

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTHLEAZE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Long Ashton

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109198

Headteacher: Mr J Jolliffe

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 27–29 April 2004

Inspection number: 257055

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:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	165
School address:	Long Ashton Road Long Ashton North Somerset
Postcode:	BS41 9HY
Telephone number:	01275 540077
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss M Uppington
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Northleaze is a smaller than average school. The number of pupils on roll has increased over the last few years. Plans are well advanced to increase the school roll to 210 and move the school, during the next academic year, to a newly built site on part of the area now used as a playing field. Most pupils are from white British heritage backgrounds, with a few from other ethnic minority backgrounds. They mostly come from privately owned houses in the local area and some travel from the outskirts of Bristol, which are close by.

Comparison of the school with all other schools nationally	Northleaze School	National Average
Percentage of pupils with special educational needs	7.4	17.5
Percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	0.7	1.6
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2.0	17.9
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0	–

The rate at which pupils join or leave the school, other than at the usual times of starting or leaving school, is lower than noted in most other schools nationally. The school is accredited with the Investors in People status. The attainment of children on entry to school is in the range of average to above average, but above average overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology English as an additional language Special educational needs
12289	Mrs S Burgess	Lay inspector	
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good and rapidly improving school. Very good leadership and management and good teaching ensure that pupils reach good standards overall and achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher provides an outstanding and clear vision for the school's future development and has enabled the school to move forward rapidly over the last two years.
- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve good standards in many subjects.
- The school has very good overall procedures for checking pupils' progress, but does not involve individuals sufficiently in understanding what they need to do to improve further.
- The school projects a very caring and friendly ethos.
- The very good provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness results in individuals showing very good attitudes, values and personal development.
- The school provides a very good curriculum, which is enriched through a wide range of extra activities.
- Very good links have been established with the parents and the wider community.

The school has strengthened all areas of its provision since the last inspection. The key issues raised at that time – to develop the roles of the co-ordinators and to improve systems for checking pupils' attainment and progress – have been thoroughly addressed and dealt with. Effective measures have been put in place to address the issue about raising the expectations for the higher-attaining pupils so that much improvement has been made since the pupils were tested last year. The school went through a period in recent times when the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 was not good enough, but over the last two years rigorous initiatives put in place by the headteacher and staff have ensured that this is no longer the case. Overall, the school has improved at a good rate since the last inspection, and at a very good rate over the last two years. The enthusiasm and commitment of the staff mean that there is plenty of potential for the staff to accelerate this improvement and help the pupils to reach very good standards in the future.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall, pupils achieve well. On entry to school, children show attainment in the range of average to above average, which is above average overall. They make good progress and achieve well, so that, by the end of the Foundation Stage, they reach above average levels in all of the areas of learning. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils gain a very in-depth understanding of the work they cover. They achieve well and reach above average levels in reading, writing and science and well above average levels in mathematics. The 2003 national test results for Year 6 showed pupils to be under-achieving in English and mathematics. Successful initiatives put in place have securely addressed this slippage so that pupils are now achieving well and currently attain above average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. They reach average standards in writing, but with a significant minority set to achieve above average levels in this year's tests. Year 6 pupils currently attain above average standards in science and have done so consistently in tests since

2002. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Although there was not enough time during the inspection to see a full range of work in design and technology and music, some samples of good work were noted in these subjects. Similarly, not enough time was available during this inspection to collect evidence and make judgements about standards in art and design, geography, history and physical education. As a result of the strong provision for supporting them, pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan very well so that the needs of individuals and groups of pupils are catered for precisely. Expectations are set clearly for pupils so that the pace and challenge in lessons are good. Teachers establish good relationships with the pupils and between the pupils to enhance learning. Although assessment procedures are good, pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in the process of checking their own progress. Very effective support is given in lessons for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants provide strong support for teachers and pupils. Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage where children are provided with a rich range of activities.

Very good systems for caring for and guiding pupils as well as very good links with parents ensure that pupils' learning is fully enhanced as they move through the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The governors fulfil their roles very well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met in full. Since his appointment the headteacher has accelerated the school's rate of improvement and has an outstanding vision for the future direction of the school. He has created an atmosphere in which staff work very effectively together. Very good systems are established to monitor the quality of provision across the school. Governors demonstrate an energetic approach to carrying out their roles and are fully involved in all aspects of the school's management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents have a high regard for the work of the school. Similarly, the questionnaires completed by pupils and discussions with them show that they like their school very much.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important area for improvement is:

- Developing procedures to involve pupils more fully in checking their own progress and understanding what they need to do to improve further. (*This area is already recognised within the school's improvement plan.*)

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

All groups of pupils, including those with special education needs, achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school and reach above average levels in a wide range of subjects. There has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach above average levels in all areas of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils achieve good standards in English and science and well above average standards in mathematics in Year 2.
- Problems of underachievement that had been identified for pupils in Years 3 to 6 have been successfully addressed so that pupils now achieve well.
- At Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain above average levels in ICT and religious education.
- Some good quality work was seen in the limited amount of time available for looking at design and technology and music.

