

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWCASTLE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle, Craven Arms

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123488

Headteacher: Lawrence Gittins

Lead inspector: Jeff White

Dates of inspection: 23-24 September 2003

Inspection number: 257010

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	40
School address:	Newcastle Craven Arms
Postcode:	SY7 8QL
Telephone number:	01588-640260
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	J.Beasley
Date of previous inspection:	5 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 40 pupils (23 boys and 17 girls) the school is very small compared with other primary schools. About a fifth of pupils live in the village and the rest are drawn from further afield. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. Free school meals' eligibility is below the national average. There are no pupils of minority ethnic heritage. Four pupils have special educational needs including a statemented pupil with visual impairment. Attainment on entry to the reception year is broadly average. There are only two classes and the headteacher teaches the Years 3-6 class for four days a week. The school has been involved in the DfES workforce Pathfinder project. In 2003, the school received the government's School Achievement Award for its improved results in the national tests for pupils aged eleven.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17242	Jeff White	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum; mathematics; science; art and design; design and technology; music; physical education
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
30398	Chris Scola	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; information and communication technology; geography; history; religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some significant strengths. Standards, achievement and the quality of education are good. Pupils' personal development is very well provided for. Under the very able leadership of the headteacher the school reaches out successfully into the local and wider community to enrich pupils' lives as much as possible. Governors know the school well and give good support. Good value for money is provided.

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

- Leadership and management are very effective
- The school is a very harmonious community and its ethos is strong
- Good teaching overall ensures that standards are good and pupils achieve well.
- Opportunities for pupils' enrichment are wide and varied
- Marking is not thorough enough in Key Stage 2

The school has improved well since its last inspection. Standards in the national test results have risen and pupils now achieve more consistently well in their work. Significant improvements to the accommodation and the increased number of class assistants have benefited management, teaching and learning. Attendance was satisfactory but is now very good. Generally, the last inspection's key issues have been addressed sufficiently well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Year group numbers are very small so any interpretation of results must be treated with great caution.

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children in the **Foundation Stage make good overall progress** towards the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. [Please note: only one child was in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection so judgements are also based on the performance of the youngest children in Year 1.] Standards are above average and achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. Achievement in reading is very good and standards are high. Pupils attain good standards in writing and mathematics, and they achieve well. Achievement is also good overall in Years 3 to 6, and pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Standards in reading are very good. Pupils throughout the school attain good standards overall in information and communication technology (ICT) but in some aspects standards are high. In all year groups pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well. Good teaching and learning in both classes are the key reasons why pupils of all abilities achieve well and attain good standards in their work.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered very effectively overall. Attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships are particularly strong. Pupils are mature, sensible and friendly. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good and ensure that pupils achieve well. Teachers cope significantly well with their mixed ages classes and successfully meet pupils' individual needs. Reading is very well taught. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils are keen learners and apply themselves well. Marking in Years 3-6 is not thorough enough.

The school provides a good curriculum and opportunities for enrichment are very good. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is very good. Partnership with parents and links with the community and other schools are very effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good and have ensured that standards have improved. The headteacher has been instrumental in reducing staff workload and enriching pupils' personal and educational opportunities. Staff are successfully deployed and the school runs very smoothly. The governors know the school very well and are fully behind the headteacher and staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel their children are treated well and are making good progress. Pupils throughout the school indicated very clearly to inspectors how happy they are at the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The **most important thing** the school should do to improve is:

- Make better use of marking as a means of assessment in Years 3 to 6

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards and achievement are good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress in reading from the time they enter the school and standards are well above average.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT, and pupils achieve well in these subjects
- The trend in standards is generally one of improvement

