

INSPECTION REPORT

QUINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lower Quinton, Stratford-upon-Avon

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125519

Headteacher: Mrs. L.J. Hayes

Lead inspector: C.D. Loizou

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 September 2003

Inspection number: 257259

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	80
School address:	Lower Quinton Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV37 8SA
Telephone number:	01789 720317
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. J. Cox
Date of previous inspection:	16 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Quinton Primary School is situated near Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire. The school is small compared with other primary schools and admits up to 15 children into its Reception class each year. The school also has a part-time (mornings) Nursery, which admits up to 13 three-year-old children. Nursery and Reception children are taught in the same class. There are 74 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven and they are taught in four mixed-age classes. Nearly all of the pupils are of white heritage and all speak English as their first language. Attainment on entry is below average. Twelve per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Approximately 25 per cent (above average) of the pupils on roll join or leave the school each year at times other than the usual time of first admission or transfer to secondary education. Twenty seven per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is above average and five per cent (average) have a Statement of Special Educational Need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9510	C. Murray-Watson	Lay inspector	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory education**. The teaching is good and is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in the infant years where the teaching is most effective. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and governors. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Nursery and Reception children and the pupils in the infant years (Years 1 and 2) achieve well because the teaching is consistently good or better.
- The teaching is good overall and is particularly effective in supporting the pupils with special educational needs. However, *the teaching varies in the junior years and the pupils are not achieving the high standards they are capable of, especially in Years 3 and 4.*
- The school provides a good and balanced curriculum and teachers ensure that there are good links between subjects and topics. Good use is made of computers. *Not enough is done to check how well the pupils are doing, especially in the junior years.*
- The headteacher and governors provide good leadership. The school is well managed so that the pupils are well behaved and enjoy caring for their school and the local environment. However, *the school's internal appearance does not present a positive image of the school to parents and visitors.*
- The school has established good links with the local community, outside agencies and businesses.

The school has made **satisfactory improvement** since its last inspection in 1998. The governors are much more involved in monitoring the work of the school. Standards have improved in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Homework is more consistent. Assessment procedures have improved but more needs to be done to ensure that all of the pupils reach their learning targets.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils **achieve satisfactorily overall** with **good achievement in the Foundation Stage and infant class**. Nursery and Reception children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. Reading, writing and mathematics standards are currently above average by the end of Year 2 and more able pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6. Standards appear low in the table below but the results need to be interpreted carefully as very few pupils take the tests each year. Consequently, standards can fluctuate markedly each year. The 2002 results show low standards in English and mathematics and they were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in science. There was a slight improvement in the 2003 results and the inspection findings confirm that standards by the end of Year 6 are currently average in English, mathematics and science. However, some inconsistencies in the teaching affect how well the pupils achieve in the junior years so that standards are not always as high as they should be.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	E*	E	E
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E
Science	C	E	E*	E*

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
E* - in the lowest five per cent of schools. The "similar" in the table above refers to the percentage of free school meals.

The pupils are **well behaved** and **show good attitudes to learning and school**. **Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average**. **The pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory**. **Moral, social and cultural development is good** and the school provides good support for all the pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **teaching is good** in most parts of the school. In the Nursery and Reception class, and in the infant class (Years 1 and 2), it is consistently good with very good features. Consequently, the children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning and achieve well. This is built on well in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils make good progress and achieve well especially in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 and 4 the teaching, although satisfactory, does not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching is good and enables the pupils to reach the standards expected for their age.

The school provides a **good curriculum**. Literacy and numeracy skills are well used across the curriculum but there could be more opportunities for pupils to use extended writing. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning in other subjects. **Partnerships with the local community, outside agencies and businesses are good** and effectively used to enhance and support the work the pupils do across a range of subjects. The school also provides **good care and welfare** and the pupils feel comfortable talking to teachers and support staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **headteacher provides good leadership** and has led the drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has had a significant impact on raising standards by the end of Year 2 and is beginning to improve the achievement of the pupils by the time they leave the school. She has led the drive to improve the way the curriculum is planned for mixed-age classes. Changes to the way classes are organised and improvements to the external environment of the school have led to significant improvements to the curriculum and to teaching. Not enough is yet done to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good in the junior years. Governors have improved their involvement in the work of the school and now help to provide the strategic direction of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold positive views of the school and are pleased with the improvements made, especially the introduction of Nursery provision soon after the last inspection. Pupils have positive views of the school and enjoy the activities provided and their time in school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to raise standards further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Set challenging attainment targets for individual pupils, particularly in the junior years, so that more pupils achieve or exceed the standards expected for their age in English, mathematics and science.
- Systematically and routinely monitor the pupils' work to check that they are on course to achieve the learning targets set for them.
- Improve the way the school's internal environment is presented to pupils, parents and visitors in order that the school's appearance reflects high expectations and presents the school in the best possible way for prospective parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good. In the junior years (Years 3 to 6) achievement is satisfactory overall but this varies between the two classes. The pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4 and good progress in Years 5 and 6. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and other subjects are average by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2. *However, standards in the junior years, although average, could be higher in Years 3 and 4. Work is not always matched or targeted to the pupils' abilities.*
- The pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are well taught and supported throughout the school.
- Achievement in Years 5 and 6 is good because the teaching is effective. However, the pupils could make better progress in Years 3 and 4, where the teaching could stretch more able pupils better.
- Assessments of the pupils are not being checked regularly enough and this affects how well they achieve as they move up the school.
- The pupils achieve well and make good progress in information and communication technology and standards are rising as a result.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (13.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (10.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.4 (14.5)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

The table of results for Year 6 has not been listed as less than ten pupils took the tests last year.

1. Attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception years is below average, especially in speech and language. The children make good progress and achieve well so that they reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1.
2. Standards vary from year to year because of small numbers in each year group. Last year's national test results show a marked improvement in standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This upward trend has continued with this year's results (2003) indicating that more pupils achieved or reached the standards expected compared with 2002. Standards are currently above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2, confirming that the pupils are achieving well especially those who have the potential to achieve higher than expected standards because the teaching is good and they are being stretched.
3. Last year's test results for Year 6 pupils are not listed because a small number took the tests so the results must be treated with caution. Inspection judgements are that the pupils attain average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Standards in science

and other subjects are average throughout the school. Achievement could be better and this very much relates to inconsistencies in the way the pupils are being taught. After making good progress in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and then continuing to achieve well in the infant class, progress slows in Years 3 and 4, where the teaching, although satisfactory, does not always match tasks to the abilities of the pupils. The teaching improves in Years 5 and 6 so that, overall, the pupils reach the standards expected. More could be done to target and challenge more able pupils in Years 3 and 4 in order to raise achievement.

