

INSPECTION REPORT

REDBOURN JUNIOR SCHOOL

St Albans

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117288

Headteacher: Mrs A M Woodhouse

Lead inspector: Mrs H E Davies

Dates of inspection: 08 - 11 September 2003

Inspection number: 257288

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	209
School address:	Long Cutt Redbourn St Albans
Postcode:	AL3 7EX
Telephone number:	01582 626489
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Barnes/ Mrs J Wiggett
Date of previous inspection:	17/05/99

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Redbourn Junior School is of a similar size to most schools with 209 pupils on roll, 85 boys and 124 girls. The school serves a residential area comprising of privately owned houses and rented accommodation. In 2000 the school was awarded "Investors In People". Most pupils are of white ethnic background and none are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. A small number of travellers attend the school. Thirty three per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is above the national average, while ten per cent are eligible for free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is broadly average overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21687	Mrs H E Davies	Lead inspector	English, mathematics, art and design, music, design and technology, physical education
9981	Mr S Hussian	Lay inspector	
11227	Mr J Moles	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, history, geography, religious education, special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Leadership and management of the school are good. A positive ethos established by the previous head ensured that the new head teacher (one week in post) is clear about why results have dipped over the past two years. She and the governors are clear about what needs to be done for standards to rise again. Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress and achieve average standards overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed in each year group. In Year 6 some very good teaching was seen. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It is effectively enriched by many extra curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is inclusive in all aspects of its work. Parents are happy with the school and their children have very positive views of the day-to-day life in school. Attitudes values and behaviour are very good. Redbourn Junior School is a sound school providing satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The positive ethos within the school which enabled the smooth transfer of responsibilities from the previous head teacher to the new head teacher, ensuring that strengths are built upon, and areas for development addressed.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They behave very well and form strong relationships with each other and the staff.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening. This is because the school promotes these skills well as, for example, through the Speech Cup.
- Extensive assessment data is collected but it is not analysed and focussed effectively enough to guide whole school target setting and planning.

Since the previous inspection, standards of behaviour and personal development have remained high. However, standards achieved in national tests are not as high now as they were at the previous inspection. Different year groups vary in the number of pupils with special educational needs and this is a contributory factor in the standards achieved. The school has worked hard to address the key issues from the previous inspection and provision for information and communication technology is now good. In the foundation subjects observed, tasks are now better matched to pupils' abilities.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The table illustrates the dip in standards in the core subjects compared to all schools from average and well above average to below and well below average. However when judged against similar schools, those schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2, standards in 2002 were average overall. This is due to a larger number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group. Progress through the school is satisfactory. Indications are that a significant number of pupils in **the present Year 6** are likely to achieve standards that are

average overall in English, mathematics and science compared to all schools, with **a significant number achieving the higher level 5** in English and mathematics. Standards are as expected nationally in information and communication technology and design and technology. Standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. **Pupils' personal qualities are very good.** They have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. **Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their cultural development is satisfactory.** **Attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning is **satisfactory overall**. Some is **good**. During the inspection, which took place in the first full week of term, two supply teachers were covering for absent members of staff in Year 3. One teacher in Year 4 was new to the school. Although the teaching and learning was satisfactory in those year groups with some good teaching, it was better in Years 5 and 6. This better teaching was characterised by work that matched pupils' abilities more closely and challenged higher attaining pupils. For example, in a very good English lesson, pupils were expected to be detectives looking for words and phrases not currently in use and devising strategies to understand the meaning. By working with the lower ability group and having effective teacher assistance, the class teacher ensured that all pupils' learning was very good. In satisfactory lessons the pace of learning was sometimes too slow. Across the school much assessment information is collected but it is not always used as effectively as possible to explain to pupils exactly what they need to do next or to set accurate whole school targets. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by good extra curriculum provision which provides a wide range of activities to meet the needs of many pupils, for example, juggling, French and many sporting activities. Accommodation and resources are good. Links with parents and the community enrich the provision for pupils well. The school cares for its pupils' well and correct procedures are in place to ensure pupils welfare while at school. Pupils' views are actively sought and acted upon very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good. The new head teacher has worked closely with the retiring head teacher to ensure continuity of provision for pupils. Already she is clear about the need to raise standards. She is working effectively with the supportive senior managers of the school and a shared vision for the future is emerging. **Management is satisfactory overall.** Day-to-day procedures run smoothly. However, the use of assessment information is not managed as effectively as it could be. **Governance of the school is good.** Governors have a good understanding of the needs of the school, through their shared work in committees and by the visits they make to school. Effective exchange of information ensures that they are clear about their responsibilities and the part they play in providing a steer to the school's future development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. The responses from the parents' questionnaires and from discussion at the parent meeting indicate that the vast majority of parents are happy with the school. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school and that the arrangements for their children when they start school are good. Parents say they feel that the school is well led and managed and that staff treat their children fairly and encourage them to become mature and independent. Parents are comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. **Pupils** are very happy in the school. They say how much they enjoy being with their friends and teachers. Pupils are confident that their teachers will help them. They enjoy playtimes on the large field but some would like more play equipment and a separate football area on the hard playground. They particularly enjoy the school productions and visits, especially the residential visits.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To streamline the extensive assessment information.
- Use that information more effectively to plan pupils' targets and meet whole school predictions more accurately.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards achieved by pupils are average overall. Achievement is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards in speaking and listening skills are good.
- Standards in 2002 were lower than is usual for the school; this was due to there being more pupils with special educational needs in that particular year group.
- The downward trend in standards looks likely to be reversed this year.
- Standards are as expected in information and communication technology and design and technology.
- Standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.
- Much work has been done in collecting assessment information to explain past results. However this information is not used effectively enough to plot achievement and predict results accurately enough.

