

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ivybridge

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113255

Headteacher: Mr J M Stephens

Lead inspector: Miss M A Warner

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th October 2003

Inspection number: 256840

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	317
School address:	Manor Way Ivybridge Devon
Postcode:	PL21 9BG
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Wilson
Date of previous inspection:	8 th to 12 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Manor Primary School, situated not far from the Devon coast and moors, had 284 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection and is similar in size to most primary schools nationally. During the inspection, 15 older children had started in the Foundation class (Reception class), with younger children expected to start later in the year. Since September 2001, the school has included a base for six autistic pupils, aged four to seven. In all, five per cent of pupils in the school have formal statements of need, and 25 per cent are on the special educational needs register. Both these figures are above the national averages. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds with two per cent coming from other white or Black Caribbean backgrounds. The number of pupils joining the school during the year is well above the national average and the number leaving is average. The socio-economic context of the school is average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Foundation class is at present above average, although in previous years it has been broadly average by the end of the year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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1165	P Dannheisser	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
17693	E Digby	<i>Team inspector</i>	English
22831	C Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology Geography and history Art Music Physical education Foundation Stage
21510	L Phillips	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Manor Primary School provides an effective education and satisfactory value for money. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and, in the Foundation class, it is good. By Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach standards that are average overall, and above average in English and science. Currently, the shortcomings in the accommodation affect the curriculum and pupils' achievements. Much rebuilding is at present in progress and the school is making successful efforts to overcome the problems associated with these building works. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Overall leadership, governance and the management of the school are all good, as is the quality of teaching and learning. The recently adopted vision of a wider curriculum has improved the quality of education but has not yet had an impact on standards. Progression within subjects is not yet clearly defined and implemented so that pupils of all abilities reach their full potential, particularly the more able, older pupils in the mixed ability classes.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in science have been above average for the last three years.
- The leadership of the school is good, and relationships and teamwork throughout the school are a particular strength.
- The curriculum is a wide and particularly relevant to the pupils.
- Many extra-curricular activities add considerable breadth to the curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.
- Provision for pupils in the special educational needs base is very good.
- Assessment is not always used effectively to plan work for all pupils.
- Progression in the development of skills is not fully planned for in different subjects.

The school is as effective as it was at the last inspection and improvement has been satisfactory. Standards are rising in information and communication technology (ICT) and a new computer suite is planned for the near future. The provisional outdoor play space for the Foundation class children is adequate, and Year 1 pupils are no longer taught with Foundation-aged children.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Standards in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage are generally slightly above average and children of this age achieve well. The large majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the school in Year 6. However, the 2003 results reflect a cohort in which there was a group of boys who were disaffected: they responded well to investigative and practical work but were difficult to motivate in English and mathematics. To combat these attitudes, the school adapted the way it taught the curriculum in order to maintain their interest, and the school's achievement in gaining the Activemark Gold Award from Sport England was a result of this cohort. In 2003, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that

were below those of similar schools in English and well below in mathematics. However, standards in science were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. Standards in English and science in the present Year 6 are above national expectations and are in line with national expectations in mathematics. Their achievement is satisfactory, overall.

Pupils' personal qualities are very positive and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attendance is above average and their attitudes and behaviour are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good and some aspects are very good: teachers' encouragement and engagement of pupils, the contribution that support staff make to pupils' learning and pupils' own application to their work and their ability to work collaboratively and independently. Whilst assessment is mainly thorough and constructive, the information provided is not well enough used to modify the work set for the highest-attaining, older pupils or to show pupils how they can improve their work. The care and welfare of pupils are very good: the school has planned carefully to minimise and eliminate any risk associated with the building work being undertaken. Induction procedures when children start school are very good and the school has very good procedures in place for seeking, valuing and acting upon pupils' views across the school. Relationships are very good throughout the school. The involvement of pupils in the work of the school is very good. The school has given considerable thought to how the curriculum should be delivered and has developed an 'active curriculum', based on providing pupils with first-hand experiences on which they build their knowledge and understanding of different subjects. Links between subjects are particularly effective. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well and has identified those who are gifted and talented in a range of subjects. Provision for pupils in the special educational needs base is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance and overall leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very effective as seen, for example, through the recent successful curriculum changes and the building developments in progress. However, these have not yet had time to make an impact on standards. The headteacher has created a positive and supportive climate for school improvement. He aspires to develop a stimulating learning community in which pupils develop independence and creativity. The management of the school is innovative and outward looking. The headteacher is well supported by other key staff and the Foundation class is particularly well led and managed. Governors are very well informed about the work of the school and many have a high level of involvement in its daily life and development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Nearly all parents consider that the school provides well for all aspects of their children's education. A few parents feel that the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in mixed-age classes. Pupils like and respect their teachers and enjoy coming to this school. They say that they are learning a great deal. The older ones are looking forward to the next stage of their education as links with the college are particularly strong.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve teachers' daily planning in mixed aged classes and in teaching groups by:
 - Using assessment data and National Curriculum levels more effectively to match work to different year groups, particularly for the more able pupils.*
 - Setting more challenging short-term individual targets for the older, more able pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. *
 - Ensuring that there is a clear progression in the development of skills, in each subject, from year to year.
- Ensure that religious education is taught for the time recommended by the locally Agreed Syllabus.

*The school has already identified these as areas to be developed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

In Year 2 and Year 6 the standards pupils reach are average, overall. Pupils' achievements in Years 2 and 6 are satisfactory. In 2001 and 2002, pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above them in science, although standards declined in 2003. Standards in English and science in the present Year 6 are above national expectations and are in line with them in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are above the national average and those of similar schools.
- Pupils' attainment in English, geography and history is above national expectations in both Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in mathematics are above national expectations in Year 2.
- There is some underachievement in the standards reached by more able pupils.
- There is limited recorded evidence of standards in religious education.

Commentary

1. The inspection took place in the autumn term when only 15 children had started in the Foundation class. Although overall attainment on entry to the school in recent years has been broadly in line with or slightly above national expectations, the attainment of the current children in the cohort is above national expectations in most areas of learning. Younger children have not yet started and no pupil, in the present class, has been identified as having special educational needs.

