

INSPECTION REPORT

PROVOST WILLIAMS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY

Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 130875

Headteacher: Mrs M J Holroyd

Lead inspector: Julia A Elsley
Dates of inspection: 29th September – 1st October 2003

Inspection number: 257239

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:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	200
School address:	Sodens Avenue, Ryton-on-Dunsmore Coventry
Postcode:	CV8 3FF
Telephone number:	(024) 76302166
Fax number:	(024) 76301660
Appropriate authority:	Warwickshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C F Reily
Date of previous inspection:	23/3/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small, rural primary Church of England school serves the two villages of Ryton-on-Dunsmore and Bubbenhall, on the outskirts of Rugby. Many children also travel to the school from Bubbenhall by bus. There are 200 pupils on roll and the numbers are increasing. This is because there are many families moving into a new housing estate that is being built in the area. A very low percentage of the children have English as an additional language. The roll tends to fluctuate a little over the course of the year because there are a few children from traveller families who attend the school for short periods of time. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with that found nationally. There are two pupils with statements. Attainment on entry at the time of the last inspection was average and it is now rising.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16892	Julia Elsley	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, music, religious education
9510	Christine Murray-Watson	Lay inspector	
20911	Judith Dawson	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, design and technology, physical education
22671	David White	Team inspector	English, information and communication studies, geography, history, special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. A very good ethos of care and consideration has a positive effect on the pupils' personal development. Good teaching enables the children to make good progress and achieve good standards in much of their work. The overall curriculum provision is good, and the leadership and management are very good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- At the Foundation Stage, the provision, the quality of teaching and the children's good achievements are significant strengths. They ensure that the children have a positive start to school life.
- Overall, the standards are above average in the majority of subjects, but the pupils' information and communication technology and design and technology skills, and their handwriting, and presentation of work are not yet of sufficiently high quality.
- The pupils are achieving well because the teaching is good overall. It ranges from a small number of satisfactory lessons to very good or excellent. However, there is not enough use of short, sharp targets to help individual pupils to understand what they need to do to correct frequent errors.
- The pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. Their behaviour is good and their personal development is very good.
- The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership and are well supported by a dedicated and committed staff.
- Overall, the curriculum provision is good. There is very good provision for the pupils' physical education. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs, including those identified as gifted and talented, is also very good. Music is an area for further development.
- The school provides excellent extra-curricular activities through clubs, visits and community links.
- The relationships between the parents and the school are good.

There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection, notably in the Foundation Stage, the provision, monitoring and evaluation of the school's work and the quality of the teaching. The pupils now have a wide range of cultural experiences. The work is well planned to meet their needs and is regularly assessed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 **the pupils' achievements are good** in English, mathematics, history, geography, religious education, art and design. **The pupils' attainment in these subjects is above average.** In science, it is well above average. In the Foundation Stage, most children attain the early learning goals and a significant minority exceeds these goals by the end of the Reception Year. The provisional Year 2 results for 2003 indicate that the good standards achieved in the 2002 tests – above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics - are likely to be maintained. The pupils' listening skills are good. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on spoken English to improve the clarity of the children's speech and to help them to articulate more succinctly their ideas and opinions. The inspection findings indicate that the quality of the pupils' work is truly reflected in the upward trend in results across the whole school. The pupils are reaching standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above the national average and in science they are well above average.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	Year-2000	Year-2001	Year 2002	Year 2002
English	D	B	B	C
Mathematics	B	C	B	C
Science	C	A	A	B

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

By the end of Year 6, the pupils' achievements in the humanities are above average. They are achieving satisfactory standards in information and communication technology (ICT,) but not doing as well as they should be because staff training has not yet been fully completed and there have been difficulties with the software packages. In art and design, the pupils achieve above average standards, but more skills-based work needs to be done in design and technology to bring it to the same level in Years 3 to 6.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. This teaching is generally good, often very good and sometimes excellent. There are various notable features, including the well-planned lessons, the level of questioning which challenges all children to achieve well and the very imaginative and creative use of resources and artefacts. All of these factors stimulate and motivate the pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. The curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school also provides a broad curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6, which is further enhanced by the excellent extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school. The provision for physical education is a notable strength, but ICT and design and technology require further development in Years 3 to 6. The care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are very good. The school has effective procedures to ensure the children's health and safety. There is a strong emphasis on promoting confident and friendly relationships and all members of the staff monitor the personal development of the children very well. The school's partnership with parents is good. The parents support their children well and make a positive contribution to the work of the school. The community links are very good. They include liaison with local industry, local community members, out-of-hours club, local primary and secondary schools and the parish church.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and the governors provide a clear direction and are very well supported by the staff team in their initiatives to bring about improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are pleased with the school's work. They consider that their children are secure and happy at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in information and communication technology and design and technology in Years 3 to 6 and improve the music provision
- Improve the pupils' spoken English skills, handwriting and the presentation of their work;
- Adopt a more rigorous approach to the marking of the pupils' work

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Taken overall, the pupils' achievements are good throughout the school. In most subjects standards are above average, including religious education, history, geography and art and design. In science, they are well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of the reception year in 2003, the standards achieved by most children were in line with the requirements of the Early Learning Goals within the Foundation Stage curriculum guidelines. Approximately a third of the children were working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. They achieve well overall, but a weaker element is the children's spoken English.
- The results of the national tests in Year 2 and in Year 6 show a clear upward trend.
- By the end of Year 2, the achievements of the pupils are good. They are reaching standards in reading and writing that are above average. Their listening skills are good, but their spoken English is not as high as it could be. In mathematics, the standards of achievement are above average and in science they are well above average.
- By the end of Year 6, the results are similar to those achieved at the end of Year 2. In English they are above average, but the pupils' handwriting and presentation of work could be further improved. In mathematics, standards are above average but in science they are well above average.
- In information and communication technology standards throughout the school are satisfactory. Higher achievement has been hindered by the difficulties the school has experienced with its software and the provision of staff training.
- Standards in design and technology are now good in Years 1 and 2 but further improvement in the development of the pupil's skills would bring the standards up to the higher level in Years 3 to 6.
- No judgements were made on the standards and pupils' achievements in music and physical education.

Commentary

1. In the Foundation Stage, the children are making good gains in their learning. This is because the curriculum provision, accommodation and resources have shown a marked improvement since the last inspection. The children's achievements are good in all areas of learning, except in spoken English. Many children enter the nursery with speech that is unclear. The staff make a good point of correcting the pronunciation of words when engaged in group activities, such as phonic work, but there are missed opportunities for correcting speech and grammatical errors, and extending the children's responses as they talk about their work.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (16.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.1 (14.3)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	17.4 (16.5)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.2)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.1 (26.6)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	30.3 (30.2)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection because the school has focussed on raising standards through a detailed and thorough analysis of results that clearly identifies the areas for improvement in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in the results year-on-year although they do fluctuate because of the variation in the size of the small cohorts. In 2002, the results in mathematics and English were above the national average in both Year 2 (reading and writing) and Year 6. These pupils also achieved well-above average standards in science. When compared with similar schools, the performance of the Year 2 pupils was above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The Year 6 pupils' performance was average in English and mathematics, but above average in science. The provisional results in 2003 show continued improvements, but do reflect the variation in cohort sizes. In English, for example, it is likely that the girls' performance is better than that of the boys but in mathematics the reverse is true. The inspection findings indicate that these improved standards in the core subjects are being maintained, but are not yet as high as they could be in the application of handwriting skills in other subjects.
3. Although standards have risen in reading and writing and the pupils' listening skills are good, their speaking skills require further development. There is a need for greater focus on the pronunciation of words to make sure they speak clearly and accurately. The remodelling and rehearsal of their responses would help them to develop their ideas and opinions, and to express them more succinctly. The reading resources have increased and there is a good range of fiction and non-fiction text to interest both boys and girls. Regular reading at home and school is a notable feature and the constant use of the library also stimulates the pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Consequently, standards are above average throughout the school. The pupils are prepared through interesting and lively approaches to writing. A good emphasis is placed on grammar, punctuation and spelling. Much of the written work is based on the pupils' own experiences, through history and geography for example, and enriched by extra-curricular visits out of school. However, their achievements are too often marred by a lack of consistency in their handwriting and presentation in their books.
4. In mathematics and science throughout the school, pupils of all abilities achieve well. A good focus is placed on investigation and solving problems and a notable strength is the way in which the pupils are expected to use their mathematical and science skills across other areas of the curriculum, for example geography. This interests the pupils and leads to good levels of achievement.
5. Standards of achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in the development of skills and ICT is used to support other areas of the curriculum. The school has identified this as a component of its whole-school improvement strategy by organising more staff training at a higher level in order to raise standards.
6. Good standards of achievement were seen in history, art and design. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection in Years 1 and 2. While standards have improved in design and technology, the school recognises that it has further headway to make in order to bring the pupils' attainment in Years 3 to 6 to the higher level. A good start has been