Commentary

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (28.5)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.4 (28.7)	26.6 (26.7)
Science	26.9 (28.7)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. **Achievement is satisfactory overall.** The table illustrates how the average points score for the school was lower in 2002 than 2001. The points were lower than the national average score for all schools. In 2003 the results in English were below the predicted target and well below target in mathematics. Indications are that the majority of pupils **in the present Year 6** are likely to achieve standards that **are average overall** in English, mathematics and science compared to all schools with **a significant number achieving the higher level 5** in English and mathematics. Thus the point scores will be higher in 2004.
2. Trends in results have dipped in the past two years. Indications are that standards are rising and achievement is improving. Results in national curriculum tests are likely to be better this year than in 2002 or 2003. More pupils will achieve the expected level 4 in the core subjects and a significant number will achieve the higher level 5 in English and mathematics.
3. Progress is better for older pupils. This is especially true in English and mathematics because the teaching is consistently good in Years 5 and 6. Across the school pupils' language skills are good. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Pupils speak clearly and confidently encouraged by adults who provide good role models. Their mathematical skills are used appropriately in other subjects such as science and design and technology. Information

and communication technology skills are used appropriately across areas of the curriculum, for example in word processing in English.

4. Achievement is satisfactory overall but better for older pupils. Travellers and pupils with special educational needs are supported well and achieve appropriately. Pupils with special talents, for example in mathematics, are provided with opportunities to extend their learning through work in secondary schools with other talented pupils. Leadership of the school is keen to maximise opportunities for pupils to shine. Parents are particularly proud of their children's achievement in the schools' musical and dramatic productions.
5. Leadership and management of English and mathematics are good. The subjects are led by senior members of staff who are committed to improvement. They have done much work in analysing results from the past two years, monitoring teaching and providing feedback to the head teacher and governors. As a result of these efforts standards are likely to rise across the school in English and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, and behaviour are very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although attendance dipped in 2001/2 it has risen significantly in the last school year and is now in line with other schools. Punctuality is good, reflecting pupils' enthusiasm for school. These factors make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- Staff expect pupils to behave in a mature and sensible manner.
- Pupils' have very positive views of the school.
- The school council is effective.
- Limited study of non-western art and literacy.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2001/02 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.9	School data:	0.4
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.

6. The school uses a system of rewards well to value good and improving rates of attendance. Attendance levels are similar to those noted at the last inspection and the school has been successful in keeping unauthorized absence low.

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	188	0	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

7. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because of the high expectations by the head teacher and all staff throughout the school. There have been no recent exclusions. Pupils are expected to behave in a mature and sensible way whether in the classroom, playground or corridors and regardless of whether they are working with teachers or other adults in the school. Pupils' social and moral development is very well promoted. It is this sense of community that establishes very positive attitudes towards both work and the school. All staff converse openly with the pupils. This means that pupils can put forward ideas and check their understanding of what is being taught. They are confident that even if their reasoning is inaccurate it will be listened to fairly by the staff and fellow pupils. The school council is well respected by both pupils and staff and is effective in raising and improving matters of concern to the pupils.
8. Pupils know that if they are experiencing difficulties in their learning they will be helped. This means that all pupils can achieve as well as expected for their capabilities. As one group of pupils stated when asked what they would say to a friend, to encourage him/her to attend this school, 'You learn well because someone will always sit down by you and explain if you don't understand'. Pupils speak highly of the school and talk in an animated and interesting way about the work they are doing, often naturally making links between the subjects being taught and sparking ideas and debates off what each other is saying. In one discussion with pupils where they were discussing the history work they had covered, conversations flowed easily from one pupil talking about the burial practices of people in Ancient Egypt to another pupil picking up on the description and talking about plaques, the Israelites and the Passover symbols. It is this holistic view of learning, coupled with very good relationships that engender confidence and self-esteem that lead to the pupils' desire to learn and this is a strength of the school.
9. Spiritual development is promoted well through regular and sincere periods of reflection in collective worship and through plays and the presentation of work done in class or in assemblies when the rest of the school can appreciate the accomplishments of individuals and groups as well as gain an understanding of the broader curriculum being covered. Poetry in literacy lessons and the analysis of art work continues the theme of reflection as a means to

gain greater understanding of underlying meaning in events, written work and the world around them. Cultural development is satisfactory but the study of non-western art and literacy is an area for further development to enable pupils to place all they have experienced in school in the context of the many other cultures in Britain today.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory overall. A significant proportion is good, some very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' learning is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are well established but not focused efficiently enough to plot pupils' progress and set accurate whole school targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers show a good command of the core subjects.
- They expect high standards of behaviour.
- They make effective use of teaching assistants and other support staff.
- They promote equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Assessment information is not always used effectively enough to plot progress.
- Pupils behave very well and are keen to learn.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	11	15	0	0	0

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

Commentary

10. Most of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. A significant proportion is good, some very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' learning is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are well established but not focused efficiently enough to plot pupils' progress and set accurate whole school targets.
11. Teachers have a secure understanding of the curriculum and teach key skills appropriately. All teachers try to make the work interesting and engage pupils, attention. For example, in a good mathematics lesson in Year 5, while describing the position of the decimal point the teacher asked pupils which car was more expensive "£24.000 or £2.400". Teachers ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them and those with special educational needs are supported appropriately in their tasks. Relationships are very good and there is sensitivity towards the needs of individuals and groups.
12. Teaching assistants usually support the lower attaining pupils well and they are clear about what they are to do. Effective support by additional external staff is provided for travellers. Both groups achieve as well as expected taking into account their capabilities. Teachers ensure that information is exchanged with support staff on a regular basis. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning and know that teachers will help them to improve. Teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. They have concentrated on raising standards in writing and now see the development of pupils' reading skills as a priority. During carousel time, teachers work with a group of pupils to develop reading skills, reading aloud or silently,

discussing the settings and characters and reflecting on the style of different authors. In mathematics, setting is matching the needs of individuals more effectively and making a positive impact on pupils' achievement. In information and communication technology, teachers make good use of the improved provision since the previous inspection.

13. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the scientific concepts they are teaching and as a result set interesting topics for pupils to investigate. In one lesson a teacher challenged the pupils to work out the amount of air resistance experienced by different materials falling to earth. Pupils have good attitudes towards such activities and engage confidently in lively debates with the teachers and each other to establish hypotheses that can be tested.
14. Senior teachers monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, extending good practice and providing pointers for improvement. Teachers in year groups plan their work together so that provision across each year group is consistent. They set clear learning objectives and employ suitable teaching strategies. All staff work together as a team sharing and supporting each other in the many and varied tasks they undertake. They are good role models for the pupils.
15. The school collects a considerable amount of assessment information that is assembled in both class and whole school files. This means that each class teacher is able to identify clearly how best to group the pupils for activities in each subject. The information is used effectively to place pupils in sets in mathematics. This is a system where pupils across the whole year are grouped according to attainment and then taught by one of the year teachers. This system is helping to raise achievement in mathematics as teachers are able to set work that is more closely matched to the group's capability. In addition the school carefully analyses the Year 6 national test results and uses this information to identify areas of learning in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science that need closer attention in the future. This strategy has helped to raise standards in these subjects. The school is successful in promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills which are above average. In mathematics number work is significantly stronger than work in measurement.
16. The school's use of this considerable assessment information is not always used efficiently enough to plot individual pupils' progress accurately enough and to set whole school targets. An area where such links occur and are successful in raising achievement is in the provision for special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, special educational needs teacher and teaching assistants work well together on devising individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils achieve as well as may be expected as a result of this well targeted support and keep up with the level of achievement of the rest of their class.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced range of curricular opportunities that cater appropriately for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all the pupils. The planned curriculum ensures satisfactory progress in pupils' learning. Enrichment of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Schemes of work enable pupils learning to progress sequential and achieve as well as may be expected.
- Good in-service training for areas the school has identified for improvement.
- Enrichment and extra-curricular provision is good and includes many activities.
- Good accommodation and resources enable the curriculum to be taught appropriately.

