taken in Year 4 were above average. This is also reflected in the quality of work seen during the inspection.

In the Foundation Stage (the Nursery and Reception year), children achieve well. They start school with average standards and make good progress in all areas of learning. The Reception children attain standards that are in line with those expected by the time they start Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics and science. By the end of Year 4, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The standards seen in the inspection confirm that the improvement reflected in the

2003 tests in Year 2 continue to be sustained now that the teaching, after a brief period of instability in staffing, is stable and consistent throughout the school. Information and communication technology standards and those in other subjects are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 4.

The pupils have very good attitudes to learning. This is reflected in good punctuality and behaviour. Attendance rates are in line with the national average. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.** There are good opportunities for the pupils to show respect and demonstrate care for each other.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching across the school is good. There is more very good teaching in Years 3 and 4 compared with that seen in the rest of the school. The pupils use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills well in other subjects. Those with special educational needs are effectively supported by well-qualified staff. The school is highly committed to including all the pupils and so the school's curriculum, resources and accommodation have been adapted to provide good opportunities for the pupils to engage in independent learning and problem solving. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have enough opportunities to undertake problem solving work in mathematics and investigational work in science and this holds back their progress. Learning is good overall because teachers plan work that is based on systematic assessments. However, up to now, these have not been applied accurately in Years 1 and 2 in mathematics and science and so standards could still be higher in these subjects by the end of Year 2. The curriculum provides good opportunities for learning throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects is good. The members of staff in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a good curriculum and have a good understanding of the curriculum for children of this age.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is good overall and that demonstrated by the headteacher is very good. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regularly undertaken and the governors receive good quality reports about standards and the impact that the curriculum and teaching is having on the pupils' learning. In this way the headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. Governors have supported the school well through a time of significant change and are committed to a highly inclusive curriculum where all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are able to achieve well. **The management of the school is good.** The headteacher, staff and governors have adopted effective strategies to raise standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very involved in the life and work of the school. They are well informed and invited to support in school. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and learning and the school involves them well in decision making and the life of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school should maintain its pursuit of raising standards of achievement, teaching and learning and should:

- assess and target the pupils early enough and soon after their initial assessments in the Foundation Stage to track their performance better in Years 1 and 2;
- provide more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to undertake problem solving in mathematics and investigations in science to sustain the improvement in standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Although results in national tests taken at the end of Year 2 declined during a brief period of staffing instability, they have improved markedly now that the relatively new members of the teaching staff have had time to have an impact on pupils' learning. Consequently, standards are well above average in English by the end of Year 4 and securely above average by the end of Year 2. Standards in mathematics and science are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 4. The pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in most subjects because the school has focused on improving the pupils' literacy skills.
- Year 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science but standards could be higher in these subjects by the end of Year 2.
- The pupils across the school develop their language and literacy skills very well.
- The pupils achieve above average standards in information and communication technology which is used well to support their learning in other subjects.

Commentary

1. The attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with the standards expected of children aged three in the Nursery and aged four in the Reception year. The good provision in the Foundation Stage enables the children to achieve well and most reach the early learning goals, a national standard for children in the Foundation Stage, in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.6 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.3 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.6 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. National tests are undertaken in Year 2 each year and optional National Curriculum tests in Year 4 before the pupils transfer to the feeder middle schools. The Year 2 tests in 2003 confirm that standards improved on the previous year and were above average in reading and writing. However, mathematics results and teacher assessments in science showed below average standards. This is the same picture when comparing the school with similar schools. In the case of reading and writing, a good proportion of the pupils exceeded the standards expected for their age but the same pupils did less well in mathematics and science. Inconsistent teacher assessments in Years 1 and 2 were also partly responsible for the pupils not reaching their predicted levels. The average point scores (see table above) improved in reading and writing but remained constant in mathematics. This indicates that the teaching has begun to reverse the trend of declining standards, including those in mathematics but less so in science. It is difficult to predict why this is the case in science except that the inspection has identified some inconsistencies in the way teachers assess the standards achieved by the pupils in science.

3. The results of the optional tests in Year 4 show that the pupils reach well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science. Teacher assessments and achievement were more consistent last year in Years 3 and 4. More able pupils reached their potential and so a good proportion exceeded the standards expected for their age in all three subjects.
4. The 2003 results confirm that the school's strategy to focus on improving language and literacy standards has been successful. Very good leadership by the headteacher and good coordination by the senior staff have resulted in sustained and effective teaching practices that have begun to reverse the trend of declining standards. The overall improvement is reflected in the 2003 results and also sustained by the standards seen during the inspection. There is a strong commitment to continue to raise standards and this is reflected in the above average standards right across the curriculum. Already, new teaching staff and professional development involving much improved teaching in mathematics and science have resulted in standards being in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 which is a significant improvement on previous years. Standards in Years 3 and 4 in English, mathematics and science have been consistently above average and are rising well because the teaching in this part of the school is more consistently good or very good compared with the rest of the school.
5. Throughout the school, the pupils are achieving well and in Years 3 and 4 their rate of progress accelerates. Senior members of staff ensure that the achievements of the pupils are analysed and tracked by checking their work and results of ongoing assessments and tests. However, target setting and assessments of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not sharp enough to ensure that the pupils reach their targets especially in mathematics and science. This is being addressed and supported by the headteacher and senior staff who are applying similar practices and checks as those that take place in Years 3 and 4. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning across the whole curriculum. Consequently, the pupils achieve well and reach standards that exceed those expected for their age.
6. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There is a good, balanced programme of work which combines specialised support provided by teaching assistants when they are taught in small groups outside the classroom and when supported in whole class lessons alongside their classmates. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children with learning difficulties are identified early through careful observation and assessment. Work is then provided that helps and supports the pupils as they move through the school and so they achieve well and make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is good. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' enjoy school and have positive attitudes.
- There are very good relationships.
- The pupils are confident and willing to take responsibilities.
- The school has a strong moral code that is embedded in its Christian and caring ethos.
- There is limited provision for developing in the pupils an awareness of multi-cultural Britain today.