2. Standards are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals that children of this age are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language, literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development. They are on track to meet the expectations in their creative development. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (16.5)	15.9 (16)
Writing	16.3 (15.9)	14.8 (14.5)
Mathematics	17.2 (17.1)	16.4 (16.7)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Standards improved from one year to the next in all three subjects from 2001 to 2002. In 2003, 91 per cent of pupils achieved Level 2 or above in reading, 96 per cent in writing and 99 per cent in mathematics. In all three subjects pupils in the school achieved above and sometimes well above the national averages. In science, pupils' attainment was high.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (27.2)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.4 (27.1)	27.0 (26.6)
Science	28.3 (29.4)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. From 2001 to 2002, National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 improved in all three subjects, English, mathematics and science. In 2003, 72 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 4 or above in English, 62 per cent in mathematics and 96 per cent in science. These results were lower than before as there was a small group of pupils who were particularly hard to motivate, in spite of all the school's efforts. However the very good science results demonstrate these pupils' greater success when an investigative approach was used. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was below and sometimes well below the national average in all three subjects.

5. Inspection evidence shows that, currently, pupils' achievement across the whole school is satisfactory. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with national expectations, overall, and above expectations in language, literacy, science, geography and history. They are in line with national expectations in design and technology and ICT at the end of Years 2 and 6. Not enough evidence was seen to judge standards overall in art and design, religious education, music or physical education.

6. Boys' attainment was a focus of the inspection. In the lessons observed, and in the work seen, there was no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. In the science National Curriculum test in 2002, boys attained slightly higher standards than girls. The 'active' curriculum was introduced last year to support pupils in Year 6 where there was a substantial number of disaffected boys. The good standards maintained in science, where an investigative approach is promoted particularly well, supports this change in philosophy. This 'active' curriculum, together with the additional support that has been targeted towards improving boys' achievement is beginning to show success. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. The emphasis on improving literacy skills raises their self-esteem and their achievement in all subjects. Another focus of the inspection was the progress made by higher-attaining pupils. Whilst the younger, more able pupils in the mixed-aged classes are often achieving well, too little is planned for the older more able pupils to reach levels above the majority. Whilst management overall is good, management relating to the monitoring of teachers' daily planning with reference to the outcomes for this group of pupils is not rigorous enough. Teaching across the school is good, however, and a slight refinement to daily planning should address the needs of these pupils and raise their expectations and standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance levels are good and the school has been successful in promoting personal growth. Pupils are confident, friendly and considerate. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good and a strength of the school. Personal and social education has a high profile in the school and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attendance is good as is their punctuality.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good both in class and in the playground.
- Pupils' awareness of school's rules is reinforced through assemblies and personal and social education lessons. The school and class rules are well understood.
- Pupils take on responsibilities gladly. They are lively and friendly. They work and play well together.

Commentary

7. Pupils arrive on time. Unpublished attendance figures for 2002/3 show that attendance improved to over 95 per cent. Certificates are awarded for excellent attendance. A computerised system enables attendance records to be analysed so that the school knows where the problems lie, and it addresses them with support from the local education authority (LEA).

Attendance in the reporting year 2001/2 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.7	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence.

8. The school has successfully striven to avoid permanent exclusion. It has developed a very effective and consistent approach to behaviour, in partnership with parents. Pupils are in no doubt as to the school's expectations. Rewards and consequences are clearly understood and all pupils know about 'time out' and 'pink slips'. They are proud to show visitors their stickers for good work and behaviour, and keep careful track of the number they have earned. The school's focus on moral development is effective. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is very good. When all pupils are engaged, challenged and the pace of the lesson is good, their behaviour is excellent. The youngest children are able to settle down to work, they sit well at tables and on the carpet. Most pupils from the special educational needs base are encouraged to take part in activities in the main school and, because of the support they receive, behave well. All pupils with special educational needs have very focused targets on their individual educational plans (IEPs) and, as a result, they know what do to improve. Pupils behave very well around the school and are mindful of the needs of others. There are plenty of toys and games to play with at lunchtimes, which are now shorter than they were at the time of the last inspection. Before the inspection, one or two parents expressed concerns about lunchtime behaviour but these concerns were not borne out during the inspection.

9. Displays of art and objects from around the world reflect the fact that pupils are introduced to a wide range of cultures. This includes weeks when the school focuses on a particular culture and pupils take part in related activities. There are links with local churches and people visit from overseas. Older pupils exchange letters with Ethiopian pupils, as a result of a special link that has been made with that country. The pupils are keenly aware of these links and there are good displays which keep this lively connection in people's minds. In this way, although most pupils come from a similar background, they know that the country and the world have a rich and interesting variety of peoples and cultures.

10. The pupils are given responsibilities appropriate for their age. As a result, pupils are mature and confident. For example, they help to befriend younger pupils in need of company in the playground at lunchtime. They are given jobs around the school and in their classrooms. Pupils conscientiously look after games equipment at lunchtime, carefully booking them out and successfully retrieving them at the end of the session. The well-established school council gives many pupils the experience of making suggestions and influencing the thinking of their school. Pupils are consulted and have a strong sense of participation. For example, they were asked about changes in the timing of the school day. Older pupils provide good role models for the youngest. Large numbers of pupils take part in the wide range of clubs in the school and many pupils said that these were especially important to them.