made in Years 1 and 2, and as a result these pupils have a good grasp of the skills and techniques required when making and designing.

7. The school's improvement is clearly mapped out through the well-focussed improvement plan and matched carefully to the professional development of all staff and the needs of the pupils. The school's self-evaluation process, performance management and use of data analysis have all significantly improved since the last inspection. Its monitoring and evaluation systems are now used regularly and extensively to bring about improvement. These features of the school's work are now well established and demonstrate the clear vision and leadership of the headteacher and governors. They are very well supported by all members of staff who have a firm and dedicated commitment to succeed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is satisfactory. The pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and their behaviour in lessons, the playground and around the school is good. The pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have very good relationships with each other and with adults
- They work well together
- The pupil mediation programme has improved behaviour
- The pupils are willing to accept responsibility
- They take full advantage of the extra curricular provision
- The school provides excellent opportunities for extra curricular activities.
- Last year there was a high level of unauthorised absence
- The pupils do not consistently present their work with sufficient care
- An emphasis on spirituality permeates throughout the whole curriculum.
- The wide-ranging activities in lessons and clubs promote very good social development in all children.
- The adults provide very good role models for the pupils by demonstrating respect, fairness and tolerance of the views of others.
- The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to learn about the modern society in which we live.

Attendance

The attendance levels are generally satisfactory, but unauthorised absence is well above the level found nationally in primary schools. Almost all of the pupils maintain a good level of regular attendance and arrive punctually at the start of the school day. Attendance levels in the recent past have been consistently good. The figure for the most recent academic year dipped to below the national average for primary schools. This is mainly due to the irregular attendance of a few children from some, though not all, of the Traveller families whose children attend the school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.6
National data	0.5

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

There have been two pupils excluded from the school for a period of two days.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	179	2	
Mixed – White and Black African	2		
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	8		
Any other ethnic group	7		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

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

Commentary

8. The pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They respond well to the good teaching they receive and work hard. When involved in paired or small group tasks, they co-operate well with each other, sharing ideas and skills in a friendly and supportive way. However, their care in presentation and the handwriting in their books could be better.
9. As they progress through the school, the pupils are developing a thoughtful and caring approach to each other's well-being. This is sometimes seen in the way the older pupils take care of the younger ones, as well as the generally happy and co-operative way different age groups play together at break-times. A pupil mediation programme has been introduced, where the older pupils are trained to deal with upsets on the playground and to encourage individuals to agree a way to resolve potential conflicts. The oldest pupils feel that this has improved the overall standard of behaviour as nearly everyone is learning how to relate better and to think about the consequences of their actions.
10. There is a very good level of attendance at the after school clubs, where the pupils take full advantage of a wide range of activities, including sports and craft skills. As well as the school's provision, the presence on site of out-of-hours care either side of the school day gives the pupils good opportunities to mix socially and to extend the activities they can enjoy together.
11. The school provides very good opportunities for the spiritual, moral and social development of all its children. This is because the wide range of curriculum opportunities available within a caring ethos enables the children to develop a mutual respect for one another. Feelings and emotions are used well to help them explore a range of values and beliefs that affect their lives and behaviour. They are encouraged to reflect on the wonders of nature, for example, as they go about their art work, using the natural materials from the woodlands or finding out about the life of children in Victorian times. Conversations with the children show that they are excited by the learning opportunities that the school provides. The Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about their recent residential trip to Norfolk. The adults have very good relationships with the children and value the contributions they make to the lessons. The children are encouraged to work collaboratively and to share problems with their peers and adults. They learn from an early age to share equipment, take turns fairly and take responsibility for their actions. This raises their self-esteem and the respect of all pupils. The provision for the children's cultural development has improved since the last inspection. Good examples of the ideas and values of others are promoted through art, music, history and geography and visits to places of interest such as the Cathedral. The religious education curriculum ensures that the children have the opportunity to learn about the beliefs and forms of worship of other faiths. The resources and artefacts of other religions have further improved their understanding. For example, a visit to a Gurdwara, and

listening to the Caribbean steel pans, the Indian harmonium and African drums have also helped to widen the pupils' awareness of the cultural richness of modern society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Taken overall, the quality of teaching is good. The teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to excellent. The pupils are learning effectively and as a result achieving well. The quality of the assessment of the pupils is very good. There has been marked improvement in the teaching and the use of assessment data since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of staff have a good knowledge of the pupils' with special educational needs and plan accordingly.
- With the exceptions of information and communication technology and music, the staff has good subject knowledge
- A notable feature of lessons is the introductory sessions to ensure that the pupils are clear about what it is they are going to learn.
- The lessons have good pace and rigour. The skilled, challenging questioning of the adults motivates the pupils to higher levels of independent enquiry.
- The very well planned practical tasks promote high level questioning skills from the pupils and enable them to extend their knowledge through investigation, exploration and discovery.
- Most teachers make good use of the available resources and artefacts in an imaginative and creative way, but in some lessons this model could be usefully employed to raise the quality of the teaching to a higher level.
- Taken overall, the assessment procedures and the use of the resulting information in the planning of subsequent work are very good. In one class, the marking of work is very good and this model could be usefully deployed across the whole school to help the children to improve rapidly through the use of short-term targets.
- The teachers and teaching assistants work very well together as a team.

Commentary

12. The quality of the teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The weaknesses identified in the last report have been well tackled by the headteacher, the subject co-ordinators and governors through a thorough, yet supportive monitoring and evaluation programme. As a result, the unsatisfactory teaching during the previous inspection has been eradicated.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3%	27%	42%	27%	0%	0%	0%

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

13. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is strong overall. The staff ensure that the children have very good opportunities to choose their own activities and to work either indoors or outdoors as they see fit. The quiet rigour of the sessions and the wide range of interesting and creative activities keep the children very busy and motivate them to want to learn. In this way, the staff are promoting the children's independent learning through enquiry, exploration and discovery very well. The adults observe the children very closely to assess how well they are progressing. For example, they are becoming increasingly aware of the need to focus more on the development of

the children's speech. The observations made and recorded, the lunchtime meetings held to discuss individual children's progress are notable features of the teamwork within the Foundation Stage.