Commentary

7. The pupils are eager to learn and always strive to do their best. They thrive on the many opportunities presented for undertaking work independently such as consulting books and information and communication technology in school and researching topic work at home. They participate enthusiastically in school productions, clubs and sports events. There is a determination to succeed throughout the school and to have fun at the same time.
8. Relationships amongst pupils and with adults are very good. This leads to a family atmosphere where the pupils and staff get to know each other well; they care for each other and there is very little oppressive behaviour. Mutual respect builds the pupils' self-confidence and results in very mature attitudes by the time they reach Year 4.
9. Older pupils have a desire to put something back into the school. They are good role models who can act on their own initiative to make the school a good place to be. They readily take on responsibilities to assist the smooth running of the school and contribute their own ideas. Year 3 and 4 pupils volunteer to read to younger pupils and have suggested ideas for additional lunchtime clubs. They also take some responsibility for charity fund raising, such as Blue Peter events, and operate their own stalls at Parent and Teacher Association events.
10. The pupils with special educational needs gain confidence and try to answer questions in class. They often receive help from those with higher attainment, for example when using computers. Pupils with identified behavioural or social educational difficulties, and those with emotional needs respond to the school's intervention strategies very well. Good support systems are in place as well as well qualified support staff to cater for their specific learning needs.
11. The pupils' spiritual development is very good and this contributes very well towards the school's commitment to its Christian ethos. They have self-belief and see learning as an adventure where they are encouraged to work independently and with others. Some high quality work is developed that improves the pupils' spiritual awareness, for example, evocative representations of Van Gogh's work in art and design lessons, creative writing that inspires the pupils to produce book cover designs and the application of artistic patterns in mathematics. Very good moral development leads to a caring and inclusive community and very good social development ensures that all the pupils' contributions are valued. The school provides well for cultural development through visits to places such as Kentwall Hall to see re-enactments of village life in Tudor times. The school covers multi-cultural aspects of the curriculum through religious education, art and design, and music. The school arranges visits from a Caribbean steel band as well as a parent who teaches aspects of Buddhism and the Chinese New Year celebrations. Despite these efforts, there are few opportunities for the pupils to participate or apply themselves to life in multi-cultural Britain today. This is principally because of the location of the school and this is recognised by the school as a potential area for further development. The pupils' cultural development is good overall.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.8
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance is satisfactory as it is in line with the national average. Punctuality is good and there is good monitoring and promotion of attendance. There are no temporary exclusions this year; there were three last year. Correct procedures were followed.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	135	3	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	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 education is good and this contributes well to the achievements of the pupils resulting in them attaining above average standards in most subject of the curriculum.

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are good. Assessment procedures are inconsistently applied but satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and teachers successfully engage the pupils in their learning.
- The pupils, including those with special educational needs, are actively involved in their lessons and information and communication technology is used well to support and enhance their learning.
- Target setting is applied well in Years 3 and 4 but up to now this has been an inconsistent aspect of teachers' assessments in Years 1 and 2, especially in mathematics and science.
- Teachers have high expectations and prepare challenging tasks for their pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9 (20%)	33 (72%)	4 (8%)	0	0	0

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

13. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and is having a positive impact on the children and their learning. There is a good understanding by the staff as to how young children learn and they set high expectations as to how best to prepare them when teaching basic communication skills and improving their personal and social development. Consequently, the children start Year 1 with good personal and communication skills. The members of staff are clear about what they want the children to learn; for example, the role-play corner provides good opportunities for the children to use language and this is backed up by storybooks and

recorded tapes of familiar and traditional stories. Expectations are high. The children draw pictures and write stories and descriptive accounts. Teachers and teaching assistants prompt the children to explain what they mean and this extends their thinking further as a result. In mathematics activities, they ask challenging and stimulating questions as the children look for patterns in numbers or shapes and then match these to earlier discussions about a number line or shapes seen in the classroom.

14. The teaching in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 is good overall with some very good teaching in Years 3 and 4. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively and so the pupils make good progress. However, Year 1 and 2 pupils are unsure about problem solving in mathematics or prediction in science. The school has identified this and has recently put in place specific sessions each day that provide more opportunities for the pupils to try to work out problems for themselves. For example, they estimate outcomes before predicting the weight of objects mathematics; organise and choose the most appropriate equipment in science lessons to help them undertake predictions and possible outcomes. This is having an impact on standards as they are higher than last year's. However, the use of assessment has not been consistently applied in Years 1 and 2 in the past and so teachers are unable to plan precise learning objectives for the pupils that best match their capabilities. This aspect of teacher assessments is much stronger and effective in years 3 and 4 where tasks are more closely matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils.
15. Opportunities to enhance the pupils' learning using literacy and information and communication technology skills are good. The pupils enjoy using computers and have regular access to the computer room. Consequently, information and communication technology skills are well taught and this reinforces their learning in other subjects. Literacy skills are also well used as the pupils are able to look up facts in non-fiction books using glossaries and indexes. This is also helped by Internet research which is a regular feature of the work done in a range of subjects.
16. In the Year 3 and 4 classes, the teachers have high expectations and are very well organised in their assessments of how well the pupils are doing. Consequently, the pupils respond positively to their learning, as in one lesson when they investigated Bible stories. In a very effective mathematics lesson the pupils in Year 4 investigated and tested a hypothesis that, "Left-handed people had a bigger right foot than their left foot and visa versa". The pupils were comfortable using and applying their data handling and numeracy skills to test the hypothesis. Teachers' planning ensures that tasks build on what has already been learned and the tasks are made interesting and motivating. Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoy writing letters to an imaginary character during a very good English lesson. Year 3 and 4 pupils write descriptive accounts about ancient civilisations. The pupils throughout the school enjoy writing in a variety of forms, with increasing accuracy and imagination. These include writing poetry, narrative and descriptive accounts as well as imaginary writing based on ideas from popular literature.
17. There are good processes for identifying pupils with all types of special educational needs. Teachers are aware of those pupils who they need to monitor because they might have learning difficulties. Teachers are also aware of the levels of need of those already identified. In lessons work is planned to meet their needs. Highly skilled and well-qualified classroom assistants effectively support these pupils in small group work as they plan alongside teachers.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and inclusive, meeting the needs of all the pupils. All statutory requirements are met, including those related to religious education which is planned in accordance with the Suffolk locally agreed syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage gives Nursery and Reception children a good range of experiences.
- Many visits and visitors and extra curricular activities enrich the curriculum.
- Provision for special educational needs pupils is good and effective support gives them good access to the curriculum.
- Accommodation is very good with additional facilities such as a swimming pool and pond area for environmental work.