Commentary

1. On entry to school, children show above average attainment in their personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, mathematical learning and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They show average attainment in their writing, physical development and creative development. They make good progress and achieve well so that by the end of the Foundation Stage they reach above average levels in all of the areas of learning. These standards are built on effectively in Year 1 and Year 2, giving pupils a very broad-based and in-depth understanding in all of the work that they cover. They achieve well and reach above average levels in reading, writing and science and well above average levels in mathematics. In Years 3 to 6, there has been some significant slippage in standards in recent times and the 2003 national test results for Year 6 showed pupils to be underachieving in English and mathematics where, although most pupils reached the expected levels, too few reached the upper levels. The school's detailed tracking system shows that Year 6 pupils made too little progress. Changes in staffing and rigorous initiatives put in place in the school's improvement plan – especially targeting an improvement in writing – have securely addressed this slippage so that pupils are once more achieving well. As a result, pupils' current work and evidence of the work they have done across the year show that they have made good progress and currently attain above average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. They reach average standards in writing, but a significant minority are set to achieve the upper level, whereas last year no pupil did so. Occasional weaknesses are noted in pupils' spelling, even with the higher-attaining pupils. The strong staff team now established and the good teaching seen mean that the school is well placed to accelerate the improvements made to help the school achieve very good standards in the future.
2. As with all small schools, caution is needed in interpreting the school's annual tests results as relatively low cohort numbers mean that results can vary significantly each year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (16.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.4 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.3 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Year 2 results mirror the judgements on attainment made by the inspection team and verify that standards continue to rise at a good rate in Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (29.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.7 (28.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.2 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

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

4. The Year 6 test results reflect a similar picture to the inspection team's judgements in science, with pupils currently performing at an above average level and likely to attain very good results again in this year's national tests. Owing to good teaching, pupils are now doing much better in English and mathematics than they were when tested last year, and a trend of declining standards at Year 6 has now been arrested – with results likely to rise significantly in this year's tests.
5. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in ICT and religious education. Samples of work seen show that pupils work well in design and technology and perform well in music. Not enough time was available for inspectors to collect sufficient evidence to enable an overall judgement to be made about standards in art and design, geography, history and physical education, although there are indications that pupils cover an adequate range of work and reach appropriate levels.
6. As a result of the strong provision to support them, pupils with special educational needs achieve well and most manage to cover the same areas of work as their classmates.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance is good. Provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. These areas have been strengthened since the school's last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are positive.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and teachers, are good.
- Behaviour is very good overall.
- Pupils become suitably mature and responsible by the time they leave school.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

7. Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection. Punctuality is also good. The school has efficient systems in place for following up any unexplained absence on the first day of non-attendance.
8. The pupils are enthusiastic about their school and appreciate the friendly and supportive treatment that they receive from their teachers. They are confident, self-assured, friendly and polite and enjoy coming to school. Large numbers of pupils take part in the range of clubs and activities that are available. In lessons, pupils work conscientiously and seek to do their best.
9. Behaviour is almost always very good because it is expected of the pupils. It is particularly good where the teaching is stimulating and fully engages them. There have been no exclusions made during the last school year. The pupils' conduct during breaks is sensible and responsible. Their efforts and very good behaviour are recognised and celebrated by praise, and through the awarding of points. Relationships between pupils are good. They are co-operative and mutually supportive. They get on well together when at play and yet are suitably competitive when it is appropriate. Incidents of anti-social behaviour are very rare. Through the good range of responsibilities and chances to gain social awareness that they are given, pupils become suitably mature and responsible by the time they leave the school.
10. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Art and music, as well as aspects of other different lessons, contribute well to their appreciation of the world around them. For example, Foundation Stage children gasped in wonder at the rapid growth of sunflower seeds and Year 6 pupils recalled their amazement at the vivid autumn colours displayed during their visit to Westonbirt Arboretum. Assemblies give them good opportunities for reflection and contemplation. They develop well their understanding of the values of friends and family.
11. Pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong through the example of all the adults in the school. Expectations are prominently displayed through class rules and are consistently reinforced. The ethos of care and consideration for others pervades the school at all levels.
12. The pupils' social development is very good because of the very wide range of experiences in which they participate. The range of extra-curricular activities and visits out of school is very good, and the residential experience for older pupils is character building. Year 6 pupils spoke with real enthusiasm about visits to a folk museum and a local cookery school, as well as their residential trip to Derbyshire and Kilve, Somerset. Pupils develop respect for others and their opinions, and an understanding of today's moral and social issues. A feature of the school is the scheme that pairs Foundation Stage children with a 'partner' in Year 6. Discussions with both groups of pupils showed how important this is to both ages and strong relationships are formed.
13. The pupils' cultural development is very well provided for through religious education lessons, which include investigation of various faiths and cultures. Reading schemes include a range of literature that extends awareness of various lifestyles. Visits to various places of worship, such as the local church and a synagogue, are used to provide a very good insight about how people of other faiths worship. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to visit relevant places of interest related to their own and others' heritage. The range of visitors to school, for

example from the Comenius project linking the school with partners in Italy and Finland, further enriches pupils' cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Good teaching, strong systems for caring for and guiding pupils as well as very effective links with parents ensure that pupils' learning is fully enhanced as they move through the school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the last inspection. Good assessment procedures have been established.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is very good, so that the needs of individuals and groups of pupils are catered for well.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage and good throughout the rest of the school.
- Expectations are set clearly for pupils, so that the pace and challenge in lessons are good.
- Teachers establish good relationships with the pupils and between the pupils to enhance learning.
- Although assessment procedures are good, pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in the process of checking their own progress.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.
- Very effective support is given in lessons for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teaching assistants provide strong support for teachers and pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12 (38 %)	11 (34 %)	9 (28%)	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.

14. One of the main strengths in teaching throughout the school is the detailed planning that teachers produce, which ensures all individuals and groups of pupils are given work that precisely matches their needs. The planning ensures that full use is made of all of the time available and is a clear basis for the good pace of learning that is generally observed. Teachers make big efforts to ensure that different age groups within their classes are catered for specifically, with clearly defined tasks given to different groups. In particular, the school makes a full effort to ensure that the Year 5 pupils, who are split between two different classes, work on the same areas of work. Also, very good efforts are made to bring this year group together for literacy and numeracy mathematics sessions twice a week, taught by the headteacher. In one of these sessions, very good teaching ensured there was plenty of interaction between the teacher and the pupils and between the pupils. This approach, as well as very effectively accelerating the learning, fully promoted the aim of ensuring that the pupils had a chance to learn to work together as a year group.
15. Teachers' careful planning ensures that different ways of learning are very well promoted, with some very effective methods of ensuring that interests and concentration are continually maintained. For example, a Year 2 science lesson began with a short but lively aerobics/dance session. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed this and the activity clearly benefited

them in terms of stimulating them and getting them to think in a lively way for the forthcoming science activities. Through their planning, teachers also ensure there is a good provision of resources to help pupils learn better through visual impact. For example, artefacts used in a Year 5/6 religious education session helped promote good discussion and broaden understanding. Also, in this session, the use of one pupil in the class, who has a Buddhist home background, to talk to the others about daily worship in her own home was an excellent means of promoting pupils' spiritual, social and religious awareness.