11. All pupils who were spoken with during the inspection like being at school and parents confirmed this in their answers to the pre-inspection survey. This was also reflected in parents' views and in classrooms visited during the inspection. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors, confident, cheerful and lively. Assemblies meet statutory requirements and together with other aspects of school life contribute satisfactorily to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. There are strengths in almost all aspects and particular strengths in the curriculum and extra-curricular provision, in the care and welfare of pupils, and in the way the school acts on pupils' views. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Assessment in the Foundation Stage is used very well.
- Teachers encourage and engage pupils very well across the school, insisting on high standards of behaviour.
- Learning support assistants make a strong contribution to the progress pupils make.
- Teachers promote equal opportunities very well.
- Pupils work very well both independently and collaboratively.
- Teachers in Years 1 to 6 do not always use assessment effectively.
- The presentation of pupils' work, particularly in Foundation subjects, is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and there are examples of excellent teaching in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching is consistently very good in the Foundation year and is very good in one third of lessons in Years 1 and 2. It is good in English and ICT across the school and in science in Years 1 and 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

13. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a strength of their teaching is their ability to encourage and engage pupils, with the result that pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is good across the school. Support staff are deployed very well and often make a strong contribution to both individual pupils' learning and the learning of groups of pupil. Pupils apply themselves well to the tasks set and work well, both on their own and with others. The school has promoted partner work very well and this often contributes to pupils' confidence in answering questions in class. Whilst teachers' daily planning shows that they plan for pupils of different ability, it does not always sufficiently meet the needs of different age groups. The needs of the more able, older pupils in particular, are not always planned for. Whilst targets are set for pupils, not enough reference is made to the levels of the National Curriculum and pupils are not shown how they can reach the next level. A further weakness is in the lack of a clear understanding of how skills in subjects should be taught progressively across the school.

14. In literacy and numeracy, teachers adapt subject plans thoughtfully to reflect the abilities of the majority of pupils. Objectives from a two-year range are carefully integrated into a weekly plan for groups of pupils from two age groups. However, younger pupils do not consistently match the pace of older pupils. For example, the school's internal testing procedures indicate that a core of the youngest pupils in each set do not make the best progress. This process is reversed when they become the older pupils in the set. The school has recognised that higher-attaining pupils need to be given opportunities for more challenging learning in investigations and explorations. Whilst the development of cross-curriculum links is largely successful, the planning of work to meet individual subject objectives is not always clear and progress within a subject is not always as good as it could be.

15. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from all staff. Purposeful and constructive relationships increase pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In most lessons work is interesting and well matched to pupils' learning requirements.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (8%)	9 (23%)	18 (44%)	10 (25%)	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.

The curriculum

The school provides **very good** learning opportunities for pupils of all ages. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are prepared well for their transfer to secondary school.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- There is a good number of well-qualified teachers and a good number of experienced support staff.
- Investigative mathematics is not fully developed.
- The progression of skills in Foundation subjects is not clearly identified.
- The current accommodation restricts teaching but the problem will be resolved when the building programme is completed.

Commentary

16. The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities. The National Curriculum and religious education are significantly enriched by a large number of wide-ranging, well attended, extra-curricular activities, provided by both staff and visiting professionals. These include art, music, sport and theme weeks. Visits into the local and wider community broaden further the experience of the pupils.

17. The school has made considerable efforts to develop links between subjects, based on first-hand learning experiences. For example, very good use is made of the local environment to make the curriculum more relevant and more immediate. In mixed-age classes, Foundation subjects are planned over two years in topics, ensuring that pupils have appropriate opportunities to build on past learning and do not repeat work. However, insufficient attention has been given to the progression of skills across the school and within a subject: this restricts the successful development of the integrated curriculum. The school provides suitable learning opportunities in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils are well prepared for each stage of their education and there are very good induction arrangements when they transfer to secondary school.

18. Groupings within the school for mathematics and literacy are varied and flexible and further plans for more able pupils offer suitably targeted programmes of work. The school is strongly committed to the inclusion of all pupils. This is reflected in the documentation and in the good provision for pupils in the special educational needs base. Pupils with special educational needs across the school have full access to the curriculum and to the wide range of extra curricular activities. The school is well staffed with teachers and a good number of experienced assistants who provide effective support for pupils, particularly those who have a special educational need.

19. The school is making successful efforts to overcome the problems associated with the building work. The work is designed to increase space in classrooms, provide better computers facilities and make room for a growing number of pupils. Current shortcomings in the

accommodation are having a negative impact on the curriculum and pupils' achievements. The small school library limits pupils' language and literacy development as well as their ability to undertake research in subjects such as history and geography. In ICT the lack of a dedicated area means that a class has to be distributed throughout the school when working on computers, limiting to a degree the amount of supervision they receive in this subject. The hall doubles as a classroom, so physical education cannot take place in the hall, but the school has the advantage of a large outdoor covered area, a very good field, and a swimming pool. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory, mainly due to the way in which the staff makes the best use of what they have. The majority of classrooms are of satisfactory size and there are a good number of central areas which enable the school to provide for the withdrawal of small groups.

Care, guidance and support

There are **very good** procedures involving staff and governors to check the provision for health and safety of pupils and adults in the school. The school has planned carefully to eliminate any risk associated with the building work. Pupils are introduced to the school sensitively and staff know them and their families well. The transition to secondary education is very well managed through close co-operation with other institutions. Pupils contribute to their school and take on wide responsibilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are closely involved in their school. They are consulted, and the active and effective school council gives all pupils a real sense of participation.
- There are very good formal and informal procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff both at school and on visits.
- A well understood behaviour policy provides pupils with a consistent framework of expectations throughout the school.
- There are very good processes both at the start and at the end of pupils' time at the school to make sure that changes are smooth and enjoyable.

Commentary

20. Staff and governors take care to inspect the school and ensure that the children and pupils are safe and that first aid systems are good and routine checks are done. The staff are vigilant and the extra burden placed on the school by current building projects has been very well handled. The school buildings and grounds are well cared for. This is a clean and orderly place for children, pupils and adults. There are formal audit procedures to make sure that all areas of the school fulfil requirements. The school promotes healthy living and all pupils have a 'fruit break' in mid morning and access to water at all time; there are reasonable expectations regarding the food they are encouraged to bring to school. The LEA audit commented on the 'strong health and safety culture' in the school.

21. The school has comprehensive child protection systems in place. Training is up to date and staff understand how to deal with any protection issues. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all schoolwork if they are able to take part. They are well supported by adults as and when this is needed. All pupils are encouraged to take advantage of what the school has to offer. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) liaises closely with all staff, ensuring that the special needs of pupils are known and acknowledged in both lesson planning and teaching. Very effective support is provided by a number of professionals from external agencies.