14. In Years 1 to 6, the successful teaching is brought about by the very good teamwork that is evident during lessons. A significant strength is the shared planning so that all staff involved in the lesson are very clear about what it is that the pupils are to learn. All plans have precise objectives and are carefully matched to meet the needs of the individual pupils. The quality and success of the planned learning for the pupils with special education needs, for example, reflect the teachers' and teaching assistants' good knowledge of these children. They are very sensitive to the needs of the pupils in their care. The teaching assistants take a positive and significant part in ensuring that the pupils make progress that is at least equal to that of their peers.
15. The lessons start promptly, and most have a brisk pace and lively and challenging question and answer sessions that build on what the pupils already know. For instance, the making of a cheese sandwich to develop 'ordering' skills brought about lively discussion. These activities contribute well to the speaking and listening skills. However, not all staff do enough in discussion with individual pupils to improve the levels of spoken English by pointing out mispronounced words and grammatical errors. Most teachers are very skilled at giving instructions to ensure that the children know what to do next. As a result, the pupils engage in the task with little or no delay as they move from the carpet to the desk.
16. There is a shared commitment to providing resources and artefacts to support the learning and, where the strategies are successfully deployed, the teaching is either good or better. For example, the teachers' use of role-play to promote the older pupil's curiosity of life in past times was inspirational.
17. As a team, the staff have used a wide range of professional development opportunities to improve their teaching across most areas of the curriculum. A significant strength is the shared understanding resulting from the discussion that follows the training in preparation for new initiatives. This discussion process has helped not only in the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, thereby raising standards in English and mathematics, but has also enhanced the provision in subjects such as science, history and geography. However, further training is needed in order to raise the standard of work in information and communication technology and music. The shared teaching in physical education, art and design, and science is good practice. It allows expertise to be disseminated and means that ultimately the pupils have higher quality learning experiences.
18. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the assessment procedures and the use of the resulting information to support both curriculum developments and the progress of individual pupils. The school now makes very good use of an analysis of the national test results to bring about improvements. The marking of pupils' work is consistent, and the best examples give pupils a clear indication of what they need to do to improve. All pupils have termly targets, but more short-term targets would more rapidly help to improve errors as they occur. It would also be helpful in some cases if time was set aside for the children to correct or complete unfinished pieces of work.
19. The view of the vast majority of parents is that the teaching is good. They made favourable comments at the parents' meeting about how enthusiastic their children are about coming to school. They also commented on the ways they supported them at home because the homework diaries show clearly what is expected.

The curriculum

The curriculum meets the statutory requirements and is enriched by the excellent provision for activities outside school time. The school provides a broad range of interesting and well-structured curricular opportunities that caters well for pupils of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. This

contributes strongly to the pupils' very good personal development, and their good standards of attainment and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curricular provision meets the pupils' needs well
- The school promotes equal opportunities and inclusion very well
- There are excellent extra-curricular activities, including clubs, visits and community links
- Very good cross-curricular links help to create a coherent education.
- There is very good curriculum planning to develop the pupils' skills in most subjects
- The school makes the most of its partnerships with parents and the community to support the curriculum
- The special educational needs provision is very good
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good
- The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good
- The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted very well
- Information and communication technology and music provision across the school and design and technology in Years 3 to 6 are not as well developed as the rest of the curriculum.

Commentary

20. There have been many improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection. Schemes of work for all subjects have mostly been carefully adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. The planning for pupils to learn through investigation and experiment in mathematics and science is very good and has had a significant impact on the standards of work in both subjects. There is a similar emphasis on promoting historical enquiry and geographical skills. The subject leaders monitor the planning very well, and the emerging priorities are linked very well to the school development plan and to the teachers' further professional development and training. Literacy and numeracy are planned effectively. The very strong links between all the subjects, while maintaining the integrity of each, provide pupils with a rich and meaningful education.
21. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage promotes the areas of learning very effectively through a range of interesting and challenging experiences. The children are already confident and secure in the school routines and are learning effectively after three weeks in school. The curriculum for the reception class leads the children effectively towards the National Curriculum so that a significant minority exceed the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1.
22. The excellent range and number of clubs provided for the older pupils includes several sports, choir, gardening, drama, art and craft and French. It makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school and the pupils are very enthusiastic participants. During the inspection, for example, 30 pupils attended the art and craft club. The school also has very good links with Peugeot Citroen, who sponsor the annual football tournament in Hordain in France and support the school's design and technology project for the West Midlands Technology Day. This link not only provides educational support, but also makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Year 6 pupils have French lessons, preparing them well for the next stage of their education as well as the French trip. Several pupils have firm friendships with their host families in France. The very good physical education provision and sporting activities provide the pupils with opportunities to compete successfully against other schools. Some pupils also learn to play musical instruments, but the overall provision for music is barely satisfactory.
23. The provision for information and communication technology, although satisfactory, is not yet as well developed as the other core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school has identified this as an area for further development. The design and technology curriculum has improved in Years 1 and 2 because of the enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leader in the reception class. There has been less adjustment to the government guidance for the subject in

Years 3 to 6. Although there are very effective links with other subjects, the development of pupils' skills is not as good as in other subjects.

24. The school makes very good provision for the pupils with special educational needs. As a result, they are well supported by their teachers and the classroom assistants. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides very effective support for her colleagues to ensure that the pupils' Individual Education Plans are of very good quality. Small steps, achievable targets are clearly defined and effectively meet the individual needs of the pupils. The provision for special educational needs meets all the statutory requirements.
25. The school uses the teachers' subject expertise very effectively so that the pupils benefit from specialist teaching. The planning is very effective in meeting the needs, for example, of the identified gifted and talented pupils in mathematics. A secondary mathematics teacher works one hour a week with a group of Year 6 pupils. There is a good number of teachers and very effective teaching assistants, all of whom benefit from regular training. The resources and accommodation are good and the attractive environment supports the pupils' learning well.

Care, guidance and support

The school has appropriate and effective procedures for ensuring the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides a very good level of support, advice and guidance for the pupils. The staff provide many opportunities for the pupils to contribute actively towards enhancing the day-to-day life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on promoting confident and friendly relationships
- The school ensures there is good curriculum coverage of health and safety issues
- The monitoring of the children's personal development is very good.

Commentary

26. The school maintains appropriate links with families and with the external services with regard to the welfare and protection of the children in the school. Matters relating to health and safety within the school buildings and site are monitored with due care. There is a strong emphasis on promoting healthy and safe practice and the pupils are given a wide range of curriculum content and direct experience to build awareness of the best ways to keep themselves healthy and safe.
27. The supportive and friendly relationships that have been established between the pupils and their class teachers mean that the pupils feel confident in approaching an adult for help. Due attention is paid to the pupils' concerns, individually and as a class group, and for the most part the pupils feel that their voices are heard and that action is taken where appropriate. For example, the pupil mediation scheme came about because of concerns about behaviour at playtimes. Whilst there are plans to introduce a School Council in the very near future, the oldest pupils feel that many opportunities are given already, at class and whole school level, to initiate discussions about issues that are of concern to them.
28. The school keeps good written records of the pupils' personal development. They include factors that might affect how well the pupils achieve within the school day, and notes on any personal problems they may be experiencing. In this way, the class teachers provide valuable additional support when appropriate.
29. The procedures for identifying the pupils with special educational needs and for monitoring progress are good. The information gained is used to good effect to put together the child's Individual Education Plan so that small achievable targets can be met. The statements of pupils who have special educational needs are being effectively implemented and the reviews of the statements and plans are up to date.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works hard to establish effective links with the parents. There are also very productive links with local industry, local community members and the parish church. The “Out-of-Hours” club provides supportive care before the start and at the end of the school day. There are very good links with the local secondary school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parental involvement in school trips and special curriculum events is good
- There are very strong links with parents whose children are in the Foundation Stage
- The links with the local Peugeot- Citroen car factory are very good
- The school’s involvement with the “Out-of-Hours” clubs for younger children is very good
- It also has very good links with the Year 7 secondary school staff
- More specific information in the Annual reports on the pupils’ progress in the non-core subjects would be helpful to parents