Commentary

1. The numbers of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are historically very small **so any interpretation of national test results must be treated with great caution.** However, the school's trend over the last three years has been one of rising standards and in Year 6 in 2002 all pupils achieved the expected level or higher. In the tests for Year 2, since 2000, standards have mainly been very high. The one child in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection was achieving well. Evidence of the performance of the youngest pupils in Year 1 indicates that they made good overall progress in the Foundation Stage and achieved many of the expected learning goals. Standards are good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development
2. Pupils' standards in reading are high because key skills in reading are taught thoroughly in Years 1 and 2 and are built on well in Years 3 to 6, especially in the guided reading sessions. Consequently, pupils are confident readers and read for a good range of purposes. Well developed speaking and listening skills are applied well throughout the curriculum. The school's analysis of pupils' performance has resulted in greater attention to developing writing skills, for example, in spelling and grammar, and standards are rising. Pupils' good standards in mathematics, in both classes, are enhanced by their regular opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum, in subjects such as science. Pupils are also developing speedy methods of calculation. A key feature of the good standards in science is the regular opportunity for pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6 to undertake scientific enquiry. Provision for ICT is very good. Not only are key skills taught directly but also pupils regularly use them in other subjects. Teaching was not seen in art and design but the standard of pupils' work is good. Singing is taught very well and standards are good. Little teaching was seen in history and geography but in the work seen standards were good in Years 1 and 2
3. The good overall teaching contributes significantly to pupils' achievements. Teaching assistants are usually very well briefed and their liaison with teachers helps to ensure that pupils' individual needs are catered for well. Pupils' very positive attitudes to their work also contribute substantially to their standards and achievements. The school has very effective systems to analyse the performance of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) Frequent and regular communication between staff ensures that these pupils receive appropriate support. Support staff are fully involved. Individual education plans (IEPS) clearly lay out suitable targets. Parents, teachers and the pupils themselves regularly review the plans. This ensures that pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well. The inspection found no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. The most able pupils are challenged well and their achievement is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour and attendance are very good and have a positive impact on their achievement; they mature well during their time in school due to the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is very good
- There is no evidence of bullying, or sexist or racist attitudes
- The attendance rate is very high
- Pupils like school, are confident, very well-mannered and happy
- Relationships throughout the school are very good

Authorised absence	
School data	3.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

Commentary

4. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. From the earliest age pupils know how to behave and they eagerly come to school to learn. There have been no exclusions over the last two years. Parents say how much their children enjoy school. Plenty of opportunities are provided in the Foundation Stage for children to learn how to play and work together harmoniously. These positive attitudes are developed well particularly through the good provision for moral, social and cultural development, which results in pupils showing high levels of confidence, self-esteem and maturity. The very good community links, sporting, artistic and musical opportunities help pupils to be aware of cultural diversity.
5. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the importance of helping others. For example, older pupils are very willing to help in the office before school and help play with or write and tell stories to younger ones. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and how their actions can affect others. The very good relationships throughout the school are helped considerably by the very good role models provided by the staff. This ensures that pupils try hard to please them in lessons. Pupils co-operate very well with each other in pairs and groups and this helps them to develop their learning skills very well. Pupils indicate very readily how much they enjoy school life. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are very good and with the co-operation of parents ensure that there are no cases of unauthorised absence. The high profile given by the school and parents to regular prompt attendance and punctuality is an important factor in relation to pupils' very positive attitude towards school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and opportunities for enrichment are wide. Care, guidance and support, and partnership with parents, other schools and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and ensure that pupils reach good standards overall in the areas of learning and in the core subjects and ICT. Assessment is sound overall but good in Reception and Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' work is well matched to their capabilities and they are therefore interested in their work
- Teachers and support staff liaise well to ensure that pupils from the Foundation Stage and onwards make good progress and work productively
- Good links are made between subjects and pupils apply their skills well
- Discussion is used well and as a result pupils talk confidently about their work
- Marking in Years 3-6 is not used enough as a tool for assessment

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	6	2	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.