Commentary

17. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The provision for religious education and collective worship is met. Subject co-ordinators have drawn up policies and schemes of work for their subjects that are clear and enable teachers to plan activities that ensure pupils learn those parts of the curriculum that will prepare them for national tests, where these apply and for their move to secondary education when they leave the school. These strategies enable pupils to achieve as well as may be expected for their individual capabilities. The very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils mean that teachers can introduce exciting activities and engage in lively debates with the pupils and this leads to great interest being shown by pupils in their work. Significant to the development of these very good attitudes, values and behaviour is the good quality programme of personal, social and health education that develops a strong learning community.
18. Leadership and management ensure that whole school training in areas that the school needs to develop are successful and enable teachers to use the latest technology and teaching techniques. The school is good at innovation in its learning techniques, for example, in information and communication technology where teachers were observed teaching pupils how to put together power point presentations on the Second World War.
19. All teachers take great care to ensure all pupils have equal access to all parts of the curriculum and equal opportunities within it. The special educational needs co-ordinator works well with class teachers, the special educational needs teacher and classroom assistants, to draw up individual education plans and provide additional support for these pupils both in the classroom and in groups withdrawn from the classroom. Provision for special educational needs is good and enables all pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as they should and keep up with the rest of their class.
20. There is an appropriate number of teaching and support staff with qualifications and experience to meet the needs of the curriculum. As at the last inspection, accommodation and resources are generally good. Accommodation is looked after very well. There is however a lack of large apparatus in the hall which limits pupils' opportunities in physical education. Pupils enjoy the benefits of a pleasant environment and facilities such as the information and communication technology suite, large playing field and pond area. The whole premises are maintained very well by a hard-working caretaker and cleaning staff.

Enrichment including extra curricular provision

21. The school provides a good range and variety of activities outside the school day. These include clubs such as chess, netball, football, recorders and juggling as well as a good range of visits out of school to support learning in the classroom. Pupils were keen to talk about a visit to a Roman site and museum to learn more about the influences the Romans had over Celtic Britain. Residential visits provide a good opportunity for social development and for pupils to engage in adventurous outdoor activities as well as learning directly about the coastal geography of Great Britain. The school promotes a good range of sporting and musical activities. Pupils participate regularly in whole school productions. In addition the school runs teams in all the main sports and take part in appropriate local and regional meetings with success.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good procedures for child protection and arrangements to ensure health and safety.
- Very good and trusting relationships exist between pupils and staff.
- Good advice, support and guidance are given to pupils as they progress through the school.
- Good induction arrangements for new pupils and effective arrangements for older pupils to find out about secondary schools.
- An effective school council enabling pupils to raise concerns and make suggestions.

Commentary

22. The school provides good advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. Pupils have many good opportunities to be involved with the school and its development. These factors result in pupils feeling confident, secure and happy in their learning. The school has successfully maintained this area of its work since the last inspection.
23. The designated officer for child protection is fully trained and experienced in dealing with child protection issues. Staff follow locally agreed procedures and know their obligations regarding child protection. Health and safety risk assessments are carried out regularly regarding premises, school trips and residential visits. There are good arrangements to deal with emergencies including fire and first aid.
24. Very good relationships at all levels reflect the school's family and caring ethos very well. The school council enables pupils to feel valued as young people and it is pleasing to see that the school has taken up many of their suggestions. Staff give a high level of day-to-day support to all pupils in their personal development. Individual problems are handled with sensitivity and care, for example, if pupils are concerned about behaviour in the playground.
25. New pupils are inducted into school life well. Consequently, they settle in quickly to the school routines. Parents commented positively about this aspect of school life. At the other end of the scale, the oldest pupils can attend 'summer schools' operated by secondary schools in the area, giving them more confidence about the next stage of their education. The views of pupils are actively sought through whole school questionnaires and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good and effective links with parents and the wider community, including other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are given good quality information about the school and its policies and practices.
- Parents have good chances to express their views and make suggestions that are valued by the school.
- Partnership with parents contributes well to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Parental concerns are taken seriously and the school deals effectively with any complaints.
- Pupils' annual reports are often too long and do not always say clearly enough how well pupils perform.
- Several good links in the community support pupils' learning well.
- Good links with other schools including effective mechanisms for pupils to transfer.