Commentary

30. Only a few parents are able to come in to school to help regularly, but a great many more provide valuable assistance on the many trips that the pupils make to places of interest. The parents also engage in active dialogue with the school through the regular completion of the homework diaries. Special events, like open days, awards assemblies and days concentrating on a particular area of the curriculum, such as mathematics, also attract considerable parental interest. Members of the wider local community are sometimes involved in supporting the curriculum, by giving accounts of their own experiences where this can enrich the more formal provision.
31. The parents of the children in the Foundation Stage are actively and productively involved in supporting their young children on entry to the school. They stay with them at the start of the day, help them to establish secure routines, and many give valuable support to groups of children during a wide range of activities. This sense of mutual care and involvement in learning is strongly fostered by the nursery and reception teachers who make the Foundation Stage area a welcoming environment for adults and children alike.
32. The school fully involves the parents of pupils with special educational needs in the review procedures required for education plans. Their views are actively sought and valued.
33. The local Peugeot-Citroen car factory pursues a policy of active involvement in the local community and gives valuable support to the school. This can take the form of arranged visits to the factory to enhance the children’s awareness of health and safety in the manufacturing process or of more direct financial support for the school. An example of this is the sponsoring of an overseas trip for the football team to play children in a “twinned” village in France. In this and other ways, the Peugeot-Citroen staff take a very active interest in the well being of the school.
34. The close links between the school and the management of the “Out-of-Hours” clubs run on the school site mean that the activities offered are mutually supportive and there is a sharing of facilities to the benefit of the pupils who attend. The mixing of ages in the club fosters the social development of the children and helps to establish friendly links during the school day as well.
35. There are appropriate opportunities for the oldest pupils to visit the local secondary schools prior to their transfer from the Year 6 class. In addition to this, a Year 7 mathematics teacher visits the school weekly to give additional tuition to pupils who are more able in this subject and can benefit from the extra challenge.

36. The school provides a good level of information for the parents about how well their children are progressing in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the coverage of many of the other subjects is not as informative as it could be. It is not always possible to see either the levels of knowledge and the skills being gained in every subject or the rate of progress being made. This requires further attention.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The governors have a significant part in helping to steer the work of the school forward. Through her own teaching, the headteacher provides a good role model for her colleagues, and manages the on-going improvements efficiently and effectively.

Main strength and weaknesses

- The headteacher and governors have a clear approach to shaping the future direction of the school. However, the work of the senior management team is not formalised and minutes of meetings are not taken.
- The headteacher and staff work effectively as a team to bring about improvements. Professional development and performance management are closely linked to the school's improvement plan.
- Good use is made of performance data and self-evaluation processes to identify areas for further development.
- The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good.
- The school manages its finances well.

Commentary

37. At the time of the previous inspection, both the headteacher and the governing body were newly appointed on the merger of two schools. In the intervening period, a great deal has been achieved and the schools have coalesced very successfully. The headteacher has developed a caring, hard-working community in which all at the school are equally valued. The very good relationships between pupils and staff and the hard work of the pupils promote a high quality ethos and good conditions for teaching and learning.

38. The governors make a very positive contribution to the work of the school and its policies through challenge and support. They have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a significant and considered influence in working with the headteacher in leading its development. They have a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of provision. They are fully involved in the life of the school.

39. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the future direction of the school to ensure that the highest possible standards are achieved. This is understood by a staff team that is dedicated to the pupils in its care. The leadership and management skills of the staff are well developed and reinforced through the performance management process. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team, but their work is neither formalised nor recorded.

40. Underpinning this process is the school's improvement plan, which reflects the clear vision of the way forward and the actions that are required to achieve it over the next two years. These are identified by a very detailed analysis of the pupils' performance and progress throughout the school, particularly in the core subjects. Evaluation is an integral part of the school's development with best practice being disseminated on a regular basis. This enables the teachers to continue improving the quality of their teaching and consequently the pupils' learning.

41. The roles and responsibilities of the staff are now fully embedded in the life of the school. The high quality of monitoring and evaluation ensures that the subject action plans are based on accurate observation and information that identify the way forward. The work and influence of the

subject leaders is beneficial to their colleagues and plays an important part in raising the pupils' standards of achievement.

42. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good and have led to a very good standard of provision for these pupils. The co-ordinator has developed very effective systems for maintaining and updating the pupil plans and the quality of support she provides for colleagues is very good.
43. The school applies well the principles of best value. For example, the governors closely monitor the school's performance and compare it with other schools; they also review initiatives such as the use and value of the pupils' learning in the new computer suite. A range of quotes is sought before agreeing to aspects of building maintenance. The governors take their financial monitoring very seriously and give the headteacher very good support in her financial management. They manage a licensed deficit budget (seen below) very effectively to ensure that lack of funding is not allowed to have an adverse effect on either the quality of education being provided or the standards that the pupils attain.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	405399
Total expenditure	434405
Expenditure per pupil	2354

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-31164
Balance carried forward to the next	-32747

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- Since the last inspection, very good improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage curriculum provision and in the assessment of the children's learning.
- Very good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor classrooms.

The nursery and reception classes are based in one unit with a shared access to a secure outdoor area. Thirty-one nursery children attend in the mornings only, and twenty-nine Reception class children stay all day. At this early stage of the year, most of the nursery children have only been in school for between 5-10 sessions.

The achievements of the children fluctuate year-on-year. However, over the past two years in relation to other schools in the County most children met the age-related expectations as set out in the national guidance for Foundation Stage children by the end of the reception year. A significant minority exceeded these goals across all the areas of learning. In the current cohorts, as well as those who have just entered Year 1 the weaker element in their learning is the use of spoken English. Standards are not as high as they could be.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The nursery and reception class children have a very positive start to school life.

Commentary

44. At this point of the year, this area of learning is the major focus of the teaching. Because of the high numbers in each session, it has been necessary to stagger the children's entry. This has been achieved very successfully and as a result all the children in both the nursery and the reception class are happy, confident and secure in coming to school. They separate from their parents and carers very well and most are becoming more self-confident. They self-register their attendance on entry to the classroom and are keen to participate in all the activities around them, both indoors and outdoors. They are beginning to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because the staff works well together, showing a very good caring and sensitive approach to the children's needs.
45. The routines are established from the outset and as a result provide a structure in which the children can begin to find some independence in their decision making. For example, they choose to work either inside or outside with the good range of equipment and materials on offer. This is fostering good independent learning and responsibility for their own actions. In the nursery, most of the work is solitary play alongside others but in the reception class most can work, negotiate and play together, for example, when using the large wood blocks to make a cabin for the animals in the 'jungle'. This shows that they are learning to establish relationships and to socialise well. The nursery children are increasingly becoming involved in the riding of bicycles and the 'driving' of trucks. In doing so, they follow the instructions of the lollipop lady at the 'zebra' crossing and stopping at the red light as they pedal around the track. Good independent learning was taking place as one child started to dig up the grass by the side of the track near the work in progress sign. This engaged another child and they worked side-by-side communicating through their actions, with sheer determination and concentration in getting the job done.
46. A significant feature in the reception class is the children's ability to attend to their own hygiene. This is because they have been well taught at home and in the nursery. The adults also place

great importance on the children being independent, for example, when changing for physical education in the hall. They guide those who need help so that they too have a sense of achievement when they have succeeded at the task.