Commentary

18. The curriculum allows pupils to achieve well across the school. Learning experiences are made interesting and there is a strong emphasis in many subjects on learning through practical activities. This motivates the pupils and makes them more willing and eager to learn. All relevant statutory requirements are met including the provision of religious education and collective worship. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to support learning in other subjects. Teachers plan a broad programme for personal, social and health education, including sex and drug education. The school is inclusive in its approach to offering all pupils access to activities and equal opportunities.
19. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants plan alongside teachers and are adept at modifying the work so pupils with special educational needs can meet their learning targets in lessons at their own level. Classroom and support assistants are all well qualified, and many are highly skilled. Between them they have a very wide range of specific expertise and all have a very good understanding of how to help pupils with different learning difficulties. The accommodation is used very well to support pupils with special educational needs.
20. In all subjects planning is based on a two year cycle because of the mixed age groups in each class. This helps to ensure continuity and progression of skills and to prevent pupils revisiting the same topic in following years. The topics have been agreed with the other local schools so that when the pupils change schools all have new work to cover. In some year groups subjects are allocated blocks of time to allow a greater period for each subject. Throughout their planning, teachers endeavour to make meaningful links with other areas of the curriculum, for example, good use is made of information and communication technology to explore different styles of painting in art and design lessons.
21. Teachers provide a rich and varied programme of learning opportunities for all the pupils including a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including art club, games, chess, recorders and French. All these are open to both boys and girls. During term time enrichment opportunities include a range of visits to local museums and art galleries, a visiting theatre group and the vicar regularly visits to lead assemblies or to talk to the pupils about his job. This he did with very good effect to the Reception class during the inspection. Along with other visits related to history and geography these activities help to enhance and enrich the pupils' curriculum and increase their understanding of the world around them.
22. The accommodation is very good and includes an outdoor swimming pool and a pond area. There is a good range of resources particularly for information and communication technology. Teacher expertise is shared in Years 3 and 4 for science, dance, art and music and benefits the pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides well for the pupils' welfare, health and safety. Support, advice and guidance are good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and valuing their views is good overall. Induction procedures are good and help the youngest children settle quickly into school routines.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are well cared for in a positive, supportive and safe learning environment.
- The pupils' personal and academic performance is monitored well but there is no forum or school council to more formally seek the views of pupils.

Commentary

23. The school has a robust and effective health and safety policy that includes regular site inspections by governors and staff, annual risk assessments and equipment checks and fire practices. Child protection procedures follow local guidelines and the members of staff are aware of their responsibilities with particularly good tracking procedures for identifying any concerns.
24. The pupils quickly establish good and trusting relationships with adults who teach and support them in school. This helps the pupils to gain confidence and contributes well to building a positive learning environment where the pupils achieve well, have concerns for others and feel happy and secure. Consequently, there are very few incidents of oppressive behaviour and no evidence of racism or racially motivated attitudes.
25. The monitoring of the pupils' academic progress and its use varies throughout the school. It is good in the Foundation stage and in Years 3 and 4 but is not as effective for target setting in Years 1 and 2 to provide individual learning targets. Older pupils in years 3 and 4 are well supported through monitoring and by very good marking which effectively informs the pupils about their learning and how they can improve. The pupils' personal development is monitored carefully throughout the school. Teachers' assessment files are updated regularly and individual pupils' files contain very good information about personal details that contribute toward explaining how well the pupils are doing. The pupils who have special educational needs are supported well.
26. Although there is no school council, the pupils' views are valued and acted upon. For example, the pupils have suggested using a buddy system; having lunchtime technology and chess clubs and are actively involved when the school organises charity fund raising for good causes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents and pupils hold very positive views of the school.
- The school provides very good information for parents about the progress their children make in school.
- The parents receive very good information about the curriculum of the school.

Commentary

27. Parents hold the school in high regard. All those returning pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that their children liked school, that staff expected the pupils to work hard and do their best, and that the pupils were treated fairly and were encouraged to become mature and independent. Less than one in ten parents expressed concerns over specific issues such as being kept well informed, bullying and seeking parents' views. All the pupils surveyed during the pre-inspection period agreed that lessons are interesting and fun when they have the opportunity to find out new things. The inspection confirms all these positive views. Communication with parents was found to be a major strength as was the ethos of the school. The pupils thrive in a happy and positive learning environment. Whilst parents' views may not

be formally canvassed by the school, it is an open and accessible school that encourages the parents to participate at all times and arranges three well attended parent consultation evenings each year.

28. Information about the pupils' attainment and progress is very good. Annual pupil reports give clear views of their progress and share advice on how to further improve their performance. All parents are frequently provided with an array of curriculum information that enables them to support their children's education at home. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in reviews of their child's individual education plans.
29. At the termly consultation evenings, parents are kept up to date on the progress their children make. In addition, there is an open day each year when parents can experience a typical working day and see for themselves the work their children do. Parents confirm that the school is always willing to discuss concerns and that problems are quickly and effectively resolved. There is good written information about all aspects of school life.
30. Benefits arising from community links include coaching by local sports clubs; help with building works; and the public display of pupils' work in a local art gallery. The pupils go out into the community, for example, when singing for elderly residents and when they attend services at All Saints church. Parents and grandparents regularly come into school to help with reading or when they have particular skills or topics to discuss. Links with local schools lead to joint in-service training for staff with guest speakers invited. Transfer arrangements and curriculum continuity are assisted by the close links that exist with the feeder middle school. Work experience opportunities are provided for secondary school students who are interested in Nursery nursing or child care as a career.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership is very good and has resulted in high expectations set by the staff; a clear vision that provides a sense of purpose and direction for the school.
- The whole staff and governors work as a team to monitor teaching and learning and ensure that all pupils are making progress and doing as well as they can.
- The period of instability and change, the appointment of staff, and curriculum development have been managed well resulting in improving standards.
- The management of finances and use of resources are good.