22. Pupils very much enjoy coming to this school. They say that they like and respect their teachers and there are obviously very good relationships between staff and pupils. A friendship arrangement supports those who need a friend in the playground. Pupils are confident that any behaviour problems, including bullying, are quickly and successfully resolved. There is sufficient

supervision at break times and pupils are looked after well. Pupils' behaviour is carefully monitored and there is close liaison with their homes should problems arise. Individual targets are discussed with pupils and their parents, and these are clearly recorded in their annual reports. Pupils are encouraged through a series of individual and classroom rewards.

23. The thriving school council is involved in making recommendations about aspects of school life, such as the friendship scheme. Council members are articulate, consult their classmates and also provide a suggestion box. They report back the results of their meetings. They also run their own events. Members of the council stand for election annually and almost all wished to stand again this year.

24. Most pupils have direct or indirect experience of contributing to the shaping of their school and this encourages their personal development. Pupils are consulted by staff about changes being considered; for example, the shortening of the midday break. Pupils value the large range of clubs and the visits and residential journeys. All this provides a strong sense of involvement, participation and citizenship. In many lessons, pupils are asked to discuss issues briefly with partners and this also helps pupils learn to express their opinions, develop their own voice and grow into independent people.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are **good** links with parents and **very good** links with other schools. The school has worked hard and successfully to involve parents and carers in its work and the work of their children. The school works closely with other institutions and this ensures that pupils move smoothly to secondary education. Pupils and staff take part in many local events and have made an effort to forge close local links.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There are very good links with the local secondary school and with pre-school play groups.
- Parents feel very welcome; many help out in school.
- Parents are consulted and their views are listened to.
- Parents receive plenty of good information and useful progress reports about their children.
- The pupils enjoy a large number of visits into the local area and beyond.

Commentary

25. The close relationship with the town's main secondary school is noteworthy. Pupils, and staff from both institutions, make early visits so that there is close professional cooperation, and pupils feel very comfortable about the transition to the next stage of their education. Professional links between staff of local primary schools and the main local secondary school enhance the continuity offered to pupils. The school also takes an active part in teacher training and gives work placement experience to students.

26. Links with parents are effective. Teachers visit all homes and pre-school groups so that when children come to the school their needs are fully understood. This and a half-day for the first week help all children to enjoy their first experiences of school and, therefore, to start building their positive attitudes. Parents say that are well informed and that they find the staff easy to approach. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works very constructively with parents, and provides a number of opportunities for them to share information and discuss issues.

27. There are plenty of informative newsletters, which keep parents in touch with the full range of activities organised by the school and by the very active friends' association. Parents are consulted and their views taken into consideration. For example, some parents felt it would be helpful to know in the first term of the school year how their children were settling in. As a result, the school has

plans to hold a consultation session in the autumn term in addition to the useful report that is sent out in the second term. They have also taken up suggestions about daily journals and reading diaries, and music lessons. The parent support group is appreciated by those with children in the special educational needs base. It meets termly and crèche facilities are provided.

28. Parents contribute their time to clubs and to their children's learning. After taking their own children to school, many parents stay on to read with pupils who benefit greatly from the time they are given. Parents are also given the opportunity of a monthly drop-in to see the school nurse and special needs co-ordinator (SENCO).

29. Links with the community are very good. There are many visits and visitors that help pupils get to know their own area. The school takes part in many local events and frequent sport tournaments. All this gives pupils experience of the town and world beyond the school enhancing their confidence and self-esteem.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership, management and governance** of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very effective** and he is well supported by the good leadership of other key staff. The Foundation Stage is particularly well led and managed. The management and governance of the school are good.

Leadership

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher provides strong and enthusiastic leadership with a clear vision for improving the school.

Commentary

30. The headteacher has created a positive and supportive climate for school improvement. He aspires to develop a stimulating learning community in which pupils develop independence and creativity in their learning and states: 'education is not just to prepare children for the adult world, it is to enable them to enjoy their childhood'. The headteacher, staff and governors work closely together to achieve the aims and objectives of the school. All actively promote equality and inclusion. As a result, there are very positive relationships between all members of the school community and they feel valued. One of the strengths of the school is the teamwork led by the group leaders for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.

Management

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- School self-evaluation procedures are used well by the senior management team to identify school improvement priorities.
- The school makes a very good contribution to initial teacher training.
- Much of the extensive range of performance information from the analysis and tracking of pupils' progress is used well but insufficient attention is given to the development of key skills in mixed aged classes.
- There are very effective strategies for involving all members of the school community and seeking their views.

Commentary

31. The management of the school is innovative and outward looking. A particular feature is the school's leading participation in initial teacher training which, although it has at times placed heavy demands on some staff, has been of great benefit. There are effective procedures for evaluating the work of the school. The headteacher regularly seeks the views of staff, parents and pupils both informally and through questionnaires, and undertakes rigorous analysis of performance information. The outcomes provide good information for identifying the priorities of the school improvement plan. This plan focuses on objectives for the whole school, which are then linked and referenced to priorities within individual subject action plans. Much of the analysis is included, making it a large document. The headteacher recognises that minor changes to the format could make clearer the links to teachers' classroom practice.

32. The school is currently undergoing an extensive building programme that will significantly improve the learning environment. Although the building work is quite disruptive, it is being well managed to minimise its impact on the work of the school. This is one of several building projects that the headteacher and governors have planned over a number of years and each is clearly related to improvements to the quality of education provided by the school.

33. The school has effective performance management procedures and teachers' objectives link well to the school priorities identified on the improvement plan. However, the headteacher is aware that systematic procedures for meeting some professional development needs, arising from individual objectives, need further attention as the timing of the annual performance management cycle differs from that of school improvement planning. Teaching and learning are monitored well through observation of teaching, analysis of planning and tracking of pupils' progress. Senior managers and subject leaders have a good understanding of what is happening in lessons. However, insufficient attention has been paid to progression in the learning of key skills by pupils of different year groups working together in mixed-age classes and sets, and this limits pupils' achievement at times.