Commentary

26. Effective links with parents and the wider community make a good contribution to learning. Parental links are similar to that of the last inspection, whereas the wider community links have shown good improvements. The school has a good relationship with parents demonstrated by the great majority of positive views they expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.
27. The school provides much helpful written information for parents, for example, regarding school policies and routines, how to support learning at home, safe use of the Internet and forthcoming work in the curriculum. Although there are good arrangements at consultation evenings for parents to find out about their children's progress, pupils' annual reports are sometimes too long and do not always say clearly enough how well pupils are doing. They can tend to describe the work done, rather than focus on how well pupils perform. Some contained too much educational jargon and lack future learning targets. Parents are given a wide-ranging questionnaire each year so that they can give their views about the school and these are analysed carefully to inform school policies.
28. Parents support the school's homework policy and help their children as much as they can at home. The parents and teachers association gives good support to the school through organizing many social and fundraising events. Their hard work has enabled the school to provide additional learning resources for pupils including computers and other equipment. This provision has had a positive impact on the standards achieved especially in information and communication technology.
29. Wider links in the community include St Mary's Church, 'game on' (football coaching) and specialist support agencies such as MECCS (the traveller education support service). The good links with secondary schools ensure that information about individual pupils is passed on and any issues raised.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are fully involved in the work of the school and act as critical friends.
- The new head teacher has quickly established a very good working relationship with the senior management team and governors.
- Leadership is clear about what needs to be done to raise standards.
- Management of the school ensures that a calm and positive ethos pervades the day-to-day life of the school. However, assessment information could be used more effectively to predict whole school targets more accurately and plot pupils' progress more efficiently.

Commentary

30. Governance of the school is good. The head teacher and senior staff are effective they have a clear and shared vision for the school. Management of the school is satisfactory, day-to-day procedures run smoothly, however, the management of assessment information is not as effective as it might be.
31. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a significant influence in leading the school's development. They help to shape the vision and direction of the school. They have a clear focus on raising standards. The governing body is well organised to fulfil its statutory duties including promoting policies in relation to special

educational needs, race equality, disability and sex education effectively. They have good relationships with the staff and clear channels of communication to exchange and discuss information about the school. Governors challenge and support the senior management team. They promote a positive climate for learning in which pupils enjoy school.

32. The new head teacher, a past member of staff, is committed to building on the strengths of the school and raising academic standards by making teaching and learning even better. She has high aspirations and already the senior management team have committed to a shared vision for the future. They are clear about what they want for the school. All staff work together as a team and ensure that the school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear and followed appropriately. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school. Support staff ensure that office procedures are effective and efficient. Teaching assistants are clear about their roles and when not directly involved in working with pupils are busy keeping displays, books and equipment in order.
33. Management of the school is satisfactory. The school improvement plan is effective. It sets out the five main priorities in this academic year and it is evident in the work of the school that these are being addressed effectively. As examples, guided reading is established appropriately, the review of design and technology is in place, the new head teacher is building on the clear vision for the future with the support of staff and governors, pupils' views are being sought and acted upon and plans are in place for a training day to begin implementing accelerated learning. However, assessment information is not used efficiently or effectively enough to set whole school targets accurately.
34. Performance management is established well. Governors set targets for the head teacher and clear targets for development are negotiated with teaching staff. The senior management team provide good role models to others working in the school. The school is supportive of new and supply teachers. This was very evident in the week of inspection. Finances are managed effectively with the support of the local education authority. The principles of best value for money are adhered to. The decision to keep eight single year group classes with fewer than 30 pupils in each means that a higher than average proportion of the budget is spent on teachers' salaries, therefore leaving much less for other expenditure. Taking account of the school's effectiveness and its expenditure per pupil, Redbourn Junior School provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 02 to March 03

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	453,424
Total expenditure	450,187
Expenditure per pupil	2,169

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	2,665
Balance carried forward to the next	3,238

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

ENGLISH

Provision in English is effective overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are developed well across the school.
- Pupils have clear targets set for them.
- A significant number of pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 5 in National Curriculum tests in 2004.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well.