47. Most of the children in the reception class take turns, share and agree limits well, for example, when using the trucks to make patterns in the sand. They are learning to tidy up at the end of sessions, though at this stage of the term the staff realises that it is an area that needs further improvement. All children, including those who have joined the reception class with no prior nursery experience, understand right from wrong. This is because the adults place a great emphasis on reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour. For example, when one child snatched flowers from another, the adult dealt with it in a quiet, kind but firm manner. The quiet rigour of the teaching and attentiveness to the needs of each child are notable features of their work. The children respond appropriately, and this demonstrates very clearly the sense of trust that is being built and the rapport between adult and child.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for the development of the children's communication, language and literacy skills is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are making good gains in their early reading and writing skills.
- Further work needs to be done to support and correct children's spoken English whilst they are engaged in their tasks.

Commentary

48. The play activities and focused group work allow the children to develop their speaking and listening skills. Most children listen well to instruction, stories and to each other. However, a small but significant minority of the children in the nursery have difficulties in the pronunciation of words. These children do not yet engage readily in talk. When they do so, they either do not speak clearly or else make single word observations. In the reception class, the staff give the children good opportunities to speak in the group time so that they may express their ideas and opinions. In these sessions, for example, they discuss a story and practise their phonic skills together with the teacher. However, the staff do not always take the opportunities during the play activities to discreetly improve the children's pronunciation of words, or correct their grammatical errors.

49. It is far too soon to be making any overall judgements on the nursery children's attainment and achievements in their literacy skills, mathematical learning, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. However, the provision for these aspects is very good. The indoor and outdoor activities are well-planned with a very clear focus on skills and knowledge that closely matches the needs of the children and meets the national framework for the Foundation Stage and beyond. This ensures that the planned learning challenges the children intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

Subsequent judgements in all areas of learning relate to children who are in the reception year.

50. In the reception class, it was evident that the children find books a source of pleasure and have a growing understanding of the printed word. They know that pictures can help to reveal the meaning of the story, that print goes from left to right and some can already recognise letters and words. Their ability to memorise rhymes and the repetitive parts of a story is developing well. For instance, the teacher captured their interest with her very good story telling of 'Elmer the Elephant'. As a result, they were able to recall parts of the story and be creative in making their own bright and colourful elephant patterns.

51. A very good emphasis is placed on early writing. The children know that marks, letters and words convey meaning. A few children are beginning to form letter shapes, and can write their own names with a mixture of upper and lower case letters. A very small minority can write simple words and are encouraged to put capital letters at the beginning of a sentence and a full stop at the end. The children's progress in pencil control and the correct formation of letters is good. Through purposeful role-play activities the children write lists by copying words and at 'the florists shop' they write out an order for flowers, whilst holding the telephone to their ear.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of play enables the children to gain first hand experiences in their mathematical understanding.

Commentary

52. Imaginative teaching is helping the children to make a good start in learning about number by counting, matching and sorting in a range of contexts. The activities include the use of number songs and visual items, such as the cakes the children had made. Access to number games around the classrooms ensures that children have time to play and match numbers on the board, and they also use the number line out of doors in a similar fashion. Pencils and paper are readily available so that the children can also write the numbers. A good example of sustained concentration was seen when a group of children were on the floor with an adult matching shapes in a large domino game. They were proud of their achievements. At "the florist's shop" the children are beginning to handle coins, and to weigh, measure and estimate when cooking. All members of staff make the learning interesting, and through exploration, enquiry and discovery the children are acquiring positive attitudes towards mathematical learning. The photographic evidence shows the numerous activities that are linked to other areas to enhance mathematical understanding. They include practical experiences using containers and building blocks to develop an appreciation of comparisons, for example, 'heavier than, lighter than, 'full and empty' and 'taller than and shorter than'. Another strong feature is the adults' questioning as the children go about their work. For example, they might ask 'What shape is the wheel?' or 'Are you going left or right?' as they reach the traffic lights.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good foundations are being laid in the children's scientific, historical and geographical knowledge and understanding, and their information and communication technology skills.

Commentary

53. Early skills in the handling of the mouse and the keyboard are being firmly established in small group situations. The range of ability is vast but the more confident children are already adept at using some of the icons, for example, to change the colour on the programme. As a result, the adults adjust the work for these children to ensure that they are being challenged at a higher level through thought provoking questioning. This good questioning is also used very sensitively to promote enquiry and investigation skills. For example, after looking closely at a sunflower head, the children realise that it was full of seeds and they learned that if saved they could be replanted later in the year. This was a real discovery. Construction toys, playdough, cutting and sticking

activities are readily accessible. For example, after reading the story about Elmer, a group of children worked collaboratively using bricks, animals, a drawing of a waterhole and trees to create a jungle scene. This was developing good negotiating skills with the help of the adult.

54. The photographic evidence shows that during the course of the year, the children have good opportunities to acquire a greater understanding of the world around them. For instance, they go out to study the local environment and visit places such as the local Post Office and the fire station. They also receive a visit from a blind lady and her dog, and work with a local artist.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good gains in both the finer and larger physical movements.

Commentary

55. The use of the spacious indoor and outdoor areas as well as the school hall provides the children with good opportunities to handle both large and small apparatus and equipment confidently and competently. They enjoy the challenges and show pleasure in their achievements as they manoeuvre the bicycles and trucks to the parking lot. There are also good cross-curricular links with their mathematical activities, for example, because the children have to park them in sequence to ten according to their number plates.

56. The children are also making positive strides in mastering fine movement skills through the use of a range of different materials, tools and equipment. They receive good support and show perseverance in doing so. They use jigsaws, different size pencils, paintbrushes, crayons and other small tools in an increasingly well-co-ordinated manner. They are helped in this process because the adults ensure that they acquire these skills when it is appropriate for them to do so.

57. The staff maintain an appropriate balance between vigilance about safety and the encouragement of independence. They intervene sensitively by giving clear instructions about how to use the equipment so that no one is put at risk, but do not interfere with the children's plans. This process also supports their personal and social development as they learn how to share and take turns. Consequently, they enjoy and benefit from their physical activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good gains in their creative development through role-play, art and music.

Commentary

58. The adult's planning shows a clear focus on the need to develop skills as well as enabling the children to explore the different techniques, materials and equipment. The classrooms have good resources that are easily accessible for the children to select. For example, they are able to express themselves freely in paint and collage. All work is highly valued by the staff so that all children feel comfortable with what they have achieved. This motivates them to further extend the work and to experiment and discover in other ways. Their previous artwork shows a strong link

with literacy and mathematics. For example, the children begin to develop an idea of pattern through repeated prints.