34. The two senior managers, who job-share the role and responsibilities of deputy head, work well together to provide effective support for the headteacher, and leadership for staff. Each has specific management responsibilities, which are clearly defined and known to the rest of the staff. This arrangement has become better established since the beginning of the current academic year and its success reflects the management capabilities of the headteacher, supported by the governing body, as well as the commitment of both the deputies. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership to a well-organised and managed department.

Governance

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The governing body is well informed about the work of the school and provides high levels of challenge and support.
- Effective financial and resource management ensures that the school makes good use of the money it has.

Commentary

35. Governors are very well informed about the work of the school and many have a high level of involvement in it. They challenge the headteacher and senior management team on their identification of priorities and their strategies for addressing improvements. They have a good understanding of the financial management of the school. They work with the headteacher and with the very efficient and well-organised school finance officer to consider best value and monitor expenditure to ensure cost effectiveness. Many of the governors come into school regularly to help,

to monitor what is happening in lessons and to discuss the management of the school. The governor with responsibility for overseeing special educational needs works closely with the school's management and staff. She is fully aware of developments in the school and effectively monitors aspects of the provisions for pupils with special educational needs.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	779,881.00
Total expenditure	749,018.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,363.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	33,793.00
Balance carried forward to the next	30,862.55

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of the specialist resource base for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder?

The resource base makes **very good** provision across the autistic spectrum for pupils who present a wide range of special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good quality of teaching.
- Extensive consultation and involvement with parents.
- Very effective assessment and recording procedures.
- Comprehensive support from external agencies.
- Insufficient monitoring of part-time provision in mainstream classes for pupils from the base.

Commentary

36. Pupils in the resource base make very good progress and achieve very well. In the calm, supporting, yet stimulating, environment of the base, pupils are encouraged to develop their academic and social skills through a carefully planned range of activities. The teacher in charge of the base provides the most appropriate strategies to meet the carefully assessed needs of the pupils and their interest and willingness to learn are maintained by well-chosen, tactile and visual resources. Social and communication skills are reinforced throughout the day. All lessons are underpinned by the very strong relationships between staff and pupils, allowing pupils to develop the confidence and willingness to try activities, secure in the knowledge that support is at hand. Pupils are placed for some lessons in mainstream classes, as soon as it is considered that they can cope and will benefit. With very focused and effective help from learning support assistants from the base, for the most part they make good progress. On occasions, pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration, either because the tasks and activities are not well matched to their needs, or the lesson itself is too long. These difficulties are not recognised and corrected as quickly as they could be, as the monitoring is inadequate. At lunch and break times, pupils from the base mix well and are fully accepted as part of the school community. The base is very well led and managed, and the teacher in charge works effectively with all staff ensuring that pupils' needs are known and understood. Relationships with parents are very good and are developed through frequent meetings and exchanges of information. Parents are very supportive of the work of the base and of the school as a whole. A number of professionals from external agencies provide very good support for pupils in the base. Not only do they provide advice and guidance, but also in some cases, detailed programmes to assist the staff in meeting the needs of individual pupils.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school's provision for the Foundation stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good teaching.
- Very good support by the learning support assistant.
- The good progress made by children.
- The very good use of day-to-day assessment.
- Accommodation, which is due for re-building, but currently does not allow children free access to a secure outdoor area.

37. Although overall attainment on entry to the school in recent years has been broadly in line with or slightly above national expectations, the attainment of the current cohort of 15 children is above expectations in most of the Early Learning Goals. As the inspection was held at the start of the school year, only the autumn-born children had started school and it is important to note that judgements on children's attainment on entry to the school are based on observations of this small group of children. These are the oldest children in the cohort and, at the time, no significant special educational needs had been identified in this group, again untypical for the rest of the school. The majority of children will join the school in January (when there will be two classes) and no information is available on the make-up of this group of pupils, who will constitute the majority of pupils by the end of the year.

38. The induction of children to school is very well managed and involves parents fully. As a result, children settle into routines happily and enjoy a broad range of exciting activities. Assessment information is used very well to ensure that children are fully challenged and reach their potential. Although it is not now a statutory requirement to undertake detailed 'baseline' assessment of children on their entry to the Foundation class, the teacher is continuing to undertake in-house assessments and this data, in conjunction with the Foundation Stage Profile which is completed throughout the Foundation year, shows in detail the progress of children during their Foundation year. Children make good progress because teaching is very good and the staff in the Foundation class work together very well to plan activities which are challenging and exciting. Very good attention is given to developing reading, writing and number skills. Staff have a very good knowledge of the learning needs of young children and devise a very good range of activities which encourage children to share, co-operate and develop their independence.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

39. Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **exceed the goals expected for their age**. They work and play together well, helping each other, playing happily and taking pride in their work. The class teacher and learning support assistant have developed very good relationships with the children in a short time and work constantly and consistently to ensure good relationships between children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

40. Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **exceed the goals expected for their age**. They learn to enjoy books, picking out their favourite characters, pictures and rhymes and enjoy listening to stories. They are beginning to recognise some basic words, recognise and write their names and identify key features of a text, such as 'title' and 'blurb'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

41. Provision for mathematical development is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **exceed the goals expected for their age**. They are able to count together to 10 and are beginning to represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper and pictures. Most confidently give a number 'one more than' and one child offers, 'You count one back' when the teacher asks, during registration, how to work out how many are in the class if one child is away. Staff in the Foundation class skilfully and constantly make links and ask questions designed to develop children's mathematical development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

42. Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **exceed the goals expected for their age**. Their skills are developed systematically and skilfully, notably through the weekly planned 'Welly Walk' around the school, the local area and village. For example, during the inspection, children, in small groups, each with an adult, were following a plan of the school as they walked around and were developing a good sense of place and an awareness of change, talking about what they saw and looking carefully at similarities, differences and patterns in their environment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