7. The two classes contain three and four age groups and teachers therefore have to be particularly well organised to meet the full range of pupils' needs. Pupils are usually organised into ability groups for the main part of lessons. The levels of challenge are appropriate and consequently pupils' achievement is good and they sustain their concentration. Effective challenge and high expectation in the work were observed in the core subjects and in ICT and history. Most Year 1 pupils have very recently left the Foundation Stage and the teacher and support staff are very appropriately continuing to provide opportunities for structured play so that the transition to work in the National Curriculum is smooth. Support staff are well aware of what is expected of them and they engage well with pupils in both classes and ensure pupils concentrate on their work. The teaching of pupils with SEN is good. Pupils who need help are identified in good time. A suitable programme of learning is planned and work is very well matched to the pupils' needs.
8. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in ICT, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. A very good example of the use of some of these skills was seen in a history lesson. Year 6 pupils were encouraged to use reference books and the Internet to complete a written table that showed similarities and differences between Celts and Romans. The teacher expected them to collaborate and/or work independently and they responded very well.
9. Discussion is a feature of all lessons. Teachers' and class assistants' exposition is clear and pupils usually know exactly what is expected of them. Questioning of pupils is well focused and helps them to explain their thinking, for example, in mathematics. The extent of discussion helps pupils, for instance, to use appropriate subject terminology in science, and consequently they are generally confident speakers.

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are good. A broad range of curricular opportunities meets pupils' needs and they make good progress. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. The overall accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is organised well to cater for the wide age range in both classes
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and community links
- The provision for pupils with SEN is good
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively
- The improved accommodation and the increased non-staffing level are benefiting the teaching and learning.

Commentary

10. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and there are now sufficient schemes of work. In both classes, care is taken to enable pupils to work in ability groups where this is appropriate and their work is well planned. Consequently, they achieve well. The support of well-briefed teaching assistants is particularly effective and enables pupils to receive skilled support in small groups. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures that they have made good progress by the time they enter Year 1. Play is well organised to support not only reception children but also the youngest Year 1 pupils.
11. Older pupils receive skilled teaching in French. The very wide range of extra-curricular activities includes a variety of sports and opportunities to take part in competitions with other local schools. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to participate in music and the arts. Many pupils learn to play a musical instrument and they participate in musical events and concerts. They also sing in musical events. All pupils can go on an adventure activity residential trip. Also in the humanities and the arts there is a wide range of visits that support the curriculum, such as visits to museums and trips to the theatre. Good use is made of visitors to the school including artists, dancers and musicians.
12. The provision for pupils with SEN is well planned and ensures that pupils make good progress towards achieving their targets in their individual educational plans (IEPs) The IEPs are detailed and thorough. They contain appropriate targets, which are communicated well to all relevant staff. Teachers and class assistants work well together to meet pupils' needs. The expertise of outside agencies is called in when necessary.
13. The promotion of pupils' personal development is a strong feature of the curriculum and begins from the time pupils enter the school. Staff are very mindful of the need to be aware of the youngest children's personal, social and emotional development and they succeed very well. The children are happy and they have chances to work alone and in small groups. Relationships are very constructive and caring so that the children gain in confidence. As pupils become older they have more formal opportunities to develop their personal qualities, for example, through discussions of social and health issues.
14. The school has developed good links with other local schools and the secondary school to which pupils transfer at age eleven. Although the school is very small and there are only three staff, the expertise they have is more than sufficient to deliver a very full and rich curriculum. The recent improvements to the accommodation have improved the indoor and outdoor facilities. The increase in the number of teaching assistants has helped reduce the workload of the teachers and is contributing substantially to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Very good support, advice and guidance are provided for each pupil. The school involves pupils well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very strong ethos of care
- Induction arrangements are very good
- Members of staff know pupils very well and pupils feel involved in the school and valued