59. No planned musical activities were seen, but at the beginning and end of story times and in mathematics good use was made of songs. The children also had access to music instruments outside and sat quietly in a corner and listened to a taped piece of music.
60. Building on their nursery experiences the children extend their role-play activities. The role-play areas are made attractive and provide good stimuli. As a result, play is purposeful and busy. The tasks are carried out effectively with a good, shared understanding of the various roles, for example, within a florist's shop. This role-play was productive in that the children were taking orders on the telephone, writing them out, selecting the flowers, arranging them, wrapping them in paper and taking the money, which was efficiently counted. No one however, appeared to be "buying" until an adult sensitively intervened by prompting one child to use her mathematical knowledge and skills to make up a bunch of three yellow flowers, four red and some greenery. This then led to another child selecting her bouquet.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are good and are rising in writing skills
- There is writing for all purposes across the curriculum
- The quality handwriting and presentation of work are inconsistent across the school.
- Insufficient attention is given to the development and improvement of spoken English.
- A sharper and more focused approach to pupils' individual improvement targets is needed through the marking of their work

Commentary

61. The school has worked hard and successfully to raise standards in English. Improved teaching and learning, the very positive attitudes of the pupils and a whole school commitment to the improvement of attainment have achieved this.
62. The 2002 results show that by the age of seven, the pupils are achieving standards in the national tests that are above average in reading and average in writing when compared with all schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level is well above average in reading and above average in writing. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. At the age of eleven, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in English is above average and the proportion achieving the higher level is well above average.
63. In the national tests for 2003, the school achieved the agreed targets for English. There is a difference between the performance of the boys and girls, but care needs to be exercised in interpreting data for a small cohort with a high proportion of boys. This was particularly evident in writing where the girls outperformed the boys. This has already been recognised by the school and actions are being taken to correct the disparity. The evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that this is being achieved.
64. By the ages of seven and eleven, the pupils are making good progress and are achieving standards that are above the national average. The few pupils with English as an additional language are performing equally as well as their peers. The school has taken steps to ensure that

the higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged and work is planned well to meet their needs. Those with special educational needs are making progress that is in line with their capabilities. The level of support they receive is very good.

65. Throughout the school, the pupils' listening skills are good, but their speaking skills require further development. The pupils need the opportunity to have their responses modelled and rehearsed with their teachers to make sure that they speak clearly and accurately. A more systematic use of paired discussions will enhance the pupils' discussion skills and their use of formal language. There were good examples of the pupils' understanding and use of technical language. For instance, in Year 6, the pupils described the criteria for non-chronological writing and in Years 2 and 5 they were confident in asking their questions of a World War II veteran and a Victorian 'child' in their history lessons.
66. All pupils are enthusiastic readers and standards are above average throughout the school. This has been achieved by the groundwork in phonic skills that the pupils receive in their early reading experiences and the development of critical skills, as they become more proficient. By the age of seven, the pupils read confidently and fluently with many being expressing a preference for different authors. The eleven-year-old pupils experience a wide range of literature and make very good use of printed and electronically stored information to research their work in all subjects. The teachers make good use of the library by fostering the pupils' library skills and to interest the children in both fiction and non-fiction text from a very early age.
67. Writing for all purposes was recognised as a focus for development over the past year. This has resulted in the pupils making good progress in their writing skills in all subjects, but especially in science and history. A more consistent approach to handwriting, style and presentation in books would bring about further improvement across the whole school. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are above average. The pupils in Year 2 used their word processing skills well to present their Weather Poems. In a link with design and technology, the pupils in Year 2 worked in pairs to produce instructions for making hare and tortoise puppets. Clear instructions were devised and written with good spelling and punctuation.
68. The high standards in writing being achieved in Year 6 are the result of teaching of a very high quality. By this age, the pupils are writing for a range of purposes, including fiction, poetry and letter writing. The pupils' skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation are well developed and used effectively. In a very good lesson, these pupils organised their work effectively when producing a piece of non-chronological writing about the buildings of the Ancient Greeks taking great care to ensure that they met the criteria for this type of text. They used words to good effect when comparing the merits of living in Athens and Sparta, and employed well-reasoned arguments when making a preferred choice of residence. For example, they decided that Athens was a better place to live because they were outward looking and would have more friends.
69. The pupils' attitudes to English are good overall. They are keen to participate and eager to learn. These characteristics are underpinned by the very good relationships they have with their peers and teachers. Their behaviour is good.
70. The quality of the teaching and learning is good overall. The teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and their planning is of a high standard. At its very best, in Year 6, the lessons have pace and challenge through appropriate support and short-term targets, and there are very high expectations and an enthusiasm for the subject. This model of short-term targets could usefully be employed throughout the school. In most lessons, the teachers make good use of the final whole class session to allow the pupils to reflect upon their learning, to assess their understanding and to provide the pupils with a view of their future learning. The skilled teaching assistants are used to good effect to support the pupils' learning. Homework is used productively to support and extend the pupils' learning, for example, as seen in a Year 5 activity concerning spelling skills.

71. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management in the subject. The pupils' performance is rigorously reviewed and the teaching is evaluated to identify areas of strength and weakness. The resulting analysis is made known to the staff and used as part of the school's improvement process.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. The teachers have identified when and how literacy skills can be developed in all subjects. The marking of the pupils' writing is always supportive, but it does not always make clear how improvements might be made. The provision of short-term targets to achieve progress from lesson to lesson will help the pupils to achieve their long-term targets. Moreover, the pupils' handwriting skills and the presentation of their work are inconsistent and require further development.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well
- The teaching is good and the curriculum is challenging
- The pupils have very good skills in investigation and solving problems
- Not enough use is made of short, sharp targets for individual pupils in order to help them understand what they need to do to improve.
- The pupils use mathematics very effectively in other subjects
- Generally, the teachers do not expect enough of their pupils' in the way they present their work.
- There is very good provision for gifted and talented pupils in Year 6
- The subject is led and managed very effectively
- The pupils' learning is measured very effectively and the results are used accurately to match the work to their abilities

Commentary

72. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 where a significant number of pupils are already working within the higher level 5. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection. The teachers' knowledge and analysis of their pupils' progress through tests and observation over time helps ensure that all pupils achieve well. Those with special educational needs have clear targets and are given effective additional support. The teachers and teaching assistants respond accurately to the needs of the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language. This year, the boys in Year 6 are working at higher levels than the girls and the provisional figures show that a higher percentage of boys achieved level 5 in the 2003 national tests. These differences vary from year to year due to the to the size of the cohort and the gender imbalance within the classes. All teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of the lesson and they work hard to generate a response from both sexes and all abilities. A Year 7 teacher works with gifted and talented pupils in Year 6 weekly, setting challenging investigations at a high level. She works in close liaison with the class teacher so that these pupils are challenged and supported very well.

73. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a thorough grounding in all aspects of the curriculum. A strong feature of the teaching is the way that the pupils are expected to use their skills across all aspects of mathematics. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, the pupils used their knowledge of addition and subtraction to pay for items with 2p and 1p coins and to work out the change. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have an above-average competency in number, which they use very effectively to solve problems relating to number, measures, shape and space. Although the teachers in Years 1 and 2 keep careful records of their pupils' achievements, it is difficult for

pupils to see the progress they are making across all aspects of mathematics. This is because some of their work is on loose sheets that are kept in a folder and are difficult to access. Short-term, relevant targets for individual pupils that are followed through in the marking would enable the pupils to understand how they can improve.