4. The pupils identified with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, the pupils attain standards in line with those expected by the end of year 2 and Year 6. There has been particularly good improvement in standards in information and communication technology since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is satisfactory and the great majority of pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day. Behaviour is consistently good and the pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive. The pupils' personal sense of responsibility is well fostered within the context of a small school family.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good behaviour and involvement in learning
- Good relationships within a small school family
- Pupils feel confident about approaching adults for help and support
- The behaviour, commitment to learning and social development of the youngest pupils is very good, in response to very good provision
- The school's environmental project is furthering the pupils' social awareness
- When the pace of lessons is too slow, some pupils can lose interest and become restless

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

Commentary

5. Attendance rates are now satisfactory after last year's above increase in authorised absence. There was an unusually high number of absences last year due to illness which is not the case this year. The school regularly checks and analyses attendance rates and this has proved to be effective in this year's much improved figures.
6. The pupils behave well throughout the school day, even during the very hot days of the inspection week. They settle quickly at the start of lessons and display enthusiasm for the learning activities being offered. Whilst working in pairs and small groups, they share ideas with confidence. In a 'circle time' seen, for example, they had no hesitation in exchanging ideas with other pupils.

7. With relatively small class sizes, the pupils and staff feel they know each other well. The pre-inspection pupil questionnaire confirms that the great majority of the pupils feel they can approach at least one adult for help and they are confident that their voice will be heard. Because it is possible for the staff to work, on occasion, with the whole school together, there is a strong sense of community. Issues that affect everyone can be discussed by all the pupils in the half-termly School Council meetings.
8. The school's Environmental Project has been the focus for much whole school activity and is a strong element in the school's provision for the pupils' social development. With ambitious plans in hand to enhance the school grounds, all the pupils have worked hard on various gardening projects. They have also had the opportunity to visit some of the commercial sponsors and see how the different businesses work.
9. During some lessons, particularly at the lower end of the juniors, the pace of lessons is too slow and the pupils lose interest. When this occurred, the usually high standard of behaviour and concentrated effort slipped.
10. Arrangements to develop the pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. Moral, social and cultural development is good. Recorded music is well used to promote a pleasant atmosphere in assemblies, though time should be given to listen and absorb a particular piece. There are times in lessons, when pupils are really excited by their activities, for example, when Year 1 and 2 pupils make sandwiches as a stimulus for discussing and writing instructions. These pupils were also enthralled at the unfolding of the Creation Story in religious education. A good, active curriculum, including environmental awareness and visits to places of interest, fosters an appreciation of the world around them. Music and art and design are given high priority and the pupils learn to respect and appreciate cultures other than their own.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	74	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The teaching is good overall but there are inconsistencies in the way the pupils are assessed and their progress is monitored.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	6	14	8			

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage and infant class is consistently good or very good and is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and achievement.
- The teaching in the junior years (Years 3 to 6) ranges from satisfactory to very good and is most effective in Years 5 and 6.
- The pupils identified with special educational needs make good progress.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not being applied consistently across the school to inform teachers' planning.

Commentary

11. A significant amount of teaching is good or better but in parts of the school, for example, in Years 3 and 4, the teaching is satisfactory and could be better. Teaching and learning are most effective when the work provided for the pupils is well matched to their abilities and is challenging for all groups of pupils across the ability range. This is more consistent in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 where the pupils achieve well as a result. This is less evident in Years 3 and 4 where learning targets for individual pupils are less rigorous and challenging.
12. The staff in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception children) have a very good and secure knowledge of the curriculum for young children and how to deliver this to best effect. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well and the children make good progress as a result. The staff plan lessons effectively so that the children learn at a good pace and engage in productive activities. There are high expectations for the children to do well and to behave properly. Teaching methods are good with very creative use of resources and outdoor areas. Consequently, the children are highly motivated and work with very good levels of interest, concentration and independence. There is a good balance of group work and child initiated activities. The management of the children is very good, with extremely positive relationships and a very secure and happy learning environment. The staff, including teaching assistants, are deployed very well to support the children in their learning. The staff know the children very well, and use perceptive observations to assess what the children have learned and base the next steps in their learning on what they already know and can do. The children achieve who are identified as having special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.
13. In the infant class (Years 1 and 2), lessons are planned carefully in the infant classes so that pupils in both year groups have work that is matched to their capabilities. The pupils respond very well to the teaching. They listen carefully to instructions and during class discussions they offer thoughtful answers and responses. They persevere with tasks, for example, when in science lessons, investigating how best to prepare a healthy meal or, in English lessons, when learning to write instructions independently and identify letter sounds in words. The teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and their behaviour. There are clear rules and classroom routines which provide a secure learning environment for the pupils. The introductions to lessons make it clear what is expected and the learning objectives are always shared with the pupils, for example, in mathematics lessons where counting skills are reinforced regularly at the beginning of each lesson. Good use is made computers to support the pupils' learning in a range of subjects.
14. In Years 5 and 6, teachers prepare challenging and interesting tasks that motivate and sustain the pupils' concentration, enabling them to work hard and persevere with the tasks set. In this way the pupils achieve well and make sustained progress in their learning. These positive features are not so evident in the teaching of Year 3 and 4 pupils. Here, tasks are

planned for each age group but do not always match the specific needs and abilities of the pupils. More able pupils, for example, are not always challenged or stretched, so that progress slows. The match of tasks to the abilities of the pupils, particularly in English and mathematics, is more evident and consistent in Years 5 and 6.

15. The headteacher and staff are currently undertaking training and have plans to introduce systematic assessment materials for all subjects across the school. Currently however, target setting and monitoring of the pupils' work does not consistently ensure that all pupils are on course to meet their learning targets.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers are sensitive to the pupils' individual needs. They plan individual and group work carefully and they use the information gained through detailed assessment of their progress in literacy and numeracy to plan the pupils' next stage of learning. The pupils are supported by efficient individual educational plans, written by the teachers and used in all lessons. The support provided by classroom assistants is good.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced, enriches the pupils' education and has improved well since the previous inspection. More could be done to target and stretch more able pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning for mixed-age classes has been modified well to meet the new organisation of classes. Although planning has improved, there are occasions when the taught activities do not match the needs of all the pupils, in particular, more able pupils.
- Good links between subjects are made when planning the curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- The school has developed its outdoor environment well but the quality of the internal accommodation and furnishings, and their organisation, does not provide a stimulating environment.
- Information and communication technology is well used to enhance the curriculum and to support the pupils' learning in other subjects.
- There is a good range of external visits, as well as links with businesses and other schools.