16. Within their planning, teachers are good at promoting links between different subjects. This means that time is used well, with several subjects being simultaneously promoted during some sessions. For example, in a very good session taught by the visiting ICT support teacher/technician, ICT, literacy and music learning were very effectively developed. In this lesson, Year 5 pupils worked on improving their PowerPoint slide shows, which incorporated a video clip and an audio recording of music writing work they had recently completed and performed.
17. The Foundation Stage is nearly always a purposeful 'hive of activity' with all children fully engaged. Especially good planning and preparation results in a rich range of interesting work for the children to do. During one observation, around ten different activities were being actively pursued, including bubble blowing, making electrical circuits, dressing up in the role-play area and riding tricycles in the area immediately outside the classroom. This variety ensures that children enjoy their learning experiences and have lots of chances to learn to work together and develop their skills.
18. In all sessions, teachers make sure that expectations are set clearly for pupils so that all individuals have a full idea of what they are supposed to do and where the learning is leading. In most lessons, the levels of challenge within the work are good so that pupils are continually forced to think and work at a good pace. This was particularly noticeable in mathematics lessons where rigorous questioning during mental/oral sessions meant pupils had to think quickly and stay alert. Clear expectations and a rapid pace of learning were especially apparent in the very good lessons seen across the school. In these sessions, the very good motivation promoted by teachers accelerated pupils' learning and ensured that they covered a lot of work in the time available. Another feature of these very good lessons was the succinct way in which teachers explained new ideas – giving a strong indication of good subject knowledge and confidence. Once again, this resulted in very good use of time, with pupils getting on with tasks that actively involved them from an early stage in the lesson. In contrast, in a very few lessons where the pace of learning was not as rapid as it could have been, this was due to explanations being too 'long-winded' or unclear, so that introductory sessions became too long and pupils became fidgety and restless.
19. Across the school, the teachers establish a very strong rapport with the pupils and use the good relationships they have with pupils very effectively to encourage individuals. This results in pupils developing a confident approach to learning and often working with good levels of motivation and being keen to please their teachers. In addition, the enthusiastic approach of teachers is transmitted to pupils, who adopt this approach themselves with all of the different types of tasks they tackle – even when faced with tough challenges. For example, in a literacy lesson, Year 6 pupils rose enthusiastically to the extension challenge given to them to write a comparison of the texts provided. Such approaches and the strong emphasis placed on building their personal development are clearly key points that have helped the older pupils improve their progress and overcome the weaknesses in achievement noted last year. The school is now very proactive in pursuing the personal development of the older pupils – having identified this as an area that was previously lacking. Lessons where, for example, Year 6 pupils work alongside and support children in the Foundation Stage are very successful in boosting the confidence and social awareness of these pupils and help to underpin the good school ethos and relationships across the school.

20. The school has a comprehensive range of assessment procedures so that pupils' progress and performance in English, mathematics and science are checked and recorded on a regular basis. In addition, a very good tracking system has been established that gives a thorough and clear overview of the progress that individual pupils make as they move through the school. Teachers use this information well to inform their planning. The school has begun to involve pupils more in checking and understanding their progress with targets now set that are shared with parents and pupils on parents' evenings. However, as a next step, the school has identified rightly the need to fully involve the pupils in the process of checking their own progress and in gaining a better understanding about what they need to do to improve. Similarly, although good examples of marking are seen, the process is not consistent across the school. In some cases, marking does not give the pupils enough indication about how they can make the work better in the future.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and sometimes also by their classmates. Individual Education Plans for these pupils are clear and very well catered for in the work provided. Pupils' weaknesses are identified precisely. Resources and support are very carefully provided to help individuals overcome the problems experienced so that their learning progresses at a good rate.
22. Teaching assistants work well throughout the school, providing strong support for groups of pupils and individuals as required. They are fully briefed for the tasks they undertake and sometimes work well in a teaching role with groups. The school is very fortunate to have an ICT teaching assistant who is also a qualified teacher; she works very effectively with groups of pupils and also occasionally leads the teaching of lessons herself in the ICT suite. Similarly, another good example was noted, with a teaching assistant leading a very effective assembly for Foundation Stage children and Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good and has improved since the last inspection. A very wide range of extra activities is provided. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is greatly enriched by opportunities offered outside of lesson times.
- Personal, social and health education and citizenship are promoted very strongly.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- Very good efforts are made to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities.
- There are some shortcomings in the adequacy of the accommodation.

Commentary

23. The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that is relevant to pupils' needs and enables them to achieve well. The curriculum is extended beyond usual requirements by the inclusion of Italian lessons for Year 6 and lessons for pupils in French in all classes, with German also taught as an after school activity. Innovative links with schools in Italy and Finland have included visitors from those countries in school. Visits are followed up through international education lessons where pupils focus specifically on the countries' cultural aspects. Another successful initiative is the way in which a very good breadth is maintained in the teaching of subjects other than numeracy, literacy and science. Subject leaders who have particular expertise in art, physical education, ICT and music are allocated some time with every junior class so that all pupils benefit from teachers' skills. This also assists co-ordinators in monitoring and maintaining standards in these subjects. A very good feature of the curriculum is the way subjects are linked in order to make learning more meaningful. In Year 5, for example, music and ICT were well linked in a PowerPoint presentation, and in Year 2, literacy skills and history were effectively combined when pupils wrote empathetically about the Fire of London.