43. Provision in physical development is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **exceed the goals expected**. They experiment with different ways of moving, adjusting speed and changing direction to avoid obstacles. They move with control and co-ordination and use simple tools to effect changes to materials. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils, leading to a high level of attainment, particularly in physical education skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

44. Provision in creative development is **very good**. Children make good progress and are on target to **meet expectations for their age**. Children recognise colours and show awareness of detail in their pictures. They play well alongside other children who are engaged in the same role-play activity and play co-operatively as part of a group. Although the current outdoor area is not ideal, as it is not adjacent to the classroom or easily accessible from the classroom, this is a temporary weakness and one which will be rectified when the current building work is completed. However, the available area is secure and is very well utilised. Staff join in children's play, skilfully supporting the development of language and thinking skills through very effective questioning. For example, during the inspection, the learning support assistant, dressed as a pirate, had organised a treasure hunt around the play area and children were engrossed in the role play activities resulting from this, cheerily shouting 'Aye Cap'n' as the 'pirate' gave orders to her 'shipmates'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Results of national assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 are good, although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level at the end of each key stage is not as high as it might be.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers and effective support is provided for those who find reading difficult.
- The subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership and high standards of teaching in the subject.
- The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar does not take sufficiently into account the different age of the two year groups within sets.

Commentary

45. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2003 was above the national average in reading, speaking and listening and well above in writing. This is an improvement since the last inspection when only reading was judged to be above average. At the end of Year 6 in 2003, pupils' attainment in English was in line with the national average. It was below the national average in reading but slightly above in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. Overall, English results in Year 6 were below those of similar schools in 2003. Standards of the current Year 2 and 6 pupils are above national expectations. Pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory overall throughout the school.

46. Many pupils are articulate and show good standards of speaking and listening. Pupils listen attentively in class. They use lively and interesting vocabulary when responding in lessons. Opportunities to develop oral presentations and debating skills are adequate but do not make the most of the capabilities of older, more able pupils.

47. Pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic readers. They have good comprehension skills and talk confidently about the books that they have read and their favourite authors. The programme of daily volunteer helpers who hear more hesitant readers each morning has had a very positive impact on the standards and enjoyment of reading for this group of pupils. Although pupils have satisfactory library skills to enable them to access information, the lack of an appropriately sized library for a school of this size has had some effect on pupils' acquisition of higher-order skills. The school is very aware of this and has tried to compensate for the limited facilities until the new library building is completed.

48. Many pupils, both boys and girls, write creatively and use imaginative vocabulary. For example, in an able Year 3/4 lesson a dramatic description of an abandoned house included, 'The house smells like a thousand people smoking and a battle' and 'Smoke blazing up like a jumping firework.' Older pupils write at length, dividing their work into paragraphs and chapters. Handwriting and presentation of work, particularly that of boys, often requires improvement and there are too many careless spelling mistakes.

49. Teaching is at least satisfactory and most is good. One very good lesson was observed during the inspection. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use guidance from the National Literacy Framework to plan the work. Teachers within each two-year age range plan well together. Whilst the organisation of pupils into ability sets often challenges the younger year group, not enough attention is given to the needs of the two different year groups within each set. The

teaching of basic spelling, grammar and punctuation skills is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' age as well as ability. The oldest and most able pupils do not achieve as well as they might, resulting in fewer pupils than expected reaching above average standards. The teaching of spelling is currently a particular focus in the work of the school. Appropriate strategies have been introduced and are making a difference but these are not always implemented consistently by all teachers. Some teachers have higher expectations and provide much better modelling of spelling and handwriting than others.

50. The English co-ordinator is an effective teacher and leader of the subject. With senior managers, she monitors and evaluates teaching and learning. A wide range of performance information is analysed which is used to set priorities for improvement and pupils' targets. However, better use could be made of pupils' progress books, if work showed what level the pupils had reached and what they needed to do to improve to reach the next level. Pupils are given many opportunities to work together and share ideas. This contributes to their enthusiasm for the subject and high levels of interest and motivation in lessons.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. The school is focusing on making links between subjects, using pupils' practical, first-hand experiences, and pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. They access information from different sources and write descriptions and reports of places, events, people and investigations. For example, pupils in a Year 5 and 6 geography lesson looked at a variety of brochures and leaflets to obtain information about particular types of holiday, whilst others accessed information from the Internet. Younger pupils explored the school's wildlife area to develop ideas for descriptive writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Leadership of the subject is very good, but the co-ordinator has been on leave for a year.
- There is a good level of monitoring, to ensure that teaching standards are maintained.
- Whole-staff involvement through the use of questionnaires is productive.
- Work for the older, more able pupils in mathematics sets is not challenging enough.
- Investigational mathematics is under used.
- Individual mathematics targets do not clearly identify the steps needed to reach the next level.

Commentary

52. Standards of attainment are average when pupils start school, they make very good progress and at the end of Year 2 their attainment is well above average. In the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2003, results were well below the national average at the expected and below the national average at the higher level. The percentage of pupils reaching both the expected and the higher levels was well below that of similar schools. Pupils' achievement in this cohort in mathematics was poor. The school has identified the unsatisfactory trend in value added from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 as one of its developmental areas for the coming year. Standards of attainment are better for younger pupils because teaching is better focused on providing appropriate learning opportunities for all pupils during mathematics lessons. The close match of learning objectives to the existing skills and knowledge of the pupils and a well-considered degree of challenge for higher attainers ensures that pupils make good progress in lessons. Standards in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

53. For the past three years, boys' results have been below those of girls'. Nevertheless, inspection evidence suggests that there are no significant gender differences in pupils' attainment. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as measured against the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs).

54. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Across the school, teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and they use the national strategy well to plan learning. However, teachers do not always use the good information they have about pupils' prior attainment and skills to consider the needs of all pupils in the lesson. A minority of pupils' individual mathematics targets do not identify what pupils must do to improve their learning and take insufficient account of National Curriculum Levels. This limits pupils' opportunities to achieve. Teaching strategies such as the marking of pupils' work and the sharing of lesson objectives and vocabulary are used consistently well and pupils' end-of-lesson self-evaluation enables them to reflect on what they have learned and achieved during the lesson. Teachers and support staff have very good relationships with pupils, which encourage them to contribute to lessons and to concentrate. Teachers use questions thoughtfully to check what pupils have understood and to encourage them to think about what they are doing; this makes a good contribution to pupils' learning as the teacher is able to correct misconceptions quickly. Pupils are confident to have a go at answering questions, even if they are unsure of the answer, because adults respond positively to their attempts.

