

INSPECTION REPORT

**ROBERT PIGGOTT CHURCH OF
ENGLAND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED
INFANT SCHOOL**

Wargrave

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 109989

Headteacher: Mrs S A Akers

Lead inspector: Mrs J Coop

Dates of inspection: 8th - 10th December 2003

Inspection number: 257333

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| School category: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4-7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 79 |
| School address: | Beverly Gardens Wargrave Reading |
| Postcode: | RG10 8ED |
| Telephone number: | 0118 9402414 |
| Fax number: | 0118 9401571 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr G Jerome-Ball |
| Date of previous inspection: | 22 nd June 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small, Voluntary Controlled Church of England Infant School serves the village of Wargrave and the surrounding areas. There are 79 pupils on roll between the ages of four to seven. Pupils come from a wide range of socio economic backgrounds but the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The socio economic circumstances of the school are above average. The majority of pupils are of white ethnicity and no pupils are at the early stages of speaking English. Attainment on entry varies each year, but is average overall. Nine percent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. This is significantly lower than recent years. One percent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which is also below the national average. Sixteen percent of pupils have joined or left the school other than at the normal time. This is very high compared to the national average. This is not a normal pattern but is due to the recent changes in the local industry. The school received a Silver healthy school award in 2003. It was the first infant school to be awarded an Investor in People award in 2000. The school was reviewed and successfully retained the award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---|
| 31862 | Mrs J Coop | Lead inspector | English Science Information and communication technology Religious education History Geography. |
| 9163 | Mr G Humphrey | Lay inspector | |
| 32135 | Ms S James | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and Technology Music Physical Education Special educational needs Personal, social, health and citizenship education. |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good features. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Good teaching and a supportive family atmosphere ensure that pupils achieve well and have very good attitudes to learning. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science.
- Standards are exceptionally high in art and design and pupils' achievements are excellent.
- The use of writing is not fully developed in all subjects and expectations for the presentation of pupils' written work are not always sufficiently high.
- The headteacher provides very clear leadership. She is well supported by governors and staff who form an effective team.
- A good curriculum is significantly enriched by a very wide range of activities.
- The school is very caring of the health, safety and welfare of pupils and has very good links with parents.
- Pupils are very happy in school, behave well and have very good relationships with their teachers and with one another.
- Provision for spiritual and moral development is excellent and sets the tone for the Christian ethos of the school.
- Assessment procedures are very good in English and mathematics, good in science and the Foundation Stage, but are not fully developed in other subjects.

The school has made **good improvement** since the last inspection. The main issues identified which were planning, information to parents, and monitoring in English and mathematics, have improved significantly. The careful monitoring of the school's performance and good planning have been instrumental in the progress made. Pupils are making better progress, and standards are higher in many subjects because the quality of teaching and the curriculum have improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| reading | B | C | A | A |
| writing | C | C | A | B |
| mathematics | A | A | A | B |

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils achieve well. All groups of pupils of all abilities make consistently good progress during their time in the school. They enjoy learning, try hard and achieve at similar rates.

In the reception class children settle well, and enjoy learning, so that they make good progress and achieve well. Most are on course to exceed the standards expected in all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 2, standards are well above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. However the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in writing is lower than in reading or mathematics. The inspection findings show that standards are well above average in these subjects. More pupils are in line to attain the higher levels in writing due to the school's efforts. Standards also exceed expectations in all other subjects, but are exceptionally high in art and design due to the innovative curriculum, excellent teaching and subject leadership.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. The school is extremely successful in cultivating pupils' spiritual and moral awareness, so that they have a mature perception of the wonders of the world and their place in it. Pupils are learning to be highly responsible and very caring young people. **Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well.** Pupils love coming to school because it is an interesting and fun place to be. **Attendance is well above average** and pupils' punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good.

The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and pupils are expected to work hard. They are helped to learn because they understand what is expected of them and how the lesson links with previous learning. They are involved in evaluating how well they have done and where they need to go next and this is instrumental in the good progress that they make. Teaching assistants play a valuable part in supporting teaching and learning.

The **curriculum is good** and is enhanced by a **very wide range of additional activities.** The curriculum for the creative arts is a very good feature and the curriculum for art and design is excellent. **The care of pupils is very good** and they are given good guidance and support. **Partnerships with parents are very good** and a major reason for pupils very good attitudes to school. **Links with the community are very good** and these make a very successful contribution to school life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Governance is good and the leadership of the headteacher is very good. Her quiet but determined approach to school improvement has been instrumental in raising standards. She is well supported by a small team of staff and hard working governors who share her vision. They form an effective team who are working hard to make further improvements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a very high opinion of the work of the school and express great confidence in it. Pupils share their parents' views. They speak enthusiastically about learning and consider that it is a friendly school where everyone looks after each other.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further develop assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics to enable subject leaders to track progress, and inform teachers' planning.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work and further develop a whole school approach to handwriting.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to develop and practice their writing skills in other subjects.