Commentary

15. The quality of care, guidance and support has improved since the last inspection. All members of staff provide very strong pastoral care that ensures every pupil feels valued and cared for. Close attention to health and safety, child protection, fire precautions and first aid procedures ensures pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. The school is very clean, tidy and a welcoming and stimulating place in which to learn. Parents agree that the school takes very good care of their children. The very good induction arrangements and continuing care and support ensure the youngest pupils quickly settle into school and make good progress. This is dealt with particularly effectively since the youngest pupils are in a class with other pupils up to two years older. Governors have ensured that a race equality policy is fully in place.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are very effective and support pupils' learning very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school very successfully uses and encourages parental support
- The school is a key part of the local community
- Links with local schools are very effective
- Written communications with parents are very informative

Commentary

16. The school recognises the very supportive approach of parents and makes very good use of them to support their children's education. The very high level of satisfaction showed by parents shows the success of the partnership. Help in the classroom is valued and, in particular, parents' contribution to developing the buildings and grounds has substantially improved facilities for pupils. The extension for pupils in reception, the recently developed environmental area, with its attractive walkways, and the outdoor play area are very good examples. The school successfully involves parents at an early stage and this helps pupils to settle quickly into school. The excellently presented prospectus and regular newsletters keep parents very well informed about school life and how to help pupils with their learning at home. The school is used well by the local community and pupils use the outdoor facilities extensively out of school hours. The local area is also used well to support pupils' learning. A very effective partnership with a local group of schools enhances provision in these areas further. The school uses the local and wider community and partnership with other schools very well to broaden pupils' horizons, thereby helping to counter the potential isolation of such a small group of pupils in a rural location.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance is good, leadership is very good and management very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher succeeds very effectively in enriching pupils' learning opportunities
- Leadership of the headteacher and other key staff has ensured that the standards of pupils' performance have improved and that the ethos of the school is strong
- The governors and headteacher have successfully reduced teachers' workload and staff are very well deployed
- Governors support the school well and they are well involved in ensuring it has a clear sense of direction

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	133,899	Balance from previous year	3,823
Total expenditure	129,050	Balance carried forward to the next	8,672
Expenditure per pupil	3,226		

Commentary

17. Governance, leadership and management have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has been instrumental in involving the school in the government's Pathfinder Project and has been fully supported by governors in this initiative. The school has gained considerably in the improvements to the accommodation and the level of non-teaching staff. The headteacher has shown very effective leadership in working hard to reduce staff's workload. He and the other full time teacher carry a heavy load and work well together in sharing aspects of leadership and management. The part-time teacher is deployed well, especially for the teaching of music. The class assistants are very well briefed overall and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. The headteacher, supported by governors, is very mindful of the potential isolation of a very small rural school. Consequently, he has shown great determination in seeking ways of broadening and enriching pupils' opportunities, for example, in extra-curricular activities and involvement in the local and wider community.
18. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to make sure that the quality of teaching is good overall. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well and they have kept abreast of professional developments and used national strategies and LEA help, whenever possible, to maintain a momentum of rising standards, for example, in mathematics. All pupils are welcomed in the school and care is taken to cater well for pupils with SEN. The provision for SEN is well managed. The headteacher and staff work very well together and are consistent in their approach to developing pupils' personal qualities. Class assistants and other non-teaching staff are valued highly by the pupils.
19. Most, if not all, governors live locally and are well known in the community. Many are parents of pupils in the school and therefore have lots of informal contact with the headteacher and staff. Governors fulfil their requirements fully. The chair of governors and the headteacher meet weekly and governors visit the school regularly. Governors, in meetings of their "development group", keep the school development plan (SDP) and school improvement under review. The SDP is an effective tool for guiding the school's future direction and includes a useful review of the previous plan. Governors' knowledge of the school's performance is informed by parental views, LEA reviews, national test results and community college feedback on former pupils' progress.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There was only one child in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection and very few pupils in Year 1. It was not possible therefore to form judgements about every area of learning.