74. A similar system of short-term target-setting, made clear to the pupils and parents and reflected in the teacher's day-to day marking, is needed throughout Years 3 to 6 to enable all pupils to have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve. All pupils who were engaged in discussion with the inspectors rate mathematics highly and are well-motivated and eager to do well. This is a tribute to the interesting curriculum that encourages them to apply their knowledge to solve problems and the very effective way that the teachers match the work to the abilities of the pupils. The pupils use mathematical vocabulary accurately, but their speaking skills are not as good as their mathematical understanding and some find it difficult to explain their thinking. Homework is used well and the pupils are conscientious about its completion, often exploring concepts beyond those required. The teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils. In a very good lesson at the end of the day, for instance, the teacher was very skilful in keeping the pupils on task by asking individuals if they were ready for more examples. The planning was amended from the day before because the pupils had not understood fully, but ensured that the gifted and talented pupils were challenged throughout. Time limits and expectations of the amount to be completed kept up the pace, and the pupils worked very hard.
75. The teachers work very closely with the teaching assistants. As a result, the pupils' learning is consistent and there are no mixed messages. Similarly, the pupils generally work hard, but the presentation of their work is inconsistent, particularly when writing word problems. The teachers rarely refer to the presentation in their marking so the pupils have no incentive to improve.
76. The subject co-ordinator provides strong leadership and her very accurate analysis of the results of formal assessments and curriculum planning have ensured that pupils have a very good curriculum. She monitors the teaching and planning to assess strengths and weaknesses and to identify issues for development. All teachers have had extensive numeracy training and the very good dialogue amongst all the staff ensures that pupils' needs are met well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

The use of other curriculum subjects to consolidate mathematical concepts is impressive. When the pupils organise and interrogate data, for example, it is for science, history or geography and often includes new learning in information and communication technology. These links are not accidental but planned to reinforce learning across the curriculum. For example, the pupils calculate the number of volts used in a range of torches in design and technology based on their understanding of decimal fractions and create circuits in science. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is a significant strength.

SCIENCE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The challenging curriculum inspires the pupils to do well
- The pupils are particularly skilful in investigating scientific processes
- Science is led very effectively by the two subject leaders and this promotes consistency in the planning
- The pupils have a wide scientific knowledge and understanding
- Assessment is used effectively to identify where amendments are needed in the curriculum

Commentary

77. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above average. This is because almost all science is taught through scientific enquiry so the pupils understand through practical experiences. There has been rapid improvement since the last inspection when standards were average for both age groups. There are an impressive number of pupils in Year 6 working within the higher level 5. The pupils achieve very well throughout the school.
78. The provisional results for the 2003 national tests indicate that standards have risen again with all Year 6 pupils achieving at least the expected level and well over half reaching the higher level 5, thus improving further on the 2002 achievements. This is because of the way science is taught and the challenging curriculum. The pupils approach new learning with a desire to “find out”. For example, while the standard curriculum for pupils in Year 2 is to learn about the life cycle of plants in a simple form, these pupils explored the relative size of seeds with their plants. Both the teacher and the pupils were fascinated to find out that some of the largest plants have tiny seeds.
79. The Year 6 pupils are practised in the concept of “fair testing” and use the principle as a matter of course, working accurately and carefully. Again the pupils’ knowledge and understanding were extended, as they not only tested the hypotheses that the strength of light passing through a material depends on its transparency and that light can bend and change direction. The pupils used concave and convex mirrors and were encouraged to explore how these characteristics benefit mankind. This approach throughout the school, based on enquiry, hypothesis, experiment and general statements, provides the pupils with a very good platform for future learning.
80. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection. The two lessons observed within Years 3 to 6 were both taught very well and the pupils’ books show that the teaching is consistently good throughout the school. This is a credit to the co-ordination of the subject and the whole school commitment to scientific enquiry. The curriculum has been tailor-made for the pupils in the school with government and Local Education Authority guidelines used where appropriate. The teachers make very good use of the available resources and homework supports the research activities very well. The marking is very effective and teachers often write questions at the end of pupils’ work to promote further enquiry. This is a good working model that could be usefully employed to further improve other aspects of the work across other subjects. In some instances, however, greater attention to the consistency in handwriting would further enhance the pupil’s presentation of their work. The pupils with special educational needs often work alongside their peers in small groups, thereby achieving very well. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged and highly motivated. Visits and visitors support the learning very effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Both the teachers and the classroom assistants show effective skills
- More staff training is required in order to raise standards to the higher level.

Commentary

81. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations. This is similar to the position found at the time of the previous inspection. Greater progress has been hindered by the difficulties the school has experienced with its software and the provision of staff training. Nevertheless, the establishment of a computer suite has had a beneficial effect on the pupils’ achievements and the quality of teaching and learning. All pupils are making satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs.

82. In Year 1, the pupils exercise appropriate mouse control to produce a picture using Splosh. Pupils in Year 2 are using their word processing skills to present their Weather Poems with imagination. Pupils in Year 3 progress to present their writing by amalgamating text and graphics.
83. By Year 5, the pupils are producing branching databases to interrogate information about different animal groups and in Year 6 they use the Internet to research information to support their study of the Ancient Greeks. They have an understanding of control and modelling through programming a set of traffic lights and produce graphs and pie charts from their databases. During a recent residential week, they have produced a personal website using Clipart and an animation program. They have a sound understanding of Internet safety.
84. During Year 6, the pupils will be taking part in the MTA Technical Challenge with Peugeot Citroen. Last year the pupils created an automated "engine fit assembly" using ICT and design and technology skills and technical equipment. They demonstrated the working model.
85. The teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. All teachers use the computer suite as well as their class-based computers. The classes are divided into two groups for each lesson. The teaching assistants provide very good support for the pupils to improve their library and research skills during the lesson. The computers are also being used in the classroom to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in history, literacy and numeracy.
86. The co-ordinator has a good subject knowledge and works hard to support her colleagues. Appropriate plans for the development of the subject have resulted from good monitoring and evaluation by the co-ordinator. The school is successfully addressing the difficulties it experienced in providing resources and staff training for the subject.

HUMANITIES

Two lessons were seen in history and religious education within Years 3 to 6. No lessons were seen in geography. A scrutiny of pupils' finished work was carried out in all three subjects. The teachers' planning for all subjects is good. The school has identified the need to improve the assessment of pupils' individual progress in these subjects and this is a current priority in the school improvement plan.

History

The provision for history is good. It is presented in an interesting and creative manner that stimulates the pupils' learning and enables them to achieve high standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good use of resources to support the curriculum.
- The use of community links and the locality to support the curriculum experiences of the pupils
- There is a need to improve the literacy skills by improving the presentation and handwriting in books

Commentary

87. The standards being achieved are above those expected which is an improvement since the last inspection. Improved teaching and learning have enabled the pupils to make better-than-average improvement. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and have good access to the curriculum.
88. The school has adapted the national guidelines to meet the needs of the pupils. In Year 1, the pupils are comparing old and new toys that are made from different materials. In Year 2, they have framed their own questions to ask of a World War II veteran, who provided them with very appropriate answers and thereby developed their knowledge of the rigours that soldiers have to undertake in wartime.
89. Enthusiasm for history continues in Years 3 to 6. The pupils extend their knowledge of Romans and Egyptians in Years 3 and 4. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, they engaged in a discussion with a Victorian 'child', using their questioning skills to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Victorian age. This will be re-enforced by the pupils taking part in an enactment of a Victorian day at a local museum. In Year 6, the pupils use their developing skills in ICT to research information from the Internet about the Ancient Greeks. In a very good literacy lesson, the pupils used the facts they had gathered to produce a piece of non-chronological writing about Greek buildings.
90. The quality of the teaching seen ranged from good to excellent. The teachers present the curriculum with imagination. They are constantly imploring their pupils to be historians and are providing them with the skills to succeed. As a result, the history projects are producing writing of good quality. However, in some cases the quality of the pupils' handwriting and their presentation of this work is unsatisfactory. The successful lessons enthuse the pupils and bring history to life. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and use relevant resources and the locality very effectively. This all stems from the very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator.

Geography

The geography curriculum is well managed and ensures full coverage of the programmes of study. Evidence from the scrutiny of work seen indicates that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The teaching and learning are well supported by a secure policy and good planning provision that is rooted in the national guidance documentation. The school makes very good use of its locality to support and enrich the pupils' learning experiences.