Commentary

31. The headteacher and governors have dealt with some difficult staffing issues and have now established a team approach to management. The analysis of information from test results and assessments give a clear insight into how the different age groups are doing and the progress they are making. As a result of effective monitoring of teaching, learning and the standards achieved, and in consultation with subject leaders, the school has clear priorities for improvements that are ambitious and realistic and will help to raise standards further. After recognising a decline in standards for a brief period in Years 1 and 2 in mathematics and science, the headteacher and senior staff have targeted support for specific groups of pupils and adapted the teaching to improve standards. This has reversed the trend of decline and transformed this to a sustained picture of improvement and rising standards. Step by step the headteacher has managed to galvanise his new staff team by focusing on improving literacy skills across the ability range. This has unlocked one of the major barriers to pupils' learning and improved standards markedly in all subjects including mathematics and science.

32. The governors are very supportive and involved in the work of the school and its place in the local community. They fully understand the strengths of the school and work hard to overcome problems and weaknesses. This has led to a number of successful appointments to both teaching and support staff, and to very important improvements to the school building, for example, the information and communication technology room. The governing body has a good range of expertise and is well organised into committees that ensure that there is an effective strategic influence on the school improvement plan.
33. Subject leadership is well developed for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In addition there is very good leadership for information and communication technology and standards have risen in all subjects of the curriculum. The teamwork and shared responsibility are very much part of the ethos and the inclusive approach of the school. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection. There are good staff development opportunities and they are linked to performance management. Management of the school's financial resources is good. The governors take a keen interest in the principles of best value in their management and are quite prepared to take the difficult decisions necessary to increase the value for money. This has led to prudent budget management to maintain staffing levels with a good team of teachers and support staff.
34. The provision for special educational needs is also well managed by an experienced teacher who was appointed during this school year. The school is very committed to providing for pupils with all types of learning difficulties and is successful in implementing and coordinating a variety of strategies to help pupils to learn. Records and assessments are carefully maintained. Legal requirements are met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	362,044
Total expenditure	376,402
Expenditure per pupil	2,091

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,358
Balance carried forward to the next	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and is a major strength of the school. Children are admitted into the Nursery three times a year and at the same time the older children move into the Reception class. At the time of the inspection there were 26 children attending the Nursery part-time, of whom, 8 were Reception age children. In the Reception class there were 23 children. Both classes have a teacher and a teaching assistant. The Foundation Stage classrooms are spacious and light and have access to a secure outdoor play area.
36. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with the standards expected of children this age but some have poor speaking skills when they come to school and many have difficulty understanding numbers. By the end of their Reception year the children are on course to achieve the expected levels. However there are a few who will not and have already been identified with special educational needs.
37. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children means they are provided with a wide range of experiences in all areas of learning. This ensures they make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals (nationally agreed levels for children at the end of the Reception year). Planning is closely linked to these goals. However, the Nursery teacher offers limited experiences to those children of Reception age in the Nursery to ensure they have a similar curriculum to their peers in the Reception class. This is an area for further development of which the teacher is well aware. Relationships are very good and ensure that the children feel secure and able to ask questions. The teachers' enthusiasm motivates the children to succeed. There has been good progress in all areas of learning since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. This is reflected in the way children are learning to respect each other, share resources, take turns and play together.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance the children's development and the majority are on course to achieve the expected levels by the end of the Reception year.
- The children achieve well because of good teaching.
- Very good relationships are being established so children feel happy and secure.

Commentary

38. The majority of children find it easy to conform to the high expectations of good behaviour set by the staff although a few of the youngest children in the Nursery do not do so as yet. Children know the routines well and settle quickly to tasks with the minimum of fuss particularly in the Reception class. The children are well focused and interested in the tasks provided, concentrate well, share resources, even when not directly supervised and are eager to learn. A calm working atmosphere pervades most sessions. The very good teamwork of all adults provides the children with good role models for cooperation. All adults expect children to listen carefully and respect the thoughts of others, however, occasionally children are very excited or over enthusiastic and call out. Because of supportive relationships children are confident to ask for help and feel secure, consequently they enjoy coming to school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and helps to ensure children achieve well.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop their language skills and extend their vocabulary.
- A good range of planned activities also helps children develop their reading and writing skills.

Commentary

39. Despite some children entering school with poor language skills most are on course to reach the expected levels. However, there are a few children who will struggle to achieve this and they are already identified as having special educational needs. Children make good progress in developing their language skills as a result of the opportunities provided for speaking and listening. In the Reception class many children are becoming articulate and confident speakers often replying to questions in complex sentences. All staff take every opportunity during both directed and free choice activities to develop vocabulary through probing questions. Children are expected to listen respectfully and only talk when it is their turn. Most do this well. Children enjoy sharing stories and are making good progress towards reading. They all handle books carefully and turn pages appropriately in the Nursery. Reception children are beginning to recognise familiar words and to sound out words they do not know. The higher attaining children use this skill more effectively than the less capable. Children use picture clues to help them tell the story and enjoy talking about their favourite stories and rhymes. All children have opportunities, whether in the Nursery or Reception classes, to explore writing. They begin by making marks on paper to recognise the first letter of the words in the sentence, and finally recognisable words. Children were observed doing well making cards, writing shopping lists and recording topic work. In more formal lessons children are taught how to form letters correctly. This represents good progress and achievement from the time they start Nursery.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall so children make good progress and achieve well.
- Every opportunity is utilised to encourage children to develop their counting skills.
- A wide range of activities is offered to support this area of learning so children become more confident.