24. The locally agreed syllabus for religious education is followed and endorsed through very strong links with the local church.
25. A very extensive range of after-school clubs is run by all staff, parents and outside organisations. The majority of pupils, including the youngest, take advantage of these sessions. The activities enable pupils to nurture their skills in a range of sports activities and foster interests in music, crafts, conservation, modern foreign languages, art, drama and ICT. The quality of learning in these activities is very good, as seen, for example, in choir and soccer skills, where pupils benefited greatly from the expertise of the teachers. Pupils' learning is also enhanced by the variety of visits to places of interest, for example to study the history of Bristol and by theatre groups and musicians, who bring their skills and talents into school.
26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their progress is very well planned and carefully monitored to ensure each step is relevant. Group and individual support is very effective; consequently, these pupils achieve well. The school is particularly good at ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully included in all school activities. As well as the full involvement of all pupils in class-work, the school ensures that all age ranges are offered chances to join in with extra-curricular activities.
27. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their learning. Exciting opportunities are planned that help children become curious and enthusiastic learners.
28. The number of support staff is low in comparison to some schools. However, those in post are highly skilled and contribute significantly to pupils' learning and the general life in school. Teaching staff are deployed well so that their particular areas of expertise are of most benefit to pupils. Resources overall are adequate. Spending on resources is rightly cautious, pending the anticipated move to new premises. The accommodation is managed well and all available space is used. However, outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage is unsuitable because it does not allow a free-flow of activity throughout the day. The cramped accommodation in the main school means that development in gymnastics and games skills, especially in Years 3 to 6, is inhibited.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. It offers them very good support, advice and guidance. Pupils are involved well in the life of the school. Provision in these areas has improved since the school's last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a secure learning environment in which pupils feel safe and confident.
- There are well-established systems of support, advice and guidance.
- Induction and transfer arrangements are very good.

Commentary

29. Health, safety and security are given a high priority by the school. The vigilance of the staff on what is an awkward, sloping site and the good level of supervision throughout the day ensure that pupils are well looked after. There is a friendly, purposeful atmosphere in the school that reflects its strong Christian ethos.
30. Appropriate child protection arrangements are in place and the relevant training for all staff is up to date. Pupils are confident they would know who to go to with a problem or concern. They appreciate the system of 'bubble time' that gives individual pupils the opportunity to talk

to their class teacher in confidence, and feel that this opportunity prevents possible problems from escalating. Pastoral support programmes are introduced for pupils with identified behavioural difficulties although, in practice, these are seldom needed.

31. Staff work well as a team and know their pupils well. As well as identifying gifted and talented pupils, teachers' records detail each pupil's strengths, interests and particular aptitudes, so that school staff get a detailed overview of each pupil's personal development. Pupils are very effectively encouraged through systems to ensure that personal achievements are rewarded every week in assembly when certificates are awarded for good work and positive attitudes.
32. Induction procedures are very well managed. A particularly strong feature is the 'partner' system between Year 6 and Foundation Stage children. The school also arranges a carefully planned programme for pre-school children, which includes 'welcome time' for one afternoon a week during the summer term and a chance to become familiar with school activities and routines in the term before they are admitted in September. Parents are made to feel welcome from an early stage. For example, parents whose children are starting school receive copies of the school newsletter in the months before their child starts at Northleaze and they are invited to an informal induction evening during the summer term. All these elements combine to give new Foundation Stage children a confident start to school life.
33. The School Council gives pupils good opportunities to express their views and to learn to respect other people's beliefs and opinions. Pupils are confident that their views are valued and taken into account. There are good opportunities for class or group discussion and the exchange of ideas through circle time or Citizenship assemblies. There are good systems to gain pupils' views by means of a pupils' questionnaire, which is planned to become a regular feature of school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are very good links between the school, parents and other schools. There are very good links with both the local and wider community. Pupils greatly benefit from this involvement. These areas of provision have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent systems for seeking, valuing and acting on parents' views.
- Parents are kept very well informed.
- There is a strong partnership between home and school, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Very good links with the local and wider community broaden pupils' experiences.

Commentary

34. Parents show a high level of satisfaction with the work of the school. Almost all the parents who returned the school's questionnaire in the first term of the current school year said that their children like school and that arrangements for settling in are good. Almost as many felt that staff expect pupils to work hard and that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem or complaint. A significant minority, however, did not agree that they were kept well informed about how their child was getting on. The school has responded very effectively to this issue by revising the format of annual written reports.
35. Parents' views are sought on a wide range of issues, with the school actively canvassing their views on how to make general improvements, target setting and, via the Parent-Teacher Association, school security. Parents receive a wide range of detailed information through meetings or workshops with the staff on topics such as residential trips, sex education and improving communication between home and school. Parents are also fully informed about staffing changes and systems for reorganising classes. In addition, parents receive

curriculum information and homework plans from their child's class teacher at the start of each term. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that they found these relevant, appropriate and informative.

36. The majority of parents are fully involved in their children's education and provide strong support, for example with homework and supporting school activities. The very active Parent-Teacher Association organises a good range of social and fund-raising events that are generally well supported by parents. Over £3000 was raised last year, enabling the purchase of such items as library books, furniture for the Foundation Stage class and sports equipment.
37. Links with other schools are very good. Transfer arrangements with secondary schools ensure a smooth transition from Year 6 to the next stage of pupils' education, even when these take place outside the official school cluster. There are close, collaborative links with another local primary school, including some shared events. The school is nearing completion of very successful participation in a project that linked it with schools in Finland and Italy to share information, e-mail letters and ideas as well as staff exchange visits.
38. Links with the local community are very good and are particularly strong with All Saints Church through assemblies, special services and foundation governor involvement. The school makes very good use of the local area to enhance the curriculum with visits, for example, to a synagogue and a Hindu temple. A number of parents help regularly in school, effectively supporting pupils in activities such as cookery, sewing, design and technology and on school trips. All these links with the wider world help to broaden pupils' experience of life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good and have strengthened since the previous inspection. The governors fulfil their roles very well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met in full.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since his appointment the headteacher has accelerated the rate of school improvement and has an outstanding vision for the future direction of the school.
- The headteacher has created an atmosphere in which staff work very effectively together.
- Very good systems are established to monitor the quality of provision across the school.
- Governors demonstrate an energetic approach to carrying out their roles and are fully involved in all aspects of the school's management.