Religious Education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are achieving above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Their awareness of other world religions has improved since the last inspection
- The teaching of religious education is good.

Commentary

91. Over the course of the year, the planning of the work for Year 1 and 2 pupils indicates that much discussion takes place about Christianity and festivals such as Divali, Christmas and Easter. The pupils are introduced to stories from the Bible and the religious texts of other faiths. A significant strength is the use of other subjects, such as art and design, to establish an understanding of the 'Creation' and various displays demonstrate the beauty of the world around us. For example, some pupils were seen frequently standing in the foyer of the school gazing at the fruits, the

paintings, and others were reading poetry about the harvest in a well-presented display. In discussion, the pupils show that they have begun to understand the meaning of religious symbols and they know that some are characteristic of more than one religion. They are fully aware of the significance of people's values and concerns in relation to matters of right and wrong.

92. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have reinforced their knowledge of both the Old and the New Testaments. They know the importance of special books in religion and develop a strong understanding and respect for the Bible and other sacred books, such as the Quran. Well-chosen artefacts, stories and visits, for example to a church, Coventry Cathedral and a Gurdwara, all help to enhance the pupils' understanding of the different faiths. The good teaching seen in one lesson extended the pupils' knowledge and developed their understanding. In whole class, paired and group discussions the pupils expressed their thoughts and understanding about relationships with their friends and family, and about those who have departed from this life. The quiet rigour of the lesson produced thought-provoking and challenging questioning by the teacher and the pupils alike. In the other lesson seen, the religious concept being taught was a difficult one for the pupils to understand, but they had a fair knowledge by the end of the session. The inspector's subsequent discussion with the teacher demonstrated the improvement that has been made in the self-evaluation of lessons since the last report. The subject is very well led and managed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson was seen in art and design in Years 1 and 2 and two lessons in design and technology were seen in Years 3 to 6. No lessons were seen in either physical education or music. A scrutiny of the teacher's planning and pupils' previous work in art and design and design and technology was carried out. The teachers' planning for physical education and music was also examined.

Art and design

The provision for art and design is **very good**.

Commentary

93. The pupils' previous work in portfolios and on display around the school indicates that the curriculum for art and design is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Furthermore, it is enhanced by visiting artists, 'focussed art' days in school, extra-curricular art clubs, and visits to see fine works of art. The locality is also used extensively, for instance, to support drawing skills when the pupils go to Coventry Cathedral, the Temple and to the museum. In the lesson observed, the children were working collaboratively in small groups, designing and using a very wide range of natural woodland materials. As a result of their carefully chosen colours, textures and the positioning of the materials they made some very interesting patterns based on the techniques of Andy Goldsworthy. The children had also used the books provided by the teacher as stimuli to help them with their work. The subject is very well led and managed.

Design and technology

The provision for design and technology is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good grasp of techniques and skills
- There are very good links with local industry to support projects in Year 6
- The subject is effectively linked to other curriculum areas
- The quality of the planning is variable for the Year 3 to 6 pupils and the development of their skills is less consistent than in other subjects.

Commentary

94. The photographic evidence and the work on display indicate that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average and the pupils achieve well. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and the pupils attain the standards expected by the end of Year 6.
95. The school uses the government guidance for planning. It has been adapted to meet pupils' needs in Years 1 and 2, but there is less coherence in the planning in Years 3 to 6 and the development of the pupils' skills varies widely from year to year. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but displays and photographs show a good range of skills being used. In these classes, the pupils make houses of straw, wood and bricks like that of the "The Three Little Pigs". They assemble and join the components accurately and then evaluate the outcomes. When a pupil constructed a shelter, the teacher linked the exercise to the work covered in science by asking "Is it waterproof?". This was an example of the very good cross-curricular links inherent in the work. The complete curriculum is covered well in Years 1 and 2. It includes food technology and is linked to personal, social and health education as the pupils prepare healthy food.
96. The teaching was good in both lessons observed within Years 3 to 6. In both classes, the pupils had a very good understanding of the properties of materials from their work in science. In one lesson, the pupils dismantled torches, again demonstrating a good scientific knowledge. When drawing diagrams of their findings, however, few pupils used the technical words they were given, and the teacher struggled to elicit a response to the question, "Does your torch fit its purpose?". Few pupils presented their work well and generally their handwriting was untidy. In the other lesson, the pupils looked at a range of percussion instruments and discussed the materials used as a preparation for designing and making their own. They suggested an appropriate range of materials to bring to school for the construction, again demonstrating a good understanding of their properties. Photographs of last year's work shows that the pupils are beginning to apply the necessary skills in order to construct their models.
97. The annual West Midlands Technology project, in partnership with PSA Peugeot-Citroen and linked to information and communication technology, provides a valuable contribution to pupils' design and technology skills and their social development. Last year's Year 6 pupils created a working model of the conveyer belt of a car assembly for the radiator and fan, controlled by the computer. These pupils had visited the Peugeot-Citroen site and had been very well supported by staff at the factory. A group of pupils presented this project to other schools. The co-ordinator manages the subject well, monitoring teaching and learning and has effected good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The teachers keep a running record of the pupils' achievements in the subject but these have not yet been used to influence the planning in Years 3 to 6. The resources are barely adequate, but deficiencies are being covered by equipment brought in by the staff and pupils. The school is very good at fund-raising and recruiting support from the community.

Music

The provision in music is **satisfactory**. It is not as good as it could be.

Commentary

98. No lessons were observed during the inspection so no judgement about standards can be made. Music is taught by the music co-ordinator for Years 1 and 2 pupils. A specialist from the local education authority's music service takes the Years 3 to 6 pupils. All pupils are given the opportunity to have individual tuition in playing a musical instrument. A choir has been established as an extra curricular club. The school's own evaluations recognise the need to develop the music curriculum across the whole school and discussion with the newly appointed co-ordinator reveals a very clear way forward as to what needs to be done in order to raise standards and achievement to a higher level.

Physical Education

- The provision in physical education is **very good**.

Commentary

99. No lessons were observed during the inspection so no judgement about standards can be made. The discussion with pupils, the school documentation and the wide range of sporting opportunities show that physical education activities have a high profile within the school. All pupils from the reception to Year 6 have regular swimming lessons. There is a good curriculum, well structured to cover all aspects and to develop skills. The clubs include a wide range of sporting activities, at present covering skipping, football, netball, hockey and athletics. The school has cricket teams and the football team visits France to compete in a tournament with schools from all over Europe. Sponsored by Peugeot-Citroen, this venture not only provides the pupils with additional sporting opportunities, but it also makes a very good contribution to their cultural development. The subject leader gives generously of his time to ensure that the school is well represented in local tournaments and that the pupils achieve success. The resources are good, augmented by the generosity of local business and individuals. The subject leader monitors the lessons to ensure that the subject is taught effectively and that the pupils' skills are developed consistently throughout the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

- The school provides a very good personal, social and health education programme for the pupils.

Commentary

100. There is an evolving personal, social, moral and health education curriculum that responds to pupils' needs. There are good programmes to support the pupils with social and language difficulties and a "Friends" course that focuses on anxiety and depression. The pupils in Year 5 undertake training on the awareness of feelings and peer mediation. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils support other children by listening and helping them to solve disputes. Visitors, such as the nurse, enhance the pupils' understanding of the use and misuse of drugs and sex education as part of the science curriculum. Personal, social and health education lessons are now timetabled for each class and, during the inspection, the pupils considered issues of anger and the need for rules. The school's provision for personal, social and health education has a beneficial influence on pupils' spiritual, moral and social education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	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).