Commentary

40. The consistently good teaching, particularly in the Reception class, enables the children to reach the expected levels. This represents very good achievement in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Adults use every opportunity to develop children's counting skills, even when sorting shapes. The Reception teacher uses questioning very well to extend children's knowledge and understanding, ensuring all children have a chance to answer. Because of good relationships children are confident to respond to questions and give detailed answers. For example, in a mathematics lesson children carefully explained why a triangle was so called and talked about the sides of a rectangle being different lengths. Children recognise simple two dimensional shapes by name. The need to use appropriate vocabulary is stressed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **good**. A wide range of topics and visitors help the children to know more about the world in which they live.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and work scrutiny shows a wide range of relevant experiences being provided for the children.
- Children have good opportunities to develop their computer skills.

Commentary

41. Most children are on course to reach the expected level. They achieve well because the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection children in the Reception class explored fruit first hand, initially guessing what it would be like inside and finding words to describe what they saw. In another session the local vicar brought a variety of artefacts to show the children and to help explain his role in the church. The children were fascinated by all he had to say and demonstrated their knowledge of the church and Christianity by talking about Jesus and his life. Computer skills are developing well and most children observed using computers demonstrated very good mouse control as they moved the cursor around the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy a range of activities including dance and gymnastics and these experiences help them achieve the expected levels.

Commentary

42. No lessons in this area of learning were observed with Nursery age children but two were seen with Reception children. Most are on course to reach the expected levels. The children make good progress and achieve well. Their spatial awareness is developing as is their body control, for example, when running around the hall they can stop when asked and balance on various parts of their bodies. They then transferred the balances to the apparatus. Health and safety when carrying apparatus is stressed. The quality of teaching is good as the children are given many opportunities to develop pencil control through specifically designed worksheets or colouring. Other activities encourage them to use scissors and cut out carefully. The outdoor play area is regularly used and different activities are planned to cover areas of learning. This adds another dimension to the children's physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures that children enjoy participating in the lessons and are on course to achieve the expected levels.

Commentary

43. Only one music lesson was observed during the inspection, none relating to other art forms. Children enjoy music and especially like choosing percussion instruments to represent farm animals. They sing with enthusiasm beginning each day with a song. Opportunities to explore different media are planned for and they include clay, paints and collage. The role-play areas are very popular; presently a hospital in the Nursery and a shop in the Reception class, and both are used during free choice time. These areas also help the children develop the skills of playing together and socialising. The pupils reach the standards expected for their age and the quality of teaching is good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 4 and this reflects very good achievement over time.
- The teaching is good overall and is very good in Years 3 and 4 where expectations are particularly high.
- Speaking, listening and reading skills are developing very well across the school.
- Writing development is very effective throughout the school because teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to explore a broad range of extended forms of writing.

Commentary

44. The pupils make very good progress over time and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. Changes to the teaching staff in the last two years have had a significant impact on standards and how well the pupils achieve in English. Consequently, standards have improved markedly over the last two years and the pupils achieve very well including those with special educational needs. The teaching and support for those pupils who have moderate learning difficulties is particularly effective and this is most evident in the way the pupils grow in confidence when speaking in class discussions or when working with a partner or in a group. For example, in a good lesson in Year 1 and 2, the pupils recognised spelling patterns and were encouraged to share these with the class. The teaching assistant was on hand to support those with moderate learning difficulties. This enabled the pupils to participate fully in the class discussion and develop confidence in speaking to others in a group. Good use is made of traditional stories. In another good Year 1 and 2 lesson thoughtful discussion and imaginative writing about characters in two modern versions of Jack and the Beanstalk led to more able pupils writing about the features of each character and how these contrasted with the other version of the story.
45. The pupils start school with standards that are typical for their age. By the time they finish Year 2, standards are above average so they have made good progress from the Foundation Stage. The progress the pupils make in Years 3 and 4 continues to be good and so the pupils reach standards that are well above those expected by the end of Year 4. The teaching in Years 3 and 4 is very good because it sets very high expectations and helps the pupils to use their well established literacy skills well. This is demonstrated in the very good range of writing that both Year 3 and Year 4 pupils produce. It is also reflected in the broad range of reading the pupils choose which shows maturity and a genuine enthusiasm for reading. Speaking and listening skills, like those in Years 1 and 2, are also developed very well in Years 3 and 4. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the pupils were asked to identify instructional texts. They quickly

recorded key words on individual white boards and then were asked to explain a sequence of events such as brushing ones teeth. Very good use of information and communication technology developed the lesson further as the pupils reinforced their understanding of editing using word processing skills. Both activities were closely linked to developing extended forms of writing and in particular factual accounts using real events or incidents that are familiar to the pupils.

46. Reading skills are systematically developed and very well supported by parents, so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 the pupils achieve very well. Reading is regularly practised and teachers track the progress of the pupils closely. Consequently, the pupils read with accuracy and confidence by the time they start Year 3. Parents often volunteer and help pupils to practise reading aloud every day. Reading is also very well supported at home so that reading diaries and records are kept that involve recording feedback from parents who help their children at home. In Years 3 and 4, reading is extended further so that the pupils experience a full range of skills and activities that include fiction, non-fiction and research. Again, much of the work is helped by the use of computers so that information and communication technology is very well linked to literacy and the development of reading skills.
47. The school has given high priority to developing independent and extended forms of writing. This has been successful, as it is evident from the broad range of writing across the school that the pupils achieve very well. Consequently, they reach standards that are well above those expected for their age by the end of Year 4. The development of writing is also helping the pupils to write independently in other subjects. Year 1 and 2 pupils write legibly and accurately and are growing in confidence as they write stories, factual accounts and answer questions on worksheets using complete and accurate sentences. By the end of Year 4, the pupils write imaginative stories, poetry and descriptive accounts of visits or events. During the inspection Year 4 pupils were adapting their own versions of an imaginative story to be read by younger pupils. They produced book covers using graphics and word processing skills on computers. This demonstrated a very good range of literacy skills which also included editing, re-drafting and note-taking skills adapted from story maps that were produced in previous lessons. The quality of this work is outstanding for Year 4 pupils.
48. Teachers throughout the school have a very good knowledge of how the pupils develop their literacy skills. They implement the National Literacy Strategy imaginatively and very well to extend the pupils' learning. Assessments of the pupils are accurate and systematic so that teachers plan work that is closely matched to the pupils' abilities and stage of development. Marking is precise and very informative. It provides useful pointers for the pupils as to how to improve their work further. The pupils also record what they have learned using a checklist that is attached to their writing books. In this way the pupils understand their own learning and the steps towards higher levels and skills. The leadership and management of English are very good. The coordinator has a very good grasp of standards and regularly checks work with the headteacher and senior staff to ensure that the pupils are making enough progress. The library is very well stocked with a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books. Together with a very well equipped information and communication technology room, they make a significant contribution towards helping the pupils to develop their literacy and research skills. This is also having a significant impact on the development of reading and writing skills across the school. A full-time teaching assistant who is based in the computer room provides excellent and skilful support by ensuring that the pupils have access to computers and research materials like CD-ROMs, library books and the Internet.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The pupils make very good use of literacy skills in other subjects. There are many examples in their writing of descriptive accounts of periods in history, of people and places in geography and of special books of religious significance and Bible stories in religious education. Poetry is used well to enhance art and design and this is attractively displayed around the school. For instance, winter scenes representing observational portraits, sketches and collages are