55. Leadership and management of the subject are now good. The mathematics co-ordinator, who is a leading mathematics teacher, has recently started leading the subject again and through regular monitoring and questionnaires has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. She has identified mathematical investigations as a key area for development and the unsatisfactory value added from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. A suitable subject development plan is in place, which identifies clear priorities for improving the subject based on information gained. Learning resources are good and used well by teachers to support learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The opportunities planned by teachers for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum are satisfactory. During the inspection evidence was available showing the cross-curricular links made across the curriculum supporting mathematical development in shape and space (for example, the making of boxes in design and technology) and measuring work. The good range of resources available to each year group supports these well-developed opportunities.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Above average standards are reached at the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- The teaching in Year 6 is excellent.
- The subject is very well resourced.
- The co-ordinator's strong leadership has resulted in the considerable success of the subject.

Commentary

57. Teachers' assessments, at the end of Year 2 in 2003, were high compared with the national average. National Curriculum tests results, at the end of Year 6 in 2003, were well above the national average at the expected level, but below the national average at the higher level. Overall, standards were well above those of similar schools. Standards have been rising from below average in 1999. Whilst boys have been performing marginally better than girls over the last few years, boys performed better than girls at the expected level and girls performed better than boys at the higher level in 2003. In these most recent results, higher attaining pupils are performing better at science than in either English or mathematics. Pupils achieve well in science.

58. Standards during the inspection were above average because the quality of teaching and learning was good and often very good or better. Teaching in a Year 5/6 lessons was excellent because of the very good subject knowledge of the teacher, the strong link with geography, the constant interaction of the teacher with pupils as they worked, taking their knowledge on further, and the pace at which the lesson moved from one activity to the next, with the teacher providing demonstration as well as the pupils taking part in investigations. A clear understanding of the water cycle was gained through successive experiments into freezing, melting, evaporating and condensing.

59. The subject is strongly led and, as a result, science has a high profile in the school. A small group of pupils attend an after-school science club. The school belongs to the British Association of Young Scientist and a science week is held each year. Regular monitoring has led to the introduction of a very good tracking system. This, together with the often very good teaching and emphasis on investigational activities, is leading to the standards achieved. In Years 1 and 2 teachers are particularly good at matching the activities to the different abilities and ages of pupils. The school has a particularly wide range of good quality, very well organised resources. Improvement has been very good since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The improvement in provision and standards since the last Ofsted inspection.
- Resources are currently only barely satisfactory.

Commentary

60. Standards by the age of 7 and the age of 11 are satisfactory and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This constitutes an improvement since the last Ofsted inspection, when a key issue for the school was to 'raise standards and improve progress in ICT at the end of Key Stage 2'.

61. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons ranged from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Most teachers demonstrate a good level of confidence and subject knowledge, as a result of in-service training and support. This was demonstrated; for example, in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were adding a 'hyperlink' to a website in their multi-media presentations. The teacher made very good links to previous learning; the learning intentions and expectations of behaviour were made very clear and, as a result, the lesson was distinguished by the very good attitudes of the pupils, most of whom left the classroom and worked diligently at various locations throughout the school.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school hopes to have a suitably resourced ICT suite by the time the current building works programme is completed and this will allow more direct 'hands on' activities and avoid the typical class demonstration of ICT skills by the teacher, followed up by a rota of 'goes on the computer' during the remainder of the week, which is unavoidable in some classrooms at the moment.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils regularly use ICT to undertake work and research in history, geography, science and art.

LEARNING THROUGH FIRST- HAND EXPERIENCES – The active curriculum

64. The distinguishing feature of the school's curriculum provision is the strong emphasis on learning through first-hand experiences. The stated aim of this curriculum is to: 'Provide all children with a programme of expressive and creative arts which includes art, music, dance, drama and physical education' and to 'develop their self-esteem, critical appreciation and enjoyment of artistic and creative activity (through) the planned curriculum and extra-curricular activities'.

Key features of the active curriculum

- The links made between curriculum areas, including literacy and numeracy, with the aim of making learning more purposeful for pupils.
- Planning to maximise the use of expertise from the local community and an increased number of visits and visitors.
- The medium-term planning for each unit of work provided by subject leaders to all teachers and the regular assessment at the end of each unit of work.

67. Overall provision for this active curriculum is good and the changes introduced have been enthusiastically supported by the children who think, 'Lessons have been more interesting', and by staff. For the purposes of this report, these 'Foundation' subjects have been grouped into three sections: the humanities subjects of history and geography; religious education curriculum and the creative arts subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

68. The quality of teaching in the small number of lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good and is good overall. In most cases, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan and resource their lessons well. In the best cases, they have very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and, as a result, pupils are well motivated and apply themselves to their work with enthusiasm. Subject co-ordinators maintain detailed files of their work which provide a good level of support for other colleagues and produce annual evaluations of their subject area.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Commentary

69. In geography and history, work was sampled but only one geography lesson and no history lessons were observed. Standards of work in books throughout the school are **above average in both subjects**, although the presentation of work is not consistent. There has been a significant improvement in the number of visits out of school and visitors to the school due to the introduction of the 'active curriculum', and this has led to an increased focus on developing pupils' geographical and historical skills throughout the school and makes learning relevant, exciting and memorable for pupils. For example, pupils take part in a river walk in Year 4 and visit the sea in Year 6 to carry out mapping work and a river study. This is linked to history lessons where they are studying the Egyptians and the River Nile. When studying the local environment of Ivybridge, they learn how to read maps using grid references. When studying the Tudors they decide what they can find out about Henry VI and Tudor time by looking at his portrait. This is linked to art lessons where they paint portraits themselves. They develop research skills and literacy skills, for example, by using the Internet and writing letters of persuasion, having looked at a letter written by Henry VI to the Pope. Cross-curricular links are very good. These were also observed in a science lesson on condensation and evaporation linked to the water cycle. Provision in both geography and history is good.