Commentary

17. The difficulties of planning for mixed-age classes have been tackled positively and the school has adopted national guidelines to support this work. Combined with a sensible re-organisation of the overall curriculum to meet the needs of the new class structure, this has resulted in pupils of different ages being able to access ongoing work at a level appropriate to their age and ability. For example, all the pupils in the juniors are able to study the Roman Invasion from an aspect and at a level appropriate to their stage of learning. However, more could be done to assess and target more able pupils so that in all lessons they are being stretched. The school's curriculum has resulted in a good range of work and a clear approach to learning throughout the school. This is further enhanced by the good links, which are made between subjects, for example, in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to present instructions for making a pizza, or the use of a multi-media presentation to demonstrate the outcomes of their work in assembly. A very good example of the use of fieldwork, new technology and cross-curricular learning is the visit made to Charlecote Park. Here, junior pupils used the digital camera to record visually the context of their investigation into the speed of the flow of the river. Finished work is very attractively presented, by combining different pupils' work in a topic book, using a word processor to write up their findings. This approach to learning enriches the pupils' lives considerably,

gives a meaning and relevance to their studies and encourages a positive approach to learning. This is evident in the well-behaved and self-disciplined attitude demonstrated by the pupils and the interested and co-operative manner in which they approach their lessons. Although literacy is developed in all subjects, the school needs to plan more opportunities for the pupils to engage in extended writing.

18. In approximately one in four lessons, there are times when tasks do not meet the needs of all pupils. On these occasions, too many pupils work at the same level and the more able are insufficiently stretched. This occurs mainly in Year 3 and 4 English and mathematics lessons and can have an adverse effect on the achievement of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, however, are well supported throughout the school. Their individual education plans are well targeted to meet their needs and the lesson content clearly fulfils these requirements. Class teachers write these plans and, therefore, have a good understanding of their pupils' needs. Teachers work well with the classroom assistants, who give good support to the pupils in their care, as well as pupils in general.
19. The school has involved its pupils effectively in the development of the school grounds. This is not only enhancing the school environment but it also gives an active focus to learning. The pupils have been involved in each stage and talk enthusiastically about the ongoing work. Good links have been made with local businesses, which have supported these developments. This approach would be well used in developing the interior of the school, which, despite having plenty of space, lacks stimulus in its furnishings and organisation. An exception to this is the school library, which is attractive, well organised and well used. Good links have also been established with the secondary school in the use of its computer suite and sporting facilities. This prepares pupils well for secondary transfer as well as enhancing the work that pupils do in ICT and in particular, control technology.
20. A good programme develops the pupils' personal, social and health education. The pupils receive good guidance on drugs, alcohol and tobacco abuse, as well as a sensitive approach to sex education. They reflect on issues meaningful to them immediately and in the context of the wider world. For instance, ongoing work in Years 5 and 6 encourages the pupils to consider things necessary to a successful community and the rights that people should expect to be able to exercise. The pupils are appreciative of the opportunities they all receive in the running of the school council. All these initiatives prepare pupils well for their role in the community, now and in the future. The manner in which they conduct themselves, the attitudes they have in lessons and the good relationships they establish, all bear testament to the success of the work of the school.
21. The headteacher and staff have worked well together to develop the curriculum of the school. The response to national and local needs has been thorough and has resulted in an evolving curriculum and organisation, which is steadily raising standards.

Care, guidance and support

The school has effective procedures in place for care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Within the small school 'family' there is a high level of pastoral care.
- Pupils have established good and trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- Visits off site are preceded by a thorough risk assessment.
- The School Council gives due prominence to the pupils' views and engages them in the day-to-day running of the school.
- The support for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and promotes their academic and personal development well.

Commentary

22. The pupils benefit from the relatively small class sizes where the class teachers and support assistants can give a good level of individual care. Child protection procedures include reference to local health and welfare services who provide additional support for families who may need it. Because each child is well known, a high degree of trust has been established. This helps to foster responsible attitudes and increased maturity as the pupils move through the school.
23. The school conducts a full risk assessment for off site visits and the pupils benefit from a rich and challenging range of experiences. This has included a visit to the local quarry and a nearby garden centre which helped to develop the school's grounds and garden areas.
24. A School Council meets half termly and involves every member of the school. This not only gives everyone a voice, but also gives an opportunity for the oldest pupils to act as scribes and mentors for the younger pupils. The pupils have a say in the Council's agenda and the outcomes from the meetings are known and appreciated by the pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains satisfactory links with the parents. There are extensive links between the school and the local business community, which support and enrich the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff maintain close contact with parents.
- The Environmental Project has drawn in considerable support from the local business community.
- The school's internal environment and some outdoor entrances do not present themselves well to visitors.

Commentary

25. The school works hard to establish good relations with parents. Amongst other things, the regular 'awards assembly' to which parents are invited has helped to make many parents feel more confident about entering the school. There are opportunities for informal contact with class teachers at the end of the school day.
26. An extensive range of business contacts have been established to support the school's environment project to enhance the school site, through landscaping the area and providing more amenities for the pupils to enjoy outside the school building. Generous sponsorship, whether through advice, materials and labour, has been offered to the school. Although the project is in its early stages, it has already brought considerable benefit to the pupils. In particular, the opportunities it has provided for educational visits have greatly enriched the curriculum.
27. Whilst many improvements are planned, the school site and some of the internal arrangements do not present a welcoming face to parents and visitors. The lack of clear sign posting to the school's main entrance can lead to difficulty in finding the way to the main reception area. School notice boards are similarly difficult to find. The school's newsletter, whilst informative, does not present a particularly positive impression of the life of the school. The annual reports on individual pupils contain little in the way of attainment or learning targets or guidance on how parents can support their children's learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good, with a much improved and good contribution by the governing body.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good, committed leadership and management.
- The governors' involvement in the work of the school has improved considerably; they give good support to the strategic management of the school.
- The school development plan is an effective tool for moving the school forward and the finances of the school are well managed.
- Subject co-ordinators have a firm grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility but need further training in the monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observations.
- The monitoring of the pupils' progress and the setting of individual targets requires further improvement.