Commentary

39. In the two years he has been in post, the headteacher has made a big impact upon accelerating the school's rate of improvement. He has outstanding clarity as to the future direction for the school and, working closely with staff, governors and parents, has produced a high quality school development plan that provides exciting initiatives for the future and ensures that an excellent strategic approach is adopted to moving the school forward. Through very good communication, he has created an atmosphere in the school where all of the staff work together as a very effective and committed team. The careful organisation and deployment of the staff ensure that all individuals feel valued and work enthusiastically to drive school initiatives ahead. Clear lines of management have been established, with subject co-ordinators carrying out their roles well. They have a good overview of the quality of work across the school and make a full contribution towards formulating actions for the school development plan. The senior management team work very closely in support of the headteacher and also provide very effective support for their colleagues.

40. The school has well developed systems to aid its self-evaluation. Monitoring processes, which include a high quality system to track pupils' progress and the full involvement of all teachers in checking the quality of pupils' work across the school, help the school to critically evaluate its performance. Also the involvement of all staff and governors in reviewing the school's strengths and weaknesses makes a strong contribution towards ensuring they all gain a shared view and understanding of the priorities for improvement in the future.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	407 682
Total expenditure	410 758
Expenditure per pupil	2 794

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9 676
Balance carried forward to the next	6 600

41. Through detailed briefings from the headteacher, meetings with subject co-ordinators and regular visits to the school, the governors keep themselves fully informed and involved. They are knowledgeable about all areas of the school's operation. For example, they have involved themselves in extensive reviews of collective worship, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development and systems for providing support, guidance and care for the pupils. Governors ensure that the budget is closely monitored and carefully managed so that the best use is made of all available resources. They provide strong support for the headteacher and staff.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection. The pupils in the Reception class receive a good start to their education. Teaching is very good in all areas and many examples of very good practice were observed. Good quality planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of these early years of education. Standards on entry generally cover an average to above average spectrum. The majority of the children are assessed as being above average, with particular strengths in their speech and language and social skills. By the time they move into Year 1, virtually all pupils will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and work at above average levels. A proportion of the children will already be working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. The strong relationship with their Year 6 partner promotes development in the full range of the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are developing their levels of personal independence well.
- They are developing the ability to work collaboratively.
- They concentrate for long periods aided by an interesting and stimulating range of activities.

Commentary

42. Most of the children are confident, achieve well and have established good relationships with one another, the class teacher and the classroom assistants. They behave very well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. Teaching and learning are very good. Children's interest and attention are captured well by the enthusiasm of the staff, and by the imaginative use of resources. These qualities, together with intelligent and sensitive planning, ensure that concentration is fostered and maintained well. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. Their personal independence is effectively fostered and children were observed preparing the table, amassing resources and equipment, and putting on their own aprons for a 'junk' modelling session.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's emergent writing is promoted well.
- Their speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively.
- Early reading skills are encouraged well.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Good opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills further through all areas of learning and, as a result, they achieve well. Most already have well-developed speaking and listening skills and talk enthusiastically

about what they are doing, as well as sharing news from home. They love being read to, and readily offer their own ideas and opinions, which adults treat with interest and respect. Reading and writing are encouraged effectively in a variety of ways. Children in the classroom read familiar simple words and wrote them in icing on small biscuits, which were then eaten with great enjoyment. Outdoors a group of children, with adult support, followed the clues of an adventure trail that included simple reading and writing tasks. Those whose reading ability is in its early stages, are encouraged well. They all have reading books and many are beginning to read simple texts. The classroom has a good range of picture books, fiction and non-fiction, which are readily available and accessible to the children. All can write their names unaided and letter formation is virtually always correct. Many write independently. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children count with confidence.
- Their emerging skills are used across a good range of curriculum areas.
- Their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.

Commentary

44. The children are making good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Many handle simple calculations with numbers to 10 and 20 and the higher-attaining children handle quite large numbers competently. Games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number, are available. Teaching and learning are very good. The staff use resources effectively to support number work and children are enthusiastic about their lessons. They measured the growth of sunflower seedlings and helped to record the results on computer graphs. They used links assembled in chains to measure and calculate. Good use of a range of resources captures and holds children's interest. Their use of mathematical vocabulary is developing well and children achieve well in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom, outdoors and further afield.
- They have good understanding of simple scientific concepts and apply them successfully.

Commentary

45. Children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. This is as a direct result of very good teaching. They show a curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. Their learning is further enhanced by visiting the computer suite with their Year 6 partners. The children learn more about their world by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects. They plant seeds and make close observations of seedling growth, understanding how food is absorbed through the roots. They connect simple circuits to make bulbs light up. Such activities are used well to extend the children's vocabulary as they describe what they see and experience. Adults use questioning well to develop further the

children's vocabulary and use of language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and to encourage children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through a range of activities both indoors and outside.
- They are developing their expertise in the use of pencils, scissors and other small tools.

Commentary

46. Children have access to two fenced outdoor areas adjacent to their classroom. However, the position of these facilities and accessibility cannot promote free-flow between the classroom and outdoors. Equipment is limited to scooters and bikes. This is compensated for by regular sessions in the school hall for gymnastics and dance. Planned physical education sessions are used to develop children's large muscle skills and co-ordination and good use is made of the timetabled sessions in the school hall. Fine motor movements are developed through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors and small construction apparatus. Children have good opportunities to manipulate a range of small equipment with dexterity, icing their names on biscuits and planting seeds. As a result of very good teaching, children make good progress and achieve well in their learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- Access to a range of resources for creative work promotes freedom and independence.