Overall provision is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress overall
- Standards and achievement are good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development

Commentary

20. Provision has improved since the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the same class as pupils in Years 1 to 2. The class teacher and class assistants work very well together to ensure that work is suitably matched to the needs of the youngest children. Relationships with the children are very positive and they are very well cared for. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. The adults appreciate the importance of role-play in children's **personal, social and emotional development** and a wide range is planned, for example, working in the "post office" or acting as "doctors" as they care for soft toys. These opportunities enable the children to co-operate with others as well as to play individually. **Communication, language and literacy are taught effectively.** Children are encouraged to talk about their work in small groups and one-to-one and they do this readily with growing confidence. They have regular opportunities to listen to stories and talk about books. Very good attention is given to developing early reading skills and this contributes significantly to the very good progress that is made. The classroom environment is very well displayed to support children's development in this area of learning including their efforts as early writers.

21. **Mathematical development** is also taught successfully. In a very good lesson the youngest Year 1 pupils worked confidently in simple addition of numbers to 10 and the one reception child counted well beyond 10. The class assistant was very well deployed and her questioning ensured children made gains in their knowledge and understanding. The very good displays of work indicate good opportunities for **creative development** and **knowledge and understanding of the world**, for example, in working in a range of media, and studying trees and mini beasts. Children responded well in a music lesson as they sang a song and showed they are becoming aware of the performance of others. The teacher's planning for the Foundation Stage indicates that a broad curriculum is provided including, in **physical development**, outdoor activity, indoor gymnastics, dance and games. The staff know the children very well and good use is made of assessment to ensure that they are suitably challenged.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are well above average
- Pupils' work in poetry is particularly good
- Writing standards have improved
- Teachers plan work very well to meet the needs of all pupils
- Teaching Assistants are used very effectively
- Marking in Years 3 to 6 does not indicate how pupils can improve

Commentary

22. Standards in reading are high across the school because of very effective teaching. Also there is good support at home. Older pupils are encouraged to read and understand a wide variety of stimulating texts that are appropriate to their abilities. Teachers are very good at asking challenging questions that develop pupils' understanding of "writers tricks." The work of a wide variety of children's authors is shared and discussed. Younger pupils benefit from a very structured approach to the teaching of reading where the early skills are very well taught. Across the school teaching assistants play a vital role in supporting this work.
23. The standard of poetry throughout the school is above average. This is because of the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and because the pupils are presented with a very wide and rich variety of poems which enable them to learn what makes a poem so effective. The teaching of poetry is particularly good. Younger pupils' fascination with rhyme is fully exploited and the structure and language of poems are very well studied. The very good relationships that exist throughout the school, mutual respect and the open communication between everyone within the school, enable pupils to use poetry to express and share personal thoughts and feelings very successfully.
24. The teaching of writing has improved because of the recent initiatives the school has taken to raise standards, for example, in spelling and grammar. Standards have risen and pupils' achievement is good. In both infants and juniors a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining at the higher levels. Lessons are very well planned with a good balance of teacher input and pupil activities and they proceed at a fast pace. The skills of handwriting are well taught. Standards of presentation are high because of the good example and high expectations of the teachers. This results in very motivated pupils.
25. Teaching assistants play an important and very effective role in the teaching of English. Their help and support enable groups of pupils to work with a skilled and informed adult who reinforces and consolidates work done in a much larger mixed age group. Also they provide very appropriate individual support to pupils with particular difficulties in learning. This ensures these pupils also make good progress.
26. Marking, in Years 3 to 6 is the one weak area of the teaching of English. The pupils would benefit from more frequent written guidance to identify particular areas where work could be improved and feedback on what improvement has taken place.
27. In a small school the development of the English curriculum has been a shared responsibility where teachers and teaching assistants have all played a very effective and appropriate role. The areas highlighted for development, such as writing are very relevant and this reflects the strength and direction of key personnel. There has been good progress since the most recent inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

28. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to apply and develop their skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing in other subjects apart from English. Discussion is a feature of most

lessons and pupils are generally confident and articulate. Science, religious education, history and geography are used effectively to develop and consolidate writing skills in a range of different forms. Literacy skills are also developed well in pupils' use of ICT.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good