Commentary

28. The headteacher is strongly committed to the school and its community and makes every effort to enhance the lives of the pupils in her care. She has shown a readiness to respond to national initiatives, taking into account the immediate needs of the pupils. Hence, she has adapted the organisation of the classes and the curriculum, when circumstances demand it. There is a clear determination to drive up standards, which have improved. She is supported by a governing body, which has improved its contribution considerably since the previous inspection. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, meet regularly to monitor its progress and are kept well informed by the headteacher. They are aware of the challenges facing the school and are very active and determined to meet these challenges, for example, the need to improve standards further and to market the school in the wider community. All members of the school community work well as a team and foster a good community spirit in their work. This shows in the way pupils respond to the opportunities provided for them and the way they conduct themselves in the day-to-day life of the school. This is clearly a school that believes in equal opportunities and ensures that its pupils have access to the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs are given good support to access all aspects of life in school.
29. The governors and staff produce a school development plan which identifies accurately the priorities for the school. Finances are well targeted, so that the school achieves the best value it can for its expenditure. The management of the school's finances by the administrative staff is good. The progress towards targets is monitored, and the plan is adapted to changing needs. The variations in each small cohort and the high rate of pupil turnover are taken into account when planning and organising the school and its curriculum. The headteacher monitors the progress of separate year groups and her very good knowledge of her pupils allows her to explain the differences in performance.
30. There is an effective programme of performance management and staff training. This is undertaken against a background of multiple staff responsibilities. Subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of the pupils' performance in their areas of responsibility, including the special educational needs co-ordinator. This is gathered through analysing test data and informal contact with colleagues and pupils. The headteacher monitors classroom teaching and learning and has provided useful feedback, which has resulted in better practice, although more now needs to be done to improve the teaching for Year 3 and 4 pupils. There are plans to train teachers to do this in their own subjects, which is necessary in order to raise standards further. Although annual targets are set, there is a need to set short-term individual targets for the pupils, linked to National Curriculum levels, and to monitor

progress towards these targets. Short-term targets, shared with the pupils, will give them a knowledge of their own learning. Currently, the assessment of pupils' work is not regular or systematic.

31. The leadership and management of the school have continued to improve since the previous inspection. The governing body, headteacher and staff are fully aware of the challenges faced by the school and are well equipped to face them.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	306,026
Total expenditure	312,164
Expenditure per pupil	3,902

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,493
Balance carried forward to the next	10,355

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. Part-time (mornings) Nursery children are taught alongside full-time Reception children in the Foundation Stage class by a teacher and two teaching assistants. The curriculum is based on the appropriate areas of learning and overall provides the children with a good range of learning opportunities.
33. The attainment of most children when they first start the Nursery and the Reception year is just below the standard expected of children of this age. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessments. The teaching is good with very good features and this has a positive effect on children's learning. As a result, by the time they move into Year 1, the children have made significant gains in their learning and their attainment is in line with that expected in all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The teaching is particularly effective in helping the children to integrate and co-operate with others, consequently, the children achieve very well in this area of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and teaching assistants are very effective in organising and planning activities.
- The children soon learn routines and become familiar with their surroundings.
- Importance is placed on the children understanding the environment around.
- The contribution that parents make to the Foundation Stage class, its resources and outdoor areas in particular, are highly valued by the staff and the children.

Commentary

34. The children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority. This ensures that the children make very good progress and achieve very well. Consequently, they are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Relationships are positive and children very obviously enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers, immediately becoming involved in the range of activities available to them. They are eager to learn new skills and put effort and concentration into their tasks. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and what is right and wrong and children respond well to the rules and routines of school life. The children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as role-play and outdoor play. The children soon learn to work both independently and co-operatively for sustained periods of time because activities are challenging and varied. For example, the children enjoyed arranging and sorting different sized and shaped plastic bottles to make perfume using water and herbs collected from the herb garden. Parents make a significant contribution to the outdoor and indoor resources and are often seen helping the children with tasks, such as building tracks and discussing which toy animals are grouped in different parts of the Safari Park. All the children respond positively to challenging tasks, such as writing their names and drawing pictures. There are well-planned opportunities for the children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of their own uniqueness and the wonder of the world around them. Lessons build effectively on this as children consider their own place in the family and the importance of friendship and being kind to each other. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. As a result, the children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. The children are making significant gains in their learning, particularly in speech and language. They also achieve well in early reading and writing skills.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children gain in confidence when talking to others and are encouraged to talk, ask questions and share ideas with adults and other children.
- The children achieve well in early reading and writing skills.
- The teaching is particularly effective in making language exciting and fun for the children.
- The curriculum is well led and managed.

Commentary

35. Communication, language and literacy are given a very high priority and the children are provided with a wide range of effective experiences and activities to develop and extend their language skills. Emphasis is placed on listening carefully to adults and other children. The children listen very attentively and follow the teacher's instructions as she explains how to water the garden. By the time the children transfer to Year 1, even the most reticent of speakers become attentive listeners and willingly contribute to conversations. They enjoy listening to well-told stories and rhymes and join in familiar ones with enthusiasm. Considerable emphasis is placed on children sharing conversations with adults and challenging questions and comments are used effectively to promote their thinking. Very good adult interaction encourages the children to make choices. For example, when making biscuits, questions such as, "Do you think you can mix that, what else could you use?" develop children's thinking skills. The importance of using language to develop ideas in structured play situations, such as the Lower Quinton Shop, encourage the children to use imaginative vocabulary as they create their own dramatic situations. They become fire officers or police officers and dress up accordingly. One even enjoyed the novel experience of becoming a 'school inspector' and began to imitate by sitting and observing and then taking notes. The children are learning to use language effectively to express feelings or persuade each other to take on a particular role, such as which family member will make the tea or how to make the model roadway safe for vehicles.
36. Clearly defined work areas and labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards help to develop early reading and writing skills. By the time the children enter the Reception year most can recognise their names and make very good attempts to write their own names. The children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they work in the graphics area. The curriculum is well planned and managed so that the children learn to explore sounds, letters and early writing when using an interesting writing table. They draw detailed pictures and are beginning to write simple sentences. They make books about family events and topics using familiar letters, sounds and words. Emphasis is placed on the learning of sounds and the familiar shapes of initial letter sounds.
37. A very comfortable book corner and a library area promote a love of books and children are learning to handle books with care. The children are often seen choosing a book to read to themselves or to share. Adults ensure that the children understand about authors and illustrators and higher attaining children are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words. All the children take games or books home on a regular basis to share with family members. This has a very positive effect on their progress in learning to read. There has been good progress in this area of learning since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The teaching of mathematics is good and the majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Problem solving skills are well developed as the children work out directions and positions when making models.
- Resources are always available to provide the children with stimulating choices and activities.
- The teacher's planning is well organised so that all staff work as a team to engage the children in meaningful learning activities.
- Early counting skills are very well reinforced and provide a good foundation for developing the children's numeracy skills.