Commentary

35. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils including those with special needs, travellers and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress and are likely to achieve average standards. A significant number of pupils are likely to achieve the higher level 5 this year. Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are not as high now as at the previous inspection although higher than in the past two years.
36. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 pupils will achieve higher standards than in the previous two years. When pupils enter the school their levels of attainment vary and although most achieve level two, in some year groups many pupils are at the lower range of level two.
37. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6 much of the teaching is good. Across the school pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and standards are above average. In lessons, teachers expect all pupils to listen carefully and politely to each other and to the adults working in the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to express themselves clearly and be aware of the audience they are addressing. For example, the Speech Cup is a competition for all pupils to enter.
38. Pupils explained that they practise their speaking skills before their own class and then two pupils are selected from each class. They give a presentation to the whole school and parents and friends are invited. Pupils must not read from a script, they must have eye contact with the audience and keep their heads up. Pupils must have prepared their own speech. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about the skills they develop. Last term a Year 3 pupil won the lower school cup and a Year 5 pupil the upper school cup.
39. Reading, writing and spelling are taught in a consistent manner across the school. In addition to the literacy lesson every class has a guided reading session each day. The teacher works with a different reading group in each lesson while the other groups develop writing and spelling skills. This work is having a positive impact on raising standards. Individual targets are set for pupils in English enabling them to be clear about what they need to do next to improve. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The deputy head teacher leads her colleagues well and is effective in identifying areas for development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

40. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are used well in all areas of school life. In all lessons pupils listen carefully and speak confidently and clearly. Pupils writing skills are used effectively in other subjects such as religious education, history and geography. Pupils' enjoyment of reading is developing well. Their use of reference books to gather information is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is effective overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of setting is having a positive impact on meeting the needs of individual pupils.
- Standards are rising in mathematics.
- The use of assessment information to set individual and whole school targets is not effective as it could be.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well.

Commentary

41. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils including those with special needs, travellers and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress and are likely to achieve standards that are expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are not as high now as at the previous inspection although higher than in the past two years.
42. Results in mathematics have not been as high as usual in the past two years. However, pupils in the current Year 6 are likely to achieve standards that are average overall with a significant number of pupils achieving the higher level 5. This is because setting is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has ensured that the lower sets have fewer pupils and more teacher support which means that these pupils have more individual attention. Little use was seen of information and communication technology being used to support learning. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. When they move from class to class they behave well, settle to their work quickly and concentrate effectively.
43. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is often good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers ensure that pupils use number systems confidently and move from counting reliably to calculating fluently with all four number operations. They teach pupils to develop mental strategies for solving problems effectively. Planning within year groups is consistent and work in each year group builds on what pupils have learnt previously. For example, in both sets in Year 3, pupils learnt to count forwards and backwards from two and three-digit numbers. They developed their knowledge of place value and the relationships between HTU. Higher attaining pupils wrote and ordered numbers up to 1000. By Year 6 pupils learnt how to round decimals up or down. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to investigate different methods of solving problems.
44. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is very committed to raising standards and has done a great deal of information collection and data analysis. The use of this data however has not been effective enough to set accurate whole school targets but more to explain what has happened in the past. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor standards of teaching and learning in most classes and this is having a positive impact on standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

45. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily across areas of the curriculum, for example in measuring materials in design and technology. In a science lesson, pupils used their knowledge of area and capacity to ensure a fair test. Spreadsheets are used to collate data collected during scientific investigations and then used to create graphical representations of that data to enable analysis to be made of the results. Pupils also use similar systems to analyse their success in weekly spelling tests.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good attitudes of pupils to the subject.
- The use of scientific enquiry to aid learning of scientific concepts.
- Use of planning and analysis sheets to support scientific enquiry introduced as a result of in-service training.
- Contribution of science to spiritual and moral development.
- Use assessment data more effectively in order to raise standards.