displayed alongside a very good range of poetry and descriptive writing. As described above, much of the work that pupils do in other subjects involves the use of computers and technology such as the Internet and electronic mailing (e-mail). Literacy skills are used very well to develop and explore further computer skills and new technology such as the Internet, desk-top publishing, word-processed editing and graphic modelling.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are improving and are above average by the end of Year 4.
- The pupils achieve well because the teaching is good, although target setting in Years 1 and 2 is not precise enough to inform teachers' planning.
- The pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have enough opportunities to undertake problem solving tasks independently.
- Very good use is made of information and communication technology to enhance and support the pupils' learning in mathematics.

Commentary

50. The teaching is good throughout the school and standards are rising well as a result. Years 1 and 2 teachers build on the good foundations laid in the Nursery and Reception classes. As the pupils move through the school, they continue to do well because teachers' planning is well structured and usually takes account of the progress the pupils make. However, target setting in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has not been as accurate as that seen in Years 3 and 4. This is partly because the baseline assessments in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) do not provide an accurate steer to the likely or predicted standards the pupils are capable of by the end of Year 2. The school has recognised this and, with the help and support of the mathematics coordinator, teachers have begun to implement sharper assessments that provide Year 1 and 2 teachers with the likely standards the pupils are capable of achieving. In this way the pupils are grouped by ability in mathematics lessons and tasks are well matched to their abilities. Recent appointments to the teaching staff have influenced the impact on the pupils' achievements markedly. Already there are signs that standards are rising well, for example, Year 2 pupils are currently in line to reach the standards expected for their age. This is a significant improvement on the past two years where standards have been below average. This improvement in standards clearly coincides with much more effective teaching as the targets for the current Year 1 pupils show that they are likely to exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and so continue the trend of rising standards. Standards by the end of Year 4 are above those expected because there are many opportunities for the pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding to practical problems.
51. Throughout the school, the pupils develop a good understanding of numbers and number operations. Teachers ensure that they learn the correct mathematical vocabulary and the strong emphasis on mental mathematics helps the pupils to have a good recall of number facts. Year 1 and 2 pupils can count forwards and backwards in 2s, 5s and tens and many can count in 20s and 50s with confidence. In a highly effective lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils were motivated to better their own personal records as they completed a timed number test which required them to complete the number square using multiplication and division facts. In all year groups, the pupils can describe shapes, use a variety of measures, and can estimate with reasonable accuracy distances, volumes and other forms of measure.
52. The quality of teaching is good with some highly effective teaching in Years 3 and 4. Throughout the school, there is a good balance of practical whole class work and individual or group work that enables teachers and support staff to help and guide the pupils' learning. In

Years 3 and 4, the pupils are grouped by ability and this is having a significant impact on the achievement of all the pupils across the ability range. Good use is made of assessment information in Years 3 and 4 to help teachers plan lessons that build on previous learning. These assessments are regular and help to predict learning targets for the pupils. However, until recently, the targets in Years 1 and 2 have not been accurate or precise enough to guide teachers' planning. Recent changes to the teaching staff and effective intervention by the very effective mathematics coordinator have resulted in improvements to this so that standards in Years 1 and 2 are rising accordingly. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. Improvements to the teaching have also helped to provide consistency in the way teachers help the pupils to understand their own learning. This is best reflected in teachers' marking which is informative, supportive and provides a steer to the pupils as to how to improve their work further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop their problem solving skills. This is more evident in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 1 and 2. However, all year groups use mathematics to support the pupils learning in other subjects. In information and communication technology for example, spreadsheets, graphs, tables and simple matrices are used to record data and, in the case of spreadsheets in Year 3 and 4, to calculate totals and averages. In geography the pupils record data about populations and other demographic information. Year 4 pupils were researching information about London to establish the best routes that could be taken and others were finding out how popular London transport was compared with the use of private vehicles to commute in and out of London. Good use is made of the pupils' knowledge of weights and measures in design and technology as they weigh ingredients before cooking or measure nets when designing food packages.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 4 are above average. However, standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 because few pupils achieve the higher levels.
- The use of teacher expertise in Years 3 and 4 ensures good quality teaching and good achievement.
- Up to now, the monitoring of science has been unsatisfactory as it has not had an impact on pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

54. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 show that standards in science were below average. The achievement of pupils in the current Year 2 is satisfactory, and standards are broadly average, an improvement on 2003, although fewer pupils are on course to achieve the higher levels. From work seen standards by the end of Year 4 are above average and pupils are achieving well. There is a noticeable difference in the standards of written recording between the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 and the older ones in Years 3 and 4. There is a lack of consistency in the way experiments are recorded, making it more difficult for the younger pupils to achieve the higher levels and to explore in depth scientific principles.
55. The pupils enjoy their science lessons particularly when they gain first hand knowledge through practical experiments. They are responsive to teachers' questions and well motivated to remain focused on the tasks set. Year 3 and 4 pupils work very well together, sharing resources and ideas. These pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well. The

pupils in Years 1 and 2 also enjoy science but do not remain so well focused when the lesson is too long. Consequently, progress and achievement remain satisfactory.