Commentary

38. The majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1 and some will achieve them well before the end of their Reception year. The staff are highly organised and provide a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. The children learn to use mathematical ideas and skills in real situations, such as when sorting toy animals into pairs and using the telephone the 'office'. Number rhymes are used well to reinforce the children's understanding, such as 'five little speckled frogs'. These effectively develop children's ideas of early addition and subtraction. Problem solving is developed as the children work out directions and positions when making models or when planning how best to arrange the construction toys. The children have good opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. Through well-planned topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. The children respond positively to challenging tasks involving 'big' numbers that go beyond ten and twenty. The children consider size, shape and position when playing with two and three-dimensional shapes, small toys or emptying and filling containers in the water or sand play areas.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1 with a significant number achieving them well before the end of their Reception year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of outdoor areas.
- The use of the computer, tape recorder and camera to enhance the children's experiences and aid their early understanding of new technology.
- The planning of activities to help improve the children's observational skills and to evoke discussion and curiosity.

Commentary

39. The children's observational skills are developed well as they carefully examine the differences in materials and how best to help plants and flowers grow. The celebration of festivals such as Christmas and Divali help the children to develop an understanding of their own culture and those of other faith systems. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. There are very good examples of children having well planned opportunities to develop their skills of designing and making when using everyday materials, boxes and textiles to make models of shops and houses. Materials are well organised and adult

interaction encourages the children to choose from a wide range of resources. The children work independently to cut, fold and join a range of materials and this is made relevant as one child designs and makes a birthday card for her father. The computer is a popular choice and many children are competent in using the computer mouse and different programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy. Construction toys are used well in most lessons to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work and how to improve on their work. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially in the use of the outdoor area which has been transformed into a working garden, a designated play house, role play shop and a well secured and safe pond area where the children observe how tadpoles change into frogs. The children are regular visitors to the pond as they collect interesting objects and plants using a fishing net.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Effective teaching ensures the majority of children will meet the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is having a positive impact on developing in the children the confidence and skill to explore and use their bodies as they balance, climb and swing on the good equipment available.
- Activities are planned to incorporate dramatic play situations.
- Importance is placed on healthy living to develop an understanding of the importance of exercise to ensure good health.
- Good problem solving activities and the exploration of open space in dance and gymnastics are well planned and effective in developing physical skills.

Commentary

40. There is a good range of wheeled toys, climbing equipment and problem solving activities which help the children manoeuvre well, experiment with spaces such as avoiding other children and planned obstacles. They incorporate these into their dramatic play situations and in the weekly indoor dance and gymnastics lessons in the school hall. A topic on their bodies helps the children develop an understanding of the importance of exercise to ensure good health. The children are developing very good spatial awareness, control and imagination as they respond well to their teacher. Most children display a suppleness and agility as they become more aware of their own bodies. Good teacher intervention encourages the children to improve their skills of jumping, hopping and adapting their bodies as they turn, stretch and roll up like a ball. Emphasis is placed on developing children's independence and skill when handling tools and malleable materials and they are becoming competent as they handle a tools and materials safely and with care. There has been good improvement in this area of learning since the last inspection.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The children enjoy a good range of experiences in art, music, story and imaginative play.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are particularly effective links with literacy, stories, nursery rhymes and songs that help develop the children's creative skills.
- Good use of natural materials and resources encourage the children to appreciate and care for the environment as well as improve their creative and imaginative development.
- Creative development is enhanced with very tactile and relevant experiences for the children.

Commentary

41. Exciting dressing up clothes such as dressing up as fire or police officers encourage children to take on a range of different roles. There are good opportunities for imaginative which enhance the children's imagination and extend their language and creativity in this area of learning. There are good opportunities to experiment with a good range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes, and throughout the Foundation Stage, these help to develop the children's understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. The staff provide materials with interesting textures from which children can choose to create their own designs, pictures, models and collages. The children's understanding of colour is developed well as they mix their own shades of paint to create high quality pictures of teddy bears and older reception children paint their own portraits containing interesting detail. Malleable materials such as 'gloop', play dough, sand and water are available for children to explore on a daily basis. This is well linked to plants and herbs grown outside as the children experiment with different herbs and water to make perfume. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and reflects the effort the school has made to improve its standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing have improved.
- Achievement is good in the infants and, although inconsistent in the juniors, it is satisfactory by the age of eleven.
- The range of writing experiences is extensive and good links are made with other subjects. However, there needs to be more planned opportunities to write in depth, both in English and other subjects.
- Book provision is good, the library has been well developed and library skills are successfully taught but class libraries do not promote reading activities well enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.
- The teaching is particularly good in the infant class and with the oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6. However, assessment data is not always used to set short term targets and to track the pupils' progress.
- The subject co-ordinator sets a very good standard of classroom practice and leads the subject well but the monitoring of teaching and learning is neither sufficiently systematic, nor rigorous.
- Although the standard of spoken English is average, pupils have a limited range of both expression and technical vocabulary.

Commentary

42. Standards in reading and writing show a good improvement in the infants since the previous inspection. Standards in the juniors have improved satisfactorily. Current standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages. The school has responded well to the need to raise standards. Consequently, book provision is better and careful monitoring of reading practises takes place. For instance, in the infant class, home-school reading diaries are checked daily, so that pupils, who have not read recently at home, are given extra practice in school. Group reading is now practised separately from the literacy hour, which means more focused and regular practice takes place. The library has also been improved and pupils receive regular access, with good practical activities to develop library skills. Classroom libraries do not, however, give literature a high enough profile and, thereby, foster a love of books.
43. Pupils listen well in lessons and show a developing ability to negotiate and compromise in groups. However, in discussion, pupils have a limited range of expression and their knowledge of appropriate specialist vocabulary is often lacking. For instance, the oldest pupils can talk about their river studies, but cannot recall many of the technical words, such as meander and tributary, which they need to remember.
44. Despite the variations in year groups and the frequent turnover of pupils, which makes standards fluctuate year on year, achievement is good in the infants, because lessons cater for all the ability levels in the class. It is inconsistent in the juniors, though satisfactory by the end of school. The inconsistency in achievement is because there are times in the juniors, when teaching does not accurately target all levels of ability. This means that pupils of all abilities too often complete the same work. Consequently some pupils, usually the average and above average, are insufficiently challenged and, although they make progress, it is not commensurate with their potential. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, because of the well targeted work devised by their teachers and contained in their individual educational plans. These pupils are helped to access the whole curriculum by the good support from classroom assistants.