Commentary

46. Due to a greater emphasis on the development of scientific enquiry skills standards are now in line with the national average. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the scientific concepts they are teaching and as a result set interesting topics for pupils to investigate. For example, in one lesson, a teacher challenged the pupils to work out the amount of air resistance experienced by different materials falling to earth. Pupils have very good attitudes towards such activities and engage confidently in lively debates with the teachers and each other to establish hypotheses that can be tested.
47. The subject co-ordinator has been on recent training and has introduced useful planning and recording sheets to assist pupils in organising their investigations and gathering and analysing data. The result of using these planners and tables is that pupils have acquired new investigative skills well and achieved well in understanding the methods and requirements of fair testing. In one lesson for example, pupils took care to ensure that all containers in a test to find the best insulation material, were of the same size and packed to the same capacity. This has raised the standards of scientific knowledge of the pupils currently in the school to the national average. This is lower than that found at the time of the previous inspection but in line with that of an earlier inspection and is an improvement on the standards attained in the 2002 national tests.
48. The use of information and communication technology to support the investigative and analysis process is satisfactory. Spreadsheets are used to record and produce graphical representations of data gathered. There are a good number and quality of resources and this means all pupils can participate in investigative work in class sessions. In one lesson all pupils had access to glass thermometers and because they behaved sensibly with these, each pupil could carry out their own investigation with minimum supervision from the class teacher. It is this level of trust that enables so much investigative work and learning and reinforcement of investigative processes to take place.
49. Work on living things, the environment and on the Earth and beyond engenders a great sense of wonder at the complexity of our world and pupils are sensitive to this and this contributes well to their spiritual and moral development.
50. The co-ordinator gathers much assessment data for each year group, as well as individual pupils. Currently this is used satisfactorily to identify any particular areas of study that have been weak in national tests but is insufficiently streamlined to identify what each year group needs to do to raise standards, and what individual or groups of pupils need to do within that to achieve at a higher level.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well equipped information and communication technology suite.
- The use of in-service training to raise the knowledge and confidence of teaching staff.
- Good use of power point presentations to draw together learning by Year 6 pupils.

Commentary

51. The school has directed considerable funds to the enhancement of information and communication technology over the past two years. The result is a well-equipped information and communication technology suite that is effectively used on a regular weekly timetabled basis. This means that pupils have achieved well since the suite was commissioned. The curriculum is now covered in full and this is an improvement since the previous inspection and this has resulted in a rise in standards across the full curriculum so that pupils at the end of Year 6 are attaining standards that are in line with those expected nationally. In some aspects of their work, for example power point presentations, pupils are attaining above the standards expected. Year 6 pupils were observed learning how to compile power point presentations, in preparation for their work on World War II in history. In these presentations they were learning how to integrate text, clip art, photographs and sound in a well sequenced series of slides with drop down or dragged in bullet points. These power point presentations are to be used to support future individual pupil presentations to the class and school. In other aspects of the curriculum pupils are attaining standards that they should for their age. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily supporting learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The rise in standards is the result of increased confidence in the use of information and communication technology by teachers following in-service training in the subject. This is also an improvement since the previous inspection and has contributed significantly to the confident delivery of a full curriculum. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A new co-ordinator has just taken over responsibility for the subject. Much work has been done recently in establishing good practice for pupils and teachers.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support work in other subjects, but could be used more frequently. In science spreadsheets are, used to collate data collected during scientific investigations and then used to create graphical representations of that data to enable analysis to be made of the results. Pupils also use similar systems to analyse their success in weekly spelling tests. Satisfactory use is made of the Internet to obtain information to support projects in history and geography and word processing and art packages are used effectively to present the findings. Simulation packages are used satisfactorily to support work in history, for example on life in Tudor times. Limited use is made of electronic measuring equipment such as sensors to support work in science. Greater use could be made of activities in information and communication technology so that it becomes an embedded tool in the gathering, analysis and presentation of information in all subjects throughout the school.

HUMANITIES

54. No lessons were observed in geography or history. One lesson was observed in religious education. Discussions took place with a group of pupils about their knowledge of and attitudes to history and geography. Policy documents and curriculum plans were scrutinised and displays observed. This evidence indicates that statutory requirements are met and that pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop their historic and geographic skills and knowledge.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is satisfactory. It is effective in enabling pupils to attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age in relation to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good.
- Pupils are very willing to discuss complex issues.
- Good links are made between religious education and pupils' understanding the school as a community.
- Limited use is made of visits to different places of worship to support work on the major religions of the world.