Religious education

Overall provision for religious education is at least **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about what they have learned.
- Visitors make a strong contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- There is only a limited amount of recorded work to remind pupils of what they have learned.
- The amount of time allocated to the subject is considerably less than the amount of time recommended by the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Commentary

70. Two lessons were observed and a group of pupils from Year 6 were interviewed, but there was little recorded evidence available during the inspection. It was evident from the pupils' enthusiasm that the imaginative way the subject is taught, through visitors, drama, dance and through studying artefacts and famous paintings, inspires them. Standards of knowledge and understanding are good. Pupils have a good knowledge of aspects of Hinduism, such as of the Hindu gods, which they learned about in Year 4, and of Hindu weddings, through drama activities during a day's visit from a practicing Hindu. They study Christianity through, for example, seeing videos of the Miracles of Jesus and looking at famous religious paintings. Literacy skills are developed in religious education lessons; for example, when they write a letter to a relative describing Jesus who they have just met. Pupils gain knowledge of many Old and New Testament Bible stories in assemblies, but knowledge of Judaism is less secure.

71. In Years 3 and 4, teaching and learning about 'Creation' are very good, with lessons very well prepared for pupils of different abilities. Pupils learn about different types of questions and answers, such as ultimate questions and one which have factual answers or answers based on opinions. In Years 5 and 6 pupils listen very attentively and are taught by a knowledgeable teacher.

Teaching and learning are both good, with much covered in a lesson. Pupils learn about how the Bible is made up of many books, grouping texts according to different genre. As a result, they gain a wide understanding of the types of information found in the Bible. With more time, higher-attaining pupils would be able to find these texts in the Bible.

72. The subject is taught as a carousel in three-week blocks alternating with design and technology and art. Because of this and the foreshortened length of lessons the subject is not nearly meeting the recommended time suggested by the locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject appears to be taught well, but the pupils have little to remind them of what they have learned. Whilst detailed recorded work is not envisaged, a diary or short record of what they cover in each lesson would help them recall the interesting lessons they obviously have.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good cross-curricular links between subjects.
- The provision for sport and the quality of curriculum leadership in physical education are both good.
- There is a good range of resources for design and technology.
- The school's provision for music is good.
- Insufficient attention is given to continuity and progression in the key skills, particularly in art and design.

Commentary

73. The following subjects were sampled: one lesson was seen in each of art and design, design and technology and music, and three lessons were observed in physical education. In addition to observing lessons, wall displays were noted and work scrutinised from the present year and the Year 6 class that has just left. Interviews were held with the headteacher for the school's philosophy on the 'active curriculum' and for music and physical education. The deputy head was interviewed as curriculum co-ordinator. Brief discussions were held with the art and design, and design and technology co-ordinators.

74. Schemes of work for subjects within the 'active curriculum' are in most cases based on government-recommended schemes of work supported and enriched by published schemes which provide more support for non-specialist teachers - such as the music examples provided on compact-disc with the published music curriculum. Assessment sheets are completed for each unit of work undertaken and these are collected and analysed carefully by the co-ordinators.

75. Where judgements were made in these four subjects, they were broadly in line with those noted at the time of the previous Ofsted inspection. In art and design at the end of Year 6, however, they were judged to be above average in the previous report and are now average.

76. The annual Expressive Arts week makes a considerable contribution to the creative arts curriculum. During this week pupils work with visiting musicians, undertake a range of exciting activities and take part in workshops incorporating dance, music and art. Although at the time of inspection, there were a number of displays of impressive co-operative artworks round the school, an analysis of pupils' observational drawing skills in their sketchbooks show limited progress in this key skill. Planning for **art and design** now clearly indicates the skills to be covered in each unit, although standards of drawing by older pupils indicate that this might not have consistently been the case in the past. The focus on art linked to the current topic area provided many opportunities for Egyptian illustrations or Greek-style designs, but there has been less focus on the age-related key skills in art and design as pupils move through the school. Provision for art and design and design and technology is **satisfactory**.

77. Teachers' plans and records, pupils' work, discussions with them and the small sample of lessons seen indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory and that pupils achieve satisfactory standards in **design and technology**. The quality and range of resources available in each subject is satisfactory. In the one lesson seen, pupils carefully planned their work and considered the needs of potential clients. This is an improvement on the last inspection where planning was found to be insufficiently emphasised.

78. Although there were limited opportunities to observe music lessons, as they take place on days when inspectors were not present, it is clear from observations and discussions with staff and pupils that **music** has a high profile in the school and the school offers a wide range of additional musical activities including peripatetic support for piano, violin, guitar groups and a choir and a hand-bell club for Year 1 pupils. These activities take place both during and outside school hours. Pupils perform in school and around the locality, in the local shopping centre, the church and in old people's homes. The school has very good links with the local community college music department and four more able pupils visit the college on one afternoon per week and groups from the college perform in school during the year. Provision for music is **good**.

79. No overall judgement can be made about standards in **physical education**, but in the lessons observed standards were above average overall. Just prior to the inspection, the school gained the Activemark Gold Award from Sport England for the quality of its provision for physical education – the school's 'well-balanced' curriculum was cited and the judgement made that 'pupils receive numerous opportunities to celebrate their participation, commitment and enthusiasm for physical education and sport'. The school has very good links with the local community college and has gained an impressive series of cups and other awards for their teams in such activities as tag-rugby, cricket and outdoor athletics. Provision in physical education is **very good**.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. No lesson was observed but the policy was looked at, discussions with pupils took place and the headteacher was interviewed. Personal and social education has a high profile in the school. Plans for this subject follow a comprehensive scheme and are used throughout the school. There are some discrete lessons in the subject and it is also linked to other subjects or project lessons. No judgements can be made about standards or the quality of teaching and learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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