45. Generally teaching and learning are good, but better in the infant and upper junior classes. Teachers plan imaginative lessons and give clear expositions. Pupils listen well and show interest in what is being said. They answer questions confidently, which vouches for the good quality relationships that exist. Activities are well linked to other subjects, such as sandwich making in the infants as part of design and technology. Over a period of time all aspects of literacy are successfully developed by this meaningful and relevant activity. Similarly, the oldest pupils follow up a visit from a journalist, to examine the techniques of headline writing. This, in turn, leads to producing lively and pertinent articles, linked to videoed news broadcasts, for example, in geography. Teaching is less successful when all pupils are asked to complete the same work, for example, on the use of the comma, without an acknowledgement of the differing needs in the class.
46. Although the school collates assessment data to target future levels of attainment, there is a need to set short term targets, linked to National Curriculum levels and shared with the pupils. Teachers mark conscientiously, but this skill requires further development to include levels of attainment and target setting. Progress towards achieving targets should be systematically and rigorously pursued. This would give the teachers an accurate understanding of levels achieved, and the pupils an understanding of their own learning and progress.
47. The subject co-ordinator is secure in her knowledge and understanding of the subject. She provides an exemplar of very good practice in the classroom. She has the knowledge and ability to continue the development in the subject. She monitors pupils' work and, along with data provided of test analyses, she has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. In order to develop her skills and knowledge further, she needs training in direct observation of teaching and learning. A systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning could then be developed, in order to promote standards and achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Language and literacy are satisfactorily developed across the whole curriculum. Many good opportunities are taken to broaden pupils' experiences. These include regular visits to places of interest. Visitors to the school also provide a good stimulus to learning. The recording of these activities, using a variety of writing techniques, including information and communication technology, give a relevance to the learning. The finished work is often beautifully presented, as in a past study of the Romans in history. The use of the school grounds is another topic, which has fostered language development and is skilfully recorded. Pupils' hesitancy in spoken English would also benefit from a rigorous approach to learning, memorising and using new vocabulary.
49. The range of writing experiences has been broadened, and the writing process is systematically and effectively taught. Along with a good programme to improve basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar, this has successfully increased writing competency. This has begun to have an impact on writing in other subjects, but these could be further developed, so that more extended writing opportunities are planned to develop both English and the particular subject. Although good curricular links are made, more opportunities need to be planned to develop both writing in depth and knowledge and understanding of other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good overall** and is very good in Years 1 and 2 where highly effective teaching has had an immediate impact on raising standards by the end of Year 2. The teaching and curriculum in the junior years is good overall and standards are rising but there are some inconsistencies in the way the pupils are assessed and set targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising although they fluctuate because there is significant mobility of pupils and small cohorts taking the national tests each year.
- The teaching has improved well since the last inspection, especially in planning for mixed age groups.
- The teaching is highly effective in the infant years where there has been a very good rate of improvement in standards by the end of Year 2.
- Although teachers assess the pupils, the information is not sufficiently being used to target more able pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- The teachers need to spend more time checking the pupils' progress towards their targets.

Commentary

50. Standards are currently in line with those expected by the end of Year 6 and they are above average by the end of Year 2. Standards fluctuate from year to year because there are small numbers in each year group and in some years there is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The teaching is good overall but there are some inconsistencies so that achievement is only satisfactory across the school as a whole.
51. The school has improved its planning well since the last inspection, especially planning for mixed-age classes. This has led to good improvements to the quality of teaching so that, as the pupils move up the school, their learning builds on what was covered before. However, there are inconsistencies in the way the pupils are set targets. Consequently, the pupils are not always clear about the stages of learning that will help them reach their targets. The targets themselves are not always clear or challenging enough, especially for lower junior pupils in Years 3 and 4, where more able pupils have the potential to do better. The most effective teaching is in the infant years and in Years 5 and 6, where teachers' planning and delivery incorporates more challenging work for pupils of all abilities.
52. Infant pupils (Years 1 and 2) achieve well. They are able to recall addition and subtraction facts and have a good understanding of the value of each digit in numbers up to 1000. The teaching is having a positive impact on the pace of learning and is highly organised. The key strength is the way the teacher prepares tasks for the pupils that match their capabilities. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistant, for example, when using the computer to reinforce their understanding of addition and counting on from various points on a number line. More able pupils are challenged when the teacher works with a group to partition numbers using their understanding of multiples of 10 and 20 when using numbers up to 100 and 1000. These pupils are targeted to achieve levels above those expected for their age and the teaching reflects this when they calculate, for example, the nearest ten to estimate the likely sum of two numbers up to 100.
53. Junior pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. They could do better in Years 3 and 4 where the assessments of their progress are too vague. The pupils themselves do not know how well they are doing because the feedback they receive gives no indication of levels. In Years 5 and 6, the quality of teaching improves significantly and is more consistently good. The work provided for the pupils is better matched to their abilities.

54. The task for the school is to establish a more rigorous and systematic approach to assessing the pupils and to set targets that are understood by the pupils. Targets are not always challenging enough.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. The pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects such as science, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. Year 5 and 6 pupils were observed using computers to produce simple spreadsheets. The work was very different for each of the two year groups so that Year 5 pupils learned how to set out addition facts on a spreadsheet and Year 6 pupils used these skills to work out the average of a series of numbers, ages, heights and other data. Infant pupils record their science work and use good measuring skills to work out how well plants grow in different environments and conditions. Junior pupils use their knowledge of measures to draw and plan designs that will use simple mechanisms such as levers and cams in design and technology topics. The outdoor environment is used well to support learning in mathematics and other subjects such as geography. Topics where the pupils look at weather patterns or the effect of the movement of the earth in relation to the sun on shadows and their length during the day use mathematics to help the pupils record and chart variations using graphs, tables and spreadsheets. The use of graphs and other matrices or tables are used well to help the pupils across the school record their findings. Consequently, there are good links across subjects using subject specific skills and mathematics to support pupils' learning and to consolidate their knowledge and understanding.