Commentary

47. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creativity. Planning of this area is appropriately thought out, giving children a good range of artistic experiences. Teaching and learning are consistently very good. Children use a wide variety of pencils, paints and collage to create images. Many examples of children's work were on display. These show that the children have used many different techniques and media. They handle clay and play-dough and use a variety of tools to create different effects. They learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes, and are given opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play. There is a good stock of puppets and dressing-up clothes to promote imagination. At present the children play enthusiastically in the 'garden centre' acting out the roles of shopkeeper and customers with gusto. Children achieve well in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment in reading are above average.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 have been in decline, but are now rising.
- Effective initiatives have been introduced to raise standards.
- Use of the assessment of pupils' progress is good, but pupils are not yet fully involved in the process of checking their own progress.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.

Commentary

48. The overall standards of attainment for English are above average at the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. The latter represents a decline since the previous inspection. While reading standards in Years 3 to 6 are above average, these are not yet matched by the standards of writing. The national test results in 2003 showed a slippage in achievement, and that pupils have been underachieving in recent years.
49. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average and they achieve well. Many are very articulate and demonstrate this in their responses to questions as well as in putting their thoughts, ideas and opinions forward. Teachers ensure that pupils learn specific subject vocabulary and encourage them to initiate comments and lead discussions. There are good opportunities for role-play, mime and drama. Pupils listen politely to each other and work collaboratively and supportively during group activities. They speak fluently about books, showing possession of a wide vocabulary, good comprehension skills and the ability to discuss their likes and dislikes.
50. Attainment in reading is above average and pupils achieve well. The majority are fluent and expressive in their reading. They locate information in the small, but much-improved, library, which is in regular use. They understand the use of contents and index pages. Most are members of the local public library. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 read a range of texts with confidence. For example, a pupil read an extract from Samuel Pepys' diary with fluency and expression. Older pupils read demanding texts confidently and show that they enjoy more traditional books, such as 'The Secret Garden' and 'The Railway Children' as well as modern authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and J. K. Rowling. They enjoy explaining why they like particular passages and identify good features of their favourite authors. Many discriminate well between different genres.
51. Attainment in writing is average. All pupils use punctuation and grammar at an appropriate level for their age, but there are occasional weaknesses in spelling noted even among higher-attaining pupils. The improvement of writing standards is a current focus across the school. Good initiatives have been introduced to promote and extend various forms of writing, and creative work in Years 5 and 6 already shows a marked improvement. Standards are starting to rise so that work done by pupils across the year now shows them to be achieving well. The complexity of sentence construction is improving, as is the use of a broad and empathetic vocabulary. Pupils present their work neatly.
52. The quality of teaching is good and is matched by learning. Planning caters well for individual needs and higher-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. Pupils make good progress in line with their peers, and

achieve well. Where learning assistants are available, they support pupils very effectively. Marking is not always consistent across the school, but where it is good it is constructive and developmental and makes it clear where pupils can improve. Opportunities for pupils to be fully involved in the process of checking their own progress and performance are underdeveloped.

53. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. Her enthusiasm has already had an impact on the raising of standards. She collaborates well with colleagues to make improvements based on a well-focused action plan. She monitors teaching and learning closely and has ensured that systems for tracking pupils' progress are thorough. The school shows rigour in its tracking and monitoring of pupils. Teachers make good use of ongoing, and more formal, assessment to meet pupils' individual needs. 'Writing Progress' books illustrate pupils' progress as they move through the school. Many of these improvements are relatively recent and have not yet had their full impact on learning and progress.

Literacy across the curriculum

54. Good opportunities for pupils to use their developing skills in a range of subjects are included in plans. Scrutiny of work shows that literacy skills are used well in subjects such as religious education, history and science and that these skills receive appropriate attention when work is marked. The subject makes a very good, and sometimes specifically planned, contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching has improved and is now consistently good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to work and behave very well in lessons.
- Strong and purposeful subject leadership is helping to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement.

Commentary

55. Standards in Year 2 are well above the expectation for that age group. Pupils do very well in numeracy and understanding of shape and measure. Many pupils work at higher levels.
56. Currently, standards in Year 6 show an improvement on the most recent national test results (2003). Again, a significant proportion of the year group are set to attain a higher level, whilst all are likely to reach at least the accepted level for their age. Standards overall are set to exceed the national expectation.
57. Data show that there was a dip in pupils' achievement in Year 6 during the previous year. This trend has now been reversed, because of the positive action taken. Teaching has been strengthened and better use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress and set realistic targets. As a result, pupils throughout the school achieve well. The support provided for pupils with specific learning difficulties is very good. They are supported fully, often by very skilful teaching assistants. Individual plans are entirely relevant, enabling pupils to achieve as well as they can. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well because they are challenged sufficiently in lessons by the work prepared for them. Grouping by ability in Years 5 and 6 provides opportunities for pupils to raise their levels of attainment. Specially arranged lessons for a group of higher-attaining Year 6 pupils are taught regularly by a teacher from a secondary school.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Very good teaching is seen in some lessons. Teaching and learning have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Lessons are characterised by the pace and challenge of learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 warmed up with a rigorous mental challenge in which they had to list alternatives for $\frac{4}{5}$. They demonstrated very good understanding of number by expressing the fraction in percentages, decimals and some imaginative equivalent fractions such as $\frac{800}{1000}$. Incisive questioning makes pupils think mathematically. A good example was when Year 2 pupils not only had to recognise, but explain why a number is odd or even. Lessons are very clearly planned and clear learning objectives are shared with pupils, so that they know what is expected of them. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils respond very well to the pace and enthusiasm that teachers bring to lessons. Relationships are always very good and at times exemplary because pupils are confident and enjoy what they do.
59. Although there are many strengths in teaching, there are some aspects that could be more effective in some lessons. For example, at times oral and mental sessions could be more rigorous and better used to prepare pupils for the main task. Specific terminology is not always promoted as strongly as it ought to be and this lowers expectations in the lessons. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Teachers do not always help pupils evaluate their work or comment on how it might be improved.
60. Strong and purposeful leadership by the co-ordinator has a good impact on standards and achievement. There is a clear plan for development, which builds effectively on recent improvements. Relationships within the school are very strong and the resulting teamwork is a significant factor in the subject's improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Mathematics is promoted well across the curriculum. For example, good use is made of graph work in science and older pupils gain a good insight into the use of spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average levels at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Work in books and the lessons seen show that teaching and learning are good.
- Occasionally, not enough emphasis is placed upon practical investigation with older juniors.
- Marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work.
- The subject is well managed.