56. The quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good and that in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Learning is enhanced by the use of one teacher, with expertise in science, to deliver the subject to all Year 3 and 4 pupils. This ensures continuity and progression in the development of relevant skills. Questioning is used effectively to assess pupils' learning and to extend their understanding. The school's programme of study covers all elements of the science curriculum and is based on a two year cycle to accommodate mixed age classes. There is a major strength in the way teachers plan together and share their expertise. However, lessons are not sufficiently tailored to meet the needs of each year group, particularly in the two Year 1 and 2 classes. Occasionally this results in a mismatch of content and expectations. For example, much of the work seen in Years 1 and 2 is based on the same work sheet, providing insufficient challenge for more able pupils. By contrast, in Years 3 and 4 there are more appropriate challenges and expectations for pupils of different abilities so standards are rising and pupils are making good progress. Where teaching assistants are used they effectively support the learning of pupils who have been identified with special educational needs, enabling them to access and complete the task set.
57. The recently appointed subject leader has had insufficient time to make an impact. She is aware that standards in Year 2 do not match those in other core subjects and that the quality of recording needs further development and so these areas are a priority for development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- Information and communication technology is playing an important role in the teaching and learning across the school.
- The subject is very well managed and resources well used to ensure that the pupils make good progress.

Commentary

58. The school has made good progress since the last inspection developing and improving the information and communication technology curriculum. From the work that the pupils do in the information and communication technology room and at other times in a range of subjects, it is clear that standards are above those expected throughout the school. The pupils achieve well in most lessons and printed work displayed around the school indicates that the pupils are making good use of their information and communication technology skills to help their learning in other subjects. The work includes for example, Year 3 and 4 pupils designing book covers for their stories using desk top publishing and modelling skills. They demonstrated how well they had acquired skills such as word processing and graphics and were adept at combining these to edit and improve the presentation of their book covers skilfully and with confidence.
59. The teaching is good with particularly skilful support and teaching provided by the full-time teaching assistant who is assigned to manage and teach in the information and communication technology room. This is a very effective and efficient use of the school's resources as teachers and support staff fully utilise computers, the projector and programmable robotic devices to support the pupils' learning across the full range of the information and communication technology curriculum. The teaching is clearly having an impact on pupils' learning so that, for example, the pupils can observe demonstrations of advanced word processing skills or the use of hyperlinks when using the Internet to research

information. In this way the pupils learn information and communication technology skills and knowledge beyond their years.

60. The pupils achieve well because there is a cross-curricular approach to information and communication technology and the teaching is particularly skilled at combining the skills the pupils acquire with those in other subjects. This was best demonstrated when Year 4 pupils used the robotic devices to investigate plane shapes. The tasks included problem solving and more able pupils were particularly intrigued by the problems posed when attempting to program the robots to produce common shapes. The work extended their understanding of interior and exterior angles in shapes and reinforced their mathematical understanding as well as extended their information and communication technology skills further.
61. The very good leadership and management of the subject combined with the very effective support provided by the teaching assistant in the information and communication technology room has helped the school to improve the subject further. The pupils, teachers, parents and governors have all played an important part in improving resources through fund-raising as well as the active support of the community and parents who built and developed the school's information and communication technology room and resources. The subject coordinator is highly skilled at deploying resources and helping the staff to develop their skills and this has improved the professional competence of teachers and other support staff. The governors often invite subject coordinators to present to them the development of the subject and this provides them with information about how well the pupils and staff are doing after investing in new resources. This was observed during the inspection when the information and communication technology coordinator presented the governors with a highly professional demonstration of how the latest resources in the information and communication technology room are being used. The session then went on to provide the governors with an opportunity to try for themselves some of the tasks the pupils undertake in lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. The school makes good use of information and communication technology across a broad range of subjects. There are good examples of information and communication technology being used in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. These include imaginative and descriptive accounts presented using a good range of word processing skills. The Internet and electronic mailing are used to good effect to help the pupils find information, for example, about London Transport as part of their geography topic or about castles in history.

HUMANITIES

63. In history two lessons were observed and discussions were held with pupils to discuss the work seen in their workbooks. In geography and history, the work covers topics and themes that are organised to provide opportunities for the pupils to experience skills that are common to both subjects and integrated with other subjects. There is a strong emphasis on cross-curricular links with English through written accounts and research that improves the pupils reading skills. Mathematics skills are also well used as the pupils use mapping and measuring skills. Art and design is used to good effect to help the pupils develop their observation skills and this is demonstrated in the displays of pupils' drawings and observational sketches and illustrations.
64. Only one **geography** lessons was observed and it is not possible to make specific judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in that subject. However, from the work seen in pupils' books and displays of topics covered previously, provision is good links made with other subjects. Information and communication technology is used well in geography as the pupils use computers to look up information on CD-ROMs and the Internet in support of their geography work.

History

Provision for this subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum with strong links to other subjects.
- The teaching provides the pupils with exciting and varied tasks that motivate and enthuse the pupils and make learning fun.

Commentary

65. The pupils enjoy their history lessons. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils explore castles using a computer simulation. They find out how people lived in the Middle Ages and how castles were used to protect towns and villages. Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and the pupils achieve well, particularly in using their literacy skills to write descriptive accounts of life in past times. In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, the teacher told a story about people living in the grounds of a fortified town and the pupils asked questions and recounted their knowledge of castles and the role that different people played.
66. Lessons start with stimulating discussions that evoke thoughtful questions from the pupils. The pupils' books show detailed illustrations and written accounts of periods such as Ancient Greece, the Middle Ages and familiar stories about the role that famous people in the past played such as that of Florence Nightingale. The pupils use a very good range of sources for information such as the Internet, reference books and other non-fiction accounts of periods in history.
67. The quality of teaching is good and the pupils achieve well. Teachers have high expectations and this is reflected in the consistently good standards of recorded work in the pupils' books. History and geography are made interesting through the use of special visitors or when undertaking visits to special places of interest. The subject is well led and managed and the coordinator ensures that resources are updated and available to the pupils. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected and the pupils make good progress.
- Good use is made of school assemblies, visits and visitors to enhance and support the pupils' learning.