SCIENCE

The school provides a **good** science curriculum and the teaching is good. The pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but some pupils could achieve higher standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of practical investigations and resources, including the local environment.
- There are good links with other subjects that enable the pupils to use the skills and knowledge gained in those subjects to develop their scientific skills.
- Assessments of the pupils' progress are not sharp enough to help stretch those pupils who have the potential to exceed the standards expected for their age.

Commentary

56. Most pupils make good progress, however, the teachers' assessments of the pupils are not sharp enough to identify those who could be targeted to achieve higher standards. Practical work in lessons is well planned and resourced. Teachers make good use of the environment around the school, for example, when studying plants and min-beasts. In the infant class, Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoy planning a healthy packed lunch after learning about different food groups and how to identify a healthy and balanced diet. Year 5 and 6 pupils made good progress working out the effect of 'upthrust' in water when using force meters to measure the relative weight of objects in air and water. In both these lessons, teachers made good use of the skills learned in other subjects, such as mathematics, to enable the pupils to record their findings.
57. Resources and planning are well managed and organised. However, the tasks now is to improve the way the pupils are assessed in order to set accurate learning targets. Science lessons are planned well to meet the needs of different age groups in the school's mixed-age classes. Lessons do not always have enough tasks for more able pupils, nor do they start with different tasks that match the abilities of the pupils. This affects achievement, which is only satisfactory and ought to be good given the quality of teaching. There has been

satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, particular in teachers' planning. More could now be done to set challenging attainment targets for all pupils. Those with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

There has been **good** improvement to the information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum since the last inspection. Provision is now **good** and, in particular, resources and teachers' subject knowledge have improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- There are good links with other subjects so that the work the pupils do using computers and other technology is relevant and practical.
- Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are using ICT well to present information, including modelling and designing presentations about a variety of topics and subjects.
- The ICT curriculum is well used to support learning in other subjects but more could be done to provide opportunities for more able pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of ICT further.

Commentary

58. The school has been successful in improving its ICT resources and ensuring that teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum practically using a good range of topics that interest and motivate the pupils. By the end of year 2 the pupils can use a word processor to make labels, write stories and can combine text and graphics to illustrate stories and accounts. By the end of Year 6, more advanced skills are used to present information, for example, using control technology to design presentations, import pictures and text from external files and web sites. In mathematics, older pupils learn to use spreadsheets to calculate the average of a list of numbers or measures such as heights and ages. More could now be done to refine ICT lessons to provide opportunities for more able pupils to experiment further to attain higher standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. The school uses ICT well in other subjects. By Year 6, the pupils can search the Internet for relevant information on a specific topic and also retrieve information from CD-ROMs. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have used sophisticated multimedia skills to refine and present information about themselves and other subjects or topics. The pupils throughout the school respond well to the challenges and potential of ICT and know that much of their word processing and graphics work involves forward planning and design. The pupils learn to use data bases and computer programs that help them sort different attributes such as plants and animals in science lessons. Art and design work is supported well when the pupils of all ages experiment with graphic programs to represent different styles of artists such as Van Gogh or Hockney.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Geography and history are well planned to match the ages and stages of development of the pupils. Provision is **satisfactory** in both subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of national guidelines to match work at levels appropriate to the different ages of pupils in each class.
- Good links are made across the curriculum but there are too few opportunities to write in depth, using appropriate vocabulary.
- Sometimes the main focus of the lesson can be obscured by the related links.
- Visits and visitors are well used to enhance learning and enrich the curriculum.
- The immediate environment of the school is well used to develop geographical skills.
- There are times when commercially produced photocopied worksheets are used too much.

Commentary

60. The curriculum in both geography and history is well planned, so that the pupils of all ages can access the ongoing topic at an appropriate level. It is sensibly organised on a rolling programme to avoid repetition in mixed-age classes. Good links are made with other subjects, which makes the ongoing work more relevant to the pupils. These links are often incorporated into visits to places of interest, such as Charlecote Park and the finished work is often beautifully presented, successfully using information and communication technology to enable the pupils to record their work and to produce photographic and pictorial images using digital cameras. Sometimes, the links with other subjects can obscure the main focus of the lesson, as happened during an investigation of places by analysing a news video, when the focus shifted to writing news reports.
61. A scrutiny of completed work shows that coverage of the subject is thorough in all classes. Displays in the infant class, such as the travels of Barnaby Bear, are imaginative and engage the pupils' interest. Imaginative maps, based on an island study, show that geography skills and appropriate vocabulary are taught. Finished work describing the environment project, shows the systematic development of the school grounds and the worthwhile involvement of the pupils. Good use is also made of current affairs to locate items of interest on maps of various scales as seen in a Year 3 and 4 lesson where the pupils were also invited to comment on recent or current news. Past work on the Romans is thorough, imaginative and very well presented. Sometimes recorded work concentrates too much on the use of photocopied worksheets, which inhibits language development and writing styles. There are too few opportunities to write in depth.
62. In conversation, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of basic skills. Recall of previously completed work is sound, and pupils talk enthusiastically. Although they are willing to talk, and have plenty to say, they have an unsatisfactory recall of specialist vocabulary on which to draw. This limits their range of expression and impairs their accounts. Some of the basic skills are less well developed. For instance, in history, Year 6 pupils have some difficulty in remembering the chronology of the major periods studied. Their knowledge of co-ordinates in geography also requires further development.
63. Of the two lessons observed in geography, the quality of teaching and learning was good in one and satisfactory in the other. Both lessons were well linked to a study of newspapers, following the visit of a journalist. This visit had made a positive impact on the pupils, who were enthused and motivated by it. Both lessons had the same components by using news articles to promote learning, but the more successful lesson was organised to challenge pupils in small groups and, thus, retain and engage their interest more purposefully.

64. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, for example, the need to develop assessment practices. She has adapted the national guidelines well to meet the needs of all the pupils in mixed-age classes.