Commentary

29. At the time of the inspection there were only 12 pupils in Years 1-2 and only three of them were in Year 2. Their completed work indicates that they make good progress over time especially in number. Some of the work from last year's Year 2 was also scrutinised. Taken together the work shows that pupils are challenged sufficiently and work to their capabilities. The most able pupils reach above average standards, for example, in their accuracy of calculation and recognition of number sequencing and patterns. In a very effective lesson Year 2 pupils used mathematical language well when they talked about their work and also achieved well in their understanding of number problems. Pupils, at the very start of Year 1, work confidently in simple addition and are building on their work in the Foundation Stage.
30. Pupils in Years 3-6 undertake a good range of work in number. Their knowledge and understanding of computation and place value are generally good. In a lesson on problem solving they used a good range of mental and written methods. Pupils' completed work indicates that they have good opportunities to progressively develop their skills in calculation. The most able pupils reach above average standards and in some of the work standards are high, for instance, in working with decimals in Year 6. Pupils' "tracking folders" also includes work of a good standard in shape, measures and data handling.
31. A significant feature of the teaching is the strong commitment to meeting the needs of individual pupils. The staff know pupils very well and organise them into groups according to their capabilities but also, where appropriate, teach the whole group. Class assistants are carefully deployed to help these arrangements. For example, in the lesson seen in the Year R-Year 2 class the teacher worked with a small group of high attainers whilst the class assistants worked with other groups. This meant that pupils received a good degree of individual attention. In the Years 3 to 6 class the headteacher made sure that the different ability groups had appropriate resources and he also pitched his questions at the right level when talking to individuals. Teachers' explanations were very clear and questions were well focused. Pupils are managed very well in a calm and measured manner. Pupils work very productively, behave very well and have very positive attitudes to the subject. Quality and standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

32. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. Links with ICT are good and older pupils in particular are well aware of how to produce a range of graphs. There are also good examples of pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge being developed in science, geography and history. A good example is Year 4 pupils' construction of a graph to show the length of shadows in the playground.

SCIENCE

Provision is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards, teaching and achievement are good in Years 3-6
- Scientific enquiry is used well
- Work is not marked regularly

Commentary

33. Only one lesson was observed. Other judgements on standards and teaching are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work. Quality and standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 3-6 undertake a good range of work covering the National Curriculum requirements. They have made good progress over time in their scientific knowledge and understanding, for example, in their work on materials and their properties, and physical processes. Investigations are well planned and pupils have regular opportunities to test their hypotheses and draw scientific conclusions. Pupils clearly identify the approaches to answering questions such as; "What affects how water evaporates?" and their conclusions are usually scientifically plausible. Work is well matched to pupils' ages and abilities. Pupils record their work in a good range of forms including writing, tables, graphs and ICT. In some aspects of the work the most able pupils reach high standards.

34. In the very good lesson seen in the Years 3-6 class, the teaching was very effective. The inspector focused particularly on the teaching of pupils in Year 4. Interactive discussion with pupils was very well managed as very challenging questions were asked about the properties of magnets. The interactive white board was used to good effect to record pupils' comments. The teacher encouraged pupils to make predictions before a fair test was undertaken. Pupils applied themselves very well and recorded their results on their own charts. Brisk pace in the teaching and learning ensured that pupils achieved very well. A weakness in the teaching is the almost total lack of marking. Although discussion with pupils indicates that they have generally good knowledge of their learning in science, marking could help them to achieve even better. Teaching was not observed in Years 1 and 2 but the generally good standards in pupils' work on trees and mini beasts suggests the teaching is at least good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve well
- ICT is used widely to support other curricular areas
- A well-structured scheme of work is taught well and enables pupils to make good progress

Commentary

35. Standards are above national expectations because of skilled and confident teaching and good resources. All pupils use computers with great confidence and achieve well. In Year 6 and Year 2 a significant number of pupils are achieving at the higher levels. For a small school resources are very good and the pupils have easy access to a good number of computers and range of software. Pupils across the school frequently use word processing to produce attractive high quality work in all areas of the curriculum but especially in literacy. ICT is used extensively to process and present information in many other areas of the curriculum, for example, in mathematics or in art and design where pupils use a digital camera in portrait work.