Commentary

55. Observations during the inspection indicate that religious education is effective in enabling pupils to attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age in relation to the locally agreed syllabus and that the majority of pupils including those with special needs, travellers and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
56. Year 6 pupils talk with interest and confidence about the different faiths they have studied and make pertinent links between learning in religious education and other subjects. In history for example, they have learnt about Henry VIII and talk knowledgeably about how his desire for a divorce brought about the change from Catholicism to Protestantism in this country and the consequent establishment of the Church of England. It is the making of these links between subject areas that enable pupils to make satisfactory achievement in their time in the school and gain a secure understanding of the principles of the major religions of the world.
57. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the one lesson observed, pupils were beginning to distinguish between the different types of groups that people might belong to because of birth and those because of choice. They began to understand that groups use symbols to represent the group and introduce rules for behaviour that enable the group to bind together and be mutually supportive. It is through this type of lesson that pupils are encouraged to reflect on their moral and social responsibilities as citizens and to appreciate that for some people religious teachings assist in their spiritual, moral and social development. Their study of the traditions and practices of the world's major religions broadens their understanding of the many religious groups present in this country and in the world and makes a satisfactory contribution to their cultural development. This understanding is enhanced and placed in context by the celebration of the major festivals of these religions in collective worship during school assembly.
58. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The policy for the subject makes clear the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinator in supporting teaching throughout the school. Resources are adequate and well organised and this sound level of support means teachers can plan and teach religious education lessons with confidence. Limited use is made of visits to the places of worship used by the major religions of the world to support this work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

59. No lessons were observed in art and design or physical education. Only one lesson was observed in music. One lesson was observed in design and technology along with a discussion with the co-ordinator. Discussions took place with a group of pupils about their attitudes to art and design, music, physical education and design and technology. Policy

documents and curriculum plans were scrutinised, displays observed and some resources checked. This evidence indicates that statutory requirements are met and that pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop their creative talents.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management of the subject.
- Improved resources.
- Thoughtful whole school curriculum plan.
- Continued focus on in-service training for staff to improve skills.

Commentary

60. Observations during the inspection indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special needs, travellers and higher attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress and are likely to achieve standards that are expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Year 4, pupils were learning that structures are more stable if they have wide bases. They disassembled photograph frames and examined the way in which they were made looking at the size, shape and materials used. They explored how they were designed to stand up. The teaching assistant supported lower attaining pupils effectively. Scrutiny of pupils books and observations in the school, for example, models of Anderson Shelters in Year 6, linked to the history topic World War II, showed good skills in designing and making and confirm that standards are as expected. Pupils say they enjoy design and technology lessons particularly making Pop-up books for the infants.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has attended relevant training, and has audited and centralised resources. She monitors teachers planning and has adjusted topics to ensure correct coverage. She is collecting evidence of work from each year group to illustrate standards. The subject has been identified for improvement in the school improvement plan and time is to be allocated in the spring term for monitoring of teaching and learning. All staff are aware of health and safety issues and are generally more confident now than at the previous inspection. All issues from that time have been addressed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good, and is effective in establishing very good relationships within the school community and in preparing pupils for their future life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good and mature attitudes of pupils towards all aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- Teachers and pupils are very willing to engage in open discussion about relevant topics being covered.
- Well-planned lessons.

Commentary

63. Leadership and management of the subject are good. It is successful in promoting a clear, useful and comprehensive policy for personal, social and health education that includes the appropriate development of citizenship for pupils in the age range of the school. This means that teachers are clear about what they should be covering in lessons and the policy clearly indicates the way in which personal, social and health education and citizenship should permeate all aspects of school. Community for example, was the theme of the assemblies for the week of the inspection. Led by the new head teacher the school as a whole assembled to think about the school as a community, during the week other teachers expanded on this theme to consider the wider community and through the music from the sound track of 'Lord of the rings. The break down of the fellowship,' considered what may happen when communities break up. This was a skilful start to the new school year by the new head teacher and enabled her to introduce her expectations for the school community.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In one lesson observed pupils drew up lists of the people involved in different institutions and analysed the interrelated nature of the work of these people within each of those communities, for example they considered the question, 'Can a surgeon safely perform surgical operations without the support of cleaning staff?' In religious education pupils begin to understand how groups are bound together by symbols and rules and the influence these groups have on individual's lives. It is through the understanding that results from the direct teaching of these elements, that pupils are led to understand why obedience to school rules and high standards of behaviour are constantly expected of them. They thus understand that responsibility in maintaining rules is essential if the happy and secure ethos of the school, that so many of them regard as a hallmark of the school, is to be maintained. Pupils are therefore, through personal, social and health education and citizenship well prepared to take maximum advantage of learning opportunities in lessons and so achieve as well as may be expected for their individual capabilities.
65. Drugs and sex education is appropriately covered through work in science and discussion groups and the use of appropriate published materials and videos. Citizenship is enhanced through a visit for older pupils to 'Hazard Alley' where they have the opportunity to consider their response to dangers that may occur during everyday situations. Residential visits play a significant part of social development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
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	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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