Religious education

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum in religious education, which meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The scheme of work provides thorough coverage of the necessary elements of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods.
- The local church plays a positive role in developing religious education.
- The accompanying programme of personal, social and health education gives good opportunities for discussion and reflection.
- Pupils are at ease when they discuss personal and religious matters.
- There is some confusion in basic knowledge and understanding in the infants.
- The pupils have limited expression and knowledge of appropriate vocabulary.

Commentary

65. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of Christianity and other faiths, although there is some confusion in the minds of the younger pupils, when defining the Old and the New Testaments. This is clear by the time pupils are in the older junior class. By Year 2, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Bible stories and they can name, for instance, some of the disciples, who are 'Jesus' helpers.' They know about the major Christian festivals, but, when describing the nativity, become confused with details from the birth of Moses. However, they are very relaxed when sharing their perceptions of God, 'Who created everything and is really special, holy and graceful.' By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a more certain knowledge and understanding of stories from the Bible. They also describe aspects of Hinduism and Islam, and identify similarities and differences, for instance, in symbolism. They name the rites of passage, such as baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals. A strong feature of the curriculum is the link made with personal, social and health education. Pupils learn to reflect on their own experiences and see rights and responsibilities in the context of the wider community. These experiences of discussing their feelings and considering social issues have made them relaxed and at ease, when talking about matters that are important to them.
66. The teaching observed was good in the infant class and satisfactory in the junior class. Teachers make good use of artefacts, which is especially effective when it engenders a feeling of awe and wonder, as it did in the infant lesson on the Creation. When using artefacts from Islam, the junior teacher fostered a feeling of respect, which provided a fitting atmosphere within which pupils learn well. Year 6 pupils also remember the use of drama, when learning the story of Vishnu in their study of Hinduism. Religious knowledge and understanding is also well fostered through the school's close links with the church and the contribution made by the vicar in assemblies helps the pupils to gain a better understanding of their place in the world. The assemblies observed were well planned and fulfilled statutory requirements, giving good opportunities for reflection on issues like caring and sharing.
67. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the requirements of the syllabus and has worked effectively to achieve its aims.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection and only two art and design lessons were seen. Provision is **satisfactory**. Evidence from previous work and teachers' planning shows that the pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age in both art and design and design and technology.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with other subjects and topics are well planned to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes.
- Teachers ensure that the relative skills specific to each subject are learned as well as utilising these skills to help the pupils learn in other subjects.
- The school is currently trialling systems to assess the pupils' progress and has built up a good portfolio of work that is a collection of the pupils' work in every year groups. As yet this is not used to ensure that the pupils reach specific learning targets.

Commentary

68. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils develop their observational skills when sketching portraits and objects. Teachers ensure that the pupils record their art and design work carefully and the portfolio of artwork is annotated by teachers to provide good examples or benchmarks of attainment for each year group. The assessment of the pupils' work is not sufficiently linked to teachers' planning. However, the planning is well organised to ensure that the pupils build on what they have previously learned and that it matches the ages of the pupils in mixed-age classes. This now needs to be refined to ensure that the pupils who have the potential to attain higher standards are given those opportunities in lessons.

Music

Provision is **satisfactory**. The school compensates for its lack of music specialists by using the Local Authority's music service. This works well and ensures that the pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards in line with those expected for their age. There is a good quality instrumental tuition.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Singing is well taught and, consequently, the pupils are able to sing tunefully in assemblies and when performing small ensembles or drama productions to parents and visitors.
- Instrumental tuition is of good quality and includes a good range of instruments, for example, peripatetic tuition for a large number of junior pupils in the African-Caribbean steel drums.
- Listening and appraising different musical traditions and styles is an area for further improvement, including the use of recorded music in assemblies.

Commentary

69. The standards achieved by the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. No lessons were observed in the infant years. The quality of singing in assemblies is good.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and standards have been maintained. The school utilises the skills of specialist music teachers from the Local Authority's music service. Music makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to the quality of assemblies and worship. However, more could be done to raise the profile of music played in assemblies, especially recorded music when the pupils enter and leave. The playing of an appropriate piece of music creates a very appropriate atmosphere for reflection and worship but this is not always brought out or emphasised.

70. The pupils in the juniors develop a good sense of rhythm and pitch. They are able to keep a good beat, recognise a repeating pattern and sing with expression paying attention to the dynamics of the song. During a good instrumental lesson (recorder), Year 5 and 6 pupils made good progress keeping rhythm and tempo as they followed instructions and musical notation. Similarly, junior pupils benefit from good quality steel pan tuition and all the pupils in the two classes experience these remarkable percussion instruments during a carousel of activities that enable the tutor to teach small groups in turn each week. The pupils show a good understanding of musical ideas and simple notation and musical terminology as they explore whether they can create long and short notes with a range of instruments. Music and singing make a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development providing them with good experiences to develop their skills in performing and appraising and acquiring musical knowledge.
71. Specialist skills, visits and visitors are used well to develop a full range of activities to promote effective learning of music. Through well-planned cross-curricular links the pupils learn about music from other cultures such as Africa, South America and India. Music is effectively co-ordinated and makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. It enhances drama productions that are performed for parents and visitors each year.

Physical education

72. There is good provision. Two lessons were observed, one Year 1 and 2 lesson and one in the Year 5 and 6 class. The teaching is good and well planned. There are good links with other schools that enable older pupils to play competitive and non-competitive sports and activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning and use of resources are good and effective.
- The pupils achieve satisfactorily because they build on what has been learned before.
- The use of facilities in a local secondary school for sports and games is good. However, the teaching of swimming is limited and not sufficiently focussed on ensuring that all the pupils learn to swim by the time they leave the school.

Commentary

73. Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress developing basic gymnastics and dance skills. They can change direction avoiding others in large spaces. They adapt body shape and movement and are beginning to link a sequence of movements and jumps successfully. The teacher successfully brings out the best in the pupils by using good examples to illustrate how well the pupils are doing. The pupils respond enthusiastically and enjoy watching others performing well in order to strive towards the same level of achievement.
74. Junior pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed making good progress developing hockey skills. They can control the stick and aim when dribbling, passing and shooting with increasing accuracy. They co-operate well with others in team games and are able to work together to improve efficiency when passing the ball and aiming at the goal. Many pupils could shoot with accuracy and confidence.

75. Swimming is taught up to Year 6 but there is no systematic check to see if all the pupils can swim by the end of Year 6. Much of this relies on the parents to ensure that their children learn to swim. This is an area for improvement and refinement to ensure that all the pupils have had an opportunity to swim safely by the end of Year 6.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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