Commentary

62. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and work enthusiastically on the interesting tasks they are given. They gain a broad range of in-depth knowledge. For example, Year 1 pupils grow a range of plants from seeds and begin to form a good knowledge about the conditions necessary to promote healthy growth. Year 2 pupils show a good knowledge of different food groups. They sort foods into these groups and carefully plan menus for different types of meals. The work is linked well to mathematics and ICT, with pupils surveying favourite foods and recording and graphing the information using the class computer. Pupils gain a good knowledge of push-pull forces and record information about their investigations carefully. They also gain a secure understanding about what animals need to do to survive. In Years 3 to 6, pupils cover a wide range of work that ensures not only that they reach above average levels but also that they gain a broad based and in-depth knowledge and achieve well overall. Year 6 pupils' books show they have covered a comprehensive range of topics during the year and

their work is well presented with good written accounts that support the development of their literacy skills. For example, particularly detailed work was noted in pupils' research into why the moon changes its shape, with many well drawn charts, accounts and diagrams to show how pupils had arrived at their conclusions. Work on germinating seeds shows that pupils have developed a thorough knowledge of applying the fair testing principle – knowing for example that it was important for the same quantities of soil and water to be used in order that different growing conditions could be properly evaluated. When carrying out investigations, pupils are used to predicting and drawing clear conclusions based on their prior scientific knowledge.

63. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching. Work in books shows that activities are very effectively organised so that learning proceeds in a systematic way and at a good pace. The tasks provided are interesting and provide a good level of challenge for the age groups concerned. Lessons were seen taught in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 and these showed that the teachers possessed good subject confidence and provided pupils with clear and succinct explanations so that individuals had a clear understanding of what was expected of them. Teachers provide a good variety of approaches to ensure that the work remains interesting. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson, through an enjoyable mini aerobics session at the start, the teacher ensured that the pupils were 'tuned in' and alert before embarking on a discussion about the activities. As a result, pupils were well focused and motivated to work hard during the lesson.
64. Although pupils across the school gain much knowledge and understanding from carrying out practical investigations, there are times with the older junior pupils when too much emphasis is placed upon learning in a theoretical manner. At these times, not enough opportunity is given for pupils to pursue ideas through investigation and to record their results and conclusions in detail. Also, although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, there is not always enough indication given in the marking about how pupils can improve their work.
65. Science is well led and managed across the school. Good leadership and management in the past has helped to ensure that standards have been consistently maintained at a good level over recent years. The co-ordinator took on the post at the beginning of this academic year and liaises closely with and supports colleagues effectively. She has made a useful upgrade to the science equipment storage area – making sure all storage units are clearly labelled and that there is good access to all the resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above average standards.
- Teaching is good.
- ICT is used very effectively to enhance pupils' social skills and relationships across the school.
- The ICT teaching assistant provides very good support for pupils and teachers.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Good links are made to music and literacy in work carried out by older junior pupils.

Commentary

66. By Year 2, pupils reach above average levels. They show a confident ability to use the computers and develop a wide range of good skills. They know how to save, retrieve and print their work with help. They type detailed instruction programs for directing the movement of a floor robot and use a good range of different programs to help them with their work in different lessons. For example, pupils were seen in a Year 2 class using a program that supported

their literacy work effectively – dragging and dropping items around the screen with ease and typing in the appropriate text. By Year 6, pupils reach an above average standard and have gained a sophisticated range of skills. They are adept at using spreadsheets, copying and pasting information they need from the Internet into programs they are using, taking digital photographs and manipulating these on the computer, creating graphical models and using sensing equipment to monitor light, sound and temperature changes. Overall, pupils throughout the school achieve well in ICT.

67. Pupils attain the standards that they do because of the good teaching they receive. Teachers give clear and succinct instructions to pupils so that individuals move ahead at a good pace with their learning. For example, in one session seen in Year 5, the teacher used the remote learning facility – switching all of the computers in the suite to show the teacher's screen – to show pupils how to execute new techniques when importing video clips into PowerPoint. Through recent training, teachers are confident in using computers. They provide a good range of interesting work at a good level of challenge for pupils and, as a result, pupils work enthusiastically. The teaching programme is very well supported by the visiting ICT technician/teacher.
68. The school is fortunate to have an ICT teaching assistant who is also a qualified teacher. She provides very effective support for teachers and valuable input by teaching groups and individuals. In one session observed, she taught a large group of Foundation Stage children, who worked in the computer suite alongside some Year 6 pupils. She provided very clear directions and instructions so that all knew exactly how to get on with the tasks provided. This session was also part of a very good initiative the school has instigated that successfully boosts the personal skills of the Year 6 pupils, who work very well with their Foundation Stage 'partners', patiently explaining, guiding and helping them. As a result of this approach, pupils not only have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills, but also ensure very good relationships are established between the year groups.
69. As the school will be moving to a new site in the near future, the subject manager has wisely focused the staff on making the best use of all available resources – rather than replacing or upgrading current old machines in the computer suite or classrooms. He has rightly guided teachers towards making good use of the portable suite of laptop computers to make the use of ICT as accessible as possible to all pupils across the school. He ensures that all staff stay abreast of new developments and that all of the school's ICT equipment is kept in proper running order.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The school rightly identifies the need to develop the use of ICT across the curriculum more extensively. Nonetheless, a very good start has already been made with teachers thinking carefully about ways to support work through using computers. For example, in the Year 5 lesson seen, pupils made full use of video and audio recordings of their music composition work – importing clips of these recordings into their PowerPoint presentations and describing the activities they had carried out by inserting the appropriate text.