Older pupils confidently use the Internet to support personal research in history and geography. E-mail is used to communicate with pupils from other schools. Key skills are taught thoroughly and effective use is made of the interactive white board. Progress since the most recent inspection has been good. There is now a scheme of work through which pupils progress, systematically developing their skills. Work in control technology is covered in this scheme. Pupils are assessed as they progress through the scheme

ICT across the curriculum

36. As indicated above, ICT is used regularly in several subjects. The range and proximity of computers enable pupils to apply their skills quickly after they have been taught directly. A good example of the contribution of ICT to learning in other subjects was seen in a history lesson where Year 6 pupils used the Internet to research information on Celts and Romans.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was seen in History. No lessons were seen in geography and religious education. However, inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work in all three subjects.

Provision in humanities is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history and geography have improved
- A good range of visits away from the school supports work in humanities
- Marking in Years 3 to 6 does not sufficiently identify areas where pupils can improve.

Commentary

37. Standards in religious education, history and geography are at least in line with national expectations in Years 3 to 6 and above in Years 1 and 2. This is an improvement since the most recent inspection. In history and geography there is now a detailed scheme of work, which teachers use to plan work that systematically develops skills in these subjects. The advice of the Local Authority advisor has helped teachers do this. In religious education work is well planned to follow the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils in the infants have produced some very high quality work in religious education on the concept of God and why "Light" is such a powerful symbol in so many religions.

38. A very comprehensive range of visits supports work in history and geography and this helps pupils develop appropriate skills. A visit to the Secret Hills Discovery Centre helped pupils develop an increased environmental awareness that led to some very good work on this topic. The school's Internet and software programmes also strongly support work in these areas.

39. The teaching of history in the one lesson seen was very good. One of the highly effective features was the way the teacher planned very suitable work to challenge such a wide range of abilities and ages. Consequently, pupils tackled the work with great enthusiasm and they achieved very well in their historical knowledge and understanding of Celtic and Roman life. Marking is in need of improvement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and physical education. Two lessons were seen in music. Inspectors looked at the work that was available and any other evidence of provision.

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in art and design are good.
- Standards in singing are good and it is very well taught

Commentary

40. Standards in art and design and singing have improved since the last inspection. The school has made good use of artists and art activities in and out of the school to ensure that the subject has a high profile. In a workshop with an artist pupils used recycled materials imaginatively to create collage pictures. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced creative self-portraits using digital photography, photocopier and paint. Cushion cover designs are of a high standard. Good links are made with literacy. Pupils wrote poems and showed good brushwork in their paintings of the “Green Man”. Some of the pupils’ sketchbooks include examples of pupils’ trying out their own ideas, especially in observational art, but there is scope to use them more productively. The range of work in art and design is good in Years 1 and 2 and pupils use a good range of media. Good links are made with science in pupils’ good drawings of trees, and pupils’ pictures of Chinese dragons contribute to their cultural development.
41. A part-time teacher teaches music and uses her knowledge of singing very successfully. Pupils learn a good, diverse range of songs some of which are in different languages. In the lessons observed pupils improved their performance in singing. They sing tunefully and with enthusiasm including singing in parts. The school succeeds in providing pupils with good opportunities to broaden their musical experiences. Several pupils are learning the violin and a number have tuition in piano and keyboard outside of school. The opportunity is grasped wherever possible for pupils to perform within concerts in the community and in school. Pupils have the opportunity to join the school band and to perform with pupils from other schools. The school provides pupils with a wide range of sporting activities that enhance the provision for physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Only one lesson was seen in personal, social and health education (PSHE) However, PSHE permeates much of the curriculum and the general life of the school and has been evaluated in earlier sections of this report.

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	3
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	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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