Commentary

68. By Years 2 and 4 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education exceeds the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils' achievements are good and the school has done well since the last inspection to improve the range of work covered. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils can recall important facts about the life of Jesus and their books show that they write independently about festivals and traditions of other religions such as the Hindu festival of Diwali. Year 3 and 4 pupils have covered work on the stories Jesus told, the Torah and Judaism and have a good understanding of the different ways that people celebrate. The pupils have a good understanding of different places of worship. The school also uses resources well and especially the skills of local people and special visitors to enhance the

pupils' understanding of other major religions, customs and cultures. A Chinese parent was observed teaching Years 3 and 4 about the festival of Chinese New Year; they included in their demonstration a very good range of materials and artefacts used by Chinese communities in Britain. The pupils enjoyed learning to count in Chinese and were fascinated with facts about Buddhism and the story about the origins of the Chinese New Year.

69. In the lessons observed, teaching was good overall with some very good features. Teachers prepare good quality lessons and have a secure knowledge of the religions being taught. Throughout the school, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing a good understanding of Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Christianity and are building up an associated vocabulary with a good understanding of symbolism in religions. Resources, including pictures, books and artefacts, are used well and create interest in the subject. The subject is well managed and the curriculum is well linked to other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Only one design and technology lessons was observed, and three in music. The music included an observation of the choir being taught by a music specialist. A range of completed work in design and technology was inspected. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not a main focus of the inspection but were sampled. Insufficient evidence in design and technology and in music is available to make judgements about provision standards and achievement, teaching, learning and leadership.
71. In **design and technology** one lesson was seen but this was more closely linked to science rather than design and technology. Photographic evidence showed pupils involved in a range of projects. Although pupils record their projects there was little evidence of a written evaluation of the final outcome. This is an area for further development.
72. The teaching in the **music** lessons observed were mainly good and the pupils enjoyed their singing sessions in the music room. The school has good resources for music. Various visiting instrumental teachers and the use of the coordinator who teaches music to other classes considerably enhances music provision. The coordinator is having a positive impact on music across the school and this also reflects how well the school utilises the subject skills of its staff who often teach other classes as well as their own.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Years 2 and 4 are above expectations.
- The quality of teaching is good and provides pupils with opportunities to study a wide variety of famous artists and develop different techniques.
- Very good use is made of information and communication technology to provide another media for pupils to explore picture making.
- The knowledge and enthusiasm of the subject leader has had a positive effect on standards.

Commentary

73. The pupils experience a variety of media as they work in the style of different artists. They explore colour mixing using primary and secondary colours, create interesting collages and experience using clay. The pupils achieve well and demonstrate considerable knowledge about a number of famous artists. All pupils enjoy art and design and are very focused during

lessons; consequently, work of a good standard is produced. Pupils take pride in their work, being especially pleased when it is displayed on the walls.

74. The quality of teaching across the school is good and provides the pupils with opportunities to study a number of artists. The pupils try to emulate the artists' work with some degree of success, for example, the well crafted paintings in the style of Van Gogh, or the circle patterns in the style of Kandinski. The expertise of the subject leader is effectively used and both classes in Year 3 and 4 benefit from her knowledge and enthusiasm. This motivates the pupils and has a positive impact on learning and achievement. In most lessons pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate each other's pictures and to comment on what has been successful.
75. Information and communication technology is regularly and very effectively used as another media for drawing pictures, for example, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 drew pictures in the style of Vaserelly using "Dazzle" the computer paint program. The results were very interesting. Younger pupils used a programmable robot to draw different coloured lines as part of their exploration of the work of Bridget Riley.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**. The school has good facilities including a learner swimming pool.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in dance and gymnastics are above expectations by the age of seven and at the end of Year 4.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons very much and are responsive to the teachers' demands.
- The quality of teaching is good so pupils make good progress developing the relevant skills.

Commentary

76. In the lessons seen the focus was either on dance or gymnastics rather than ball skills, so it was not possible to make a judgement about standards overall. However, in the areas observed standards were above expectations. Pupils interpreted the music with appropriate movements and wonderful facial expressions in good dance lessons. Even the youngest pupils used their faces to show happiness, anger, or cheekiness as they pretended to be the comic characters. The older pupils' successfully portrayed the Iron Man very dramatically through their body language and expressions. The youngest pupils demonstrated how well they could control their bodies as they held a variety of balances. All pupils enjoy physical activities and the majority give of their best. They are well focused on the tasks set and respond positively to the high expectations of their teachers.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is good consequently pupils achieve well and make good progress as they develop their movement sequences in dance and gymnastics. Although tapes are used for some of the sessions, teachers use them well, pausing frequently to ensure pupils know what to do and to allow demonstrations. Because relationships are good pupils are happy to share their work with their peers. A good range of extra-curricular activities encourage pupils to develop their skills further as part of a team.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. Only one personal, social and health education lessons was seen during the inspection. This was a good lesson for Year 1 pupils and demonstrated how the school has developed a well-structured programme of units that are carefully planned using interesting topics and themes. Topics are often linked to whole school themes, assemblies and to topics in religious education. In the lesson seen, the pupils talked and wrote about being safe in the sun. Good

use of visual prompts, illustrations and a storybook helped the pupils to relate to a fictional character called Kesby. The pupils drew and wrote about different ways to make Kesby safe on a hot day when on holiday. This lesson and others seen in other subjects provide many opportunities for the pupils to share ideas, to listen to others and to respect their point of view. Personal, social and health education lessons and those in most other subjects help to raise self-esteem and confidence especially when pupils speak to a group or the whole class. Good use is made of drama and role-play to help the pupils relate to the views of others and to prompt questions.

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	3
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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