HUMANITIES

71. **History** and **geography** were not a focus of this inspection. A scrutiny of the pupils' work, together with discussions with pupils, suggests that standards in both subjects are in line with national expectations. Assessment follows the unit guidelines and is in the form of tick sheets. Part of a Year 2 lesson was observed in which the teaching was of a satisfactory standard. As no other lessons were seen, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision or the standard of teaching and learning in either subject.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected.
- Standards reflect the school's strong Christian ethos.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

72. Reflecting the findings at the last inspection, standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good.
73. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of world faiths, including Christianity, and are developing a good understanding of the similarities and differences between them. Most pupils understand, for example, how worship practice varies in different religions, but how the notion of worship is central to all world faiths. They develop good understanding of the use of symbolism in religion and handle the artefacts presented to them with care and respect. The school's strong Christian ethos is supported and developed well in religious education lessons and the subject features in all the classes.
74. Only two religious education lessons were observed, but this evidence along with the evidence of pupils' work in their books indicates that teaching is good. In one of the lessons seen for Year 5/6, the teaching was very good. A scrutiny of lesson planning shows that lessons are prepared well and the delivery of both the lessons seen captured pupils' interest and attention. Role-play is sometimes used to promote thinking about Christian values. A good feature of teaching is the use made of the school's good range of resources. This practice of supporting pupils' understanding of religion through first-hand experience is extended by using the Internet and videos to enhance pupils' knowledge of centres of worship and features of other religions. This is enhanced by visits to the local church, and older pupils have visited a Hindu temple and a synagogue. Pupils spoken to showed good recall of these visits and spoke with enthusiasm about their experiences. Occasional visitors to school are welcomed, to further extend pupils' learning and understanding. Pupils' response in the lessons seen was at least good and was matched well by their recall of their learning.
75. Although relatively new to the post, the co-ordinator has a good overview and grasp of the subject, and how it could be further improved. A school syllabus has been created which is firmly based on the local education authority agreed syllabus. Resources are good and include an artefact box for each religion. They are used effectively to support learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. These areas of work were sampled during the inspection. Too few lessons were seen to allow overall judgements about the quality of provision, teaching and learning and standards to be made.
77. There are indications from the work seen around the school in **art and design** that pupils reach appropriate levels for their ages. National subject guidance is adapted thoughtfully to provide a good range of creative opportunities in two and three-dimensional work. In Year 3, where pupils benefit more directly from the influence and expertise of the art co-ordinator, pupils' paintings of groups are impressive, showing good technique in their sensitive use of watercolour. Pupils enjoy artwork and take a great deal of care in what they do. Original

designs for masks in Year 6 and imaginative chairs in Year 4 are followed carefully using a combination of paints, fabrics and card.

78. Pupils' skills are also promoted well in **design and technology** lessons. This subject has a high profile in the curriculum. Enthusiastic leadership and strong support for staff result in pupils achieving good results in some of the samples of work seen. Older pupils enjoy the challenges of designing and making slippers or building controllable vehicles which incorporate electrical circuits and switches. Some construct rigid frames to house the mechanisms. In the lesson seen in Year 2, a very strong feature was the level of problem solving generated when pupils had to work in groups to find out the best way to make wheels and axles and then build prototypes.
79. Although no **music** lessons were seen during the inspection, there are indications from the range of musical activity taking place that the subject has a very high profile in the curriculum. Approximately one third of pupils in Years 3 to 6 take instrumental tuition; some learn more than one instrument. Forty pupils attend choir sessions after school, which are characterised by very good teaching. Above average standards are reached in unison and part singing. There are many opportunities for pupils to improve their performance skills. Most participate in concerts, festivals and school performances and the combined choir and orchestra perform at the Easter ceremony in church. Pupils benefit from hearing live music performances, given by members of the local authority music service and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.
80. No **physical education** lessons were seen. From discussions with the subject leader and some pupils as well as observation of some physical education club activities, it is clear that pupils are given the full range of curriculum opportunities. They achieve particularly well at swimming. All meet the national expectation at the end of Year 6 and all go on to achieve greater distances and water safety skills. Pupils enjoy their dance lessons and feel they achieve well in that area also. Because of lack of space and the fact that the field used for games is some distance from the school, the development of some gymnastics and games skills is stifled. This impact is more noticeable as pupils reach the upper junior classes. Links to outdoor centres allow Year 5 and 6 pupils to undertake some adventurous activities, such as orienteering. Overall, there are good indications that expected standards have been maintained, owing to thoughtful planning and a committed input from the co-ordinator and other teaching staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school adopts a very well considered approach towards promoting pupils' personal and social development.

Commentary

81. Provision for personal, social and health education is particularly strong and this has a very good impact on pupils' attitudes and their sense of responsibility. Times when pupils sit in a circle together with their teacher to take turns talking about their ideas about different issues are well established throughout the school and occasions such as the regular citizenship assemblies with the local vicar provide strong enhancement to help pupils gain a broad awareness and understanding of important social issues. Pupils are taught about the possible hazards linked to drugs, and education about sex and relationships is dealt with appropriately for each year group. Very good initiatives have been launched to improve the confidence and personal development of older juniors. For example, the system of partnering Year 6 pupils with Foundation Stage children strongly enhances their relationships and awareness and also serves to promote an ethos of care and support across the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	3
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	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).