All statutory requirements are met.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Standards are exceptionally high in art and design.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class achieve well and are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals¹ by the time they start in Year 1 in most areas of learning.
- Standards of speaking and listening are very high, and well above average in reading and writing at the end of Year 2.
- The quality of handwriting and presentation of written work are not consistent across the school.
- Overall standards are well above average in science and mathematics, but independent investigational and problem solving skills are not as high.
- Standards are exceptionally high in art and design, and singing.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

FOUNDATION STAGE

1. Assessment data shows that the attainment of children who start in the reception class varies considerably each year. Overall it is in line with national expectations in all areas of learning for children of this age. Children make good progress and achieve well so that they are likely to exceed the expected goals for children of this age in most areas of learning. They are in line to well exceed the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and physical development where the quality of teaching and learning is consistently very good.

KEY STAGE 1

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 17.9 (16.3) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 16.2 (14.9) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 18.0 (18.1) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

2. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well above the national average and above similar schools overall. Results in reading were well above those of similar schools. Standards have varied each year and there has been a downward trend over the past five years, especially in reading and writing. Evidence shows that this directly equates to the number of pupils in those years with specific learning difficulties. However, taking the three years from 2001 together, the overall pupil performance exceeded the national average in all three subjects. Standards rose significantly in 2003 and the school reached its targets. The evidence from the inspection is that standards are well above national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is due to the hard work of staff and the headteacher to ensure that all groups and abilities of pupils receive good quality support. As a result, the school is in line to attain its more challenging targets for 2004.
3. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very high and are enhanced very well by a wide range of opportunities for them to use these skills in other subjects. More pupils this year are in line to reach the higher level especially in writing. This is in part due to the school's drive to improve spelling, so that pupils are more confident to tackle new words, and are able to spell them correctly. There are some weaknesses. Pupils' handwriting is not consistent and is often untidy. This makes it difficult for many pupils to see and correct their mistakes and is preventing standards from being even higher. In addition, there are comparatively few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects such as geography or history.
4. Standards in mathematics and science are well above average and exceptionally high in some strands of the subjects. In both mathematics and science, pupils are provided with opportunities to solve problems and undertake investigations, with a strong emphasis on providing first hand practical experiences for the pupils. However, pupils' written recording of their work does not do justice to their level of understanding. In addition, pupils tend to rely on the teachers for directions. Their ability to select the correct methods in mathematics for example, to solve problems is average and not as high as other areas of the subject. Similarly, pupils' independent investigational skills in science are average and less well developed than other aspects of the subject.
5. Standards in information and communication technology, and religious education exceed expectations by the end of Year 2. The considerable investment in training, resources and the development of a small computer suite, instigated by the headteacher and governing body has resulted in increased staff confidence to develop information and communication technology as a tool to aid learning. As a result, pupils are gaining in confidence to use computers to support learning in many subjects and standards are rising as a consequence.
6. Standards of singing and in art and design are exceptionally high. The school has ensured that in the drive to raise standards in the core subjects, other more practical and creative subjects have not been neglected. Parents and pupils, value the high quality learning opportunities provided by the school. The high standards are in part due to the high quality curricular provision and the highly effective use of specialist teachers, visitors and good quality resources. All these factors ensure that pupils make great strides in their learning, and try very hard because of the stimulating teaching approaches.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve as well as other pupils in their class. This is because of the very effective way that their learning needs are identified and the effective support they receive as a result. In the past, girls

did not achieve as well as boys in the national tests in mathematics. The school was alert to this and acted decisively. Inspection evidence indicates that girls are achieving as well as boys in lessons. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and their talents nurtured so that they achieve well overall and often very well. In all subjects, teachers are adept at explaining the objectives and involving pupils in evaluating their efforts. This ensures that all groups of pupils are clear about what they are learning and how they can improve. This has a significant impact on the good progress that pupils make and their achievement over time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes towards school are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Their spiritual and moral development is **excellent** and their social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attendance at school is **very good** and their punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school.
- The school successfully uses the creative arts curriculum as a vehicle for spiritual development.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop empathy with other people and so they are sensitive to the feelings of others.
- Relationships between adults and between pupils and adults are very good and are characterised by friendliness, warmth and mutual respect.

Commentary

8. The school ethos is firmly based on the Christian values that pervade all aspects of its work. There is a friendly family atmosphere and pupils are very keen to come to school and to learn. Occasional incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and fairly and the school encourages pupils to take the right course of action and take responsibility if they have done wrong. As a result, pupils and parents are clear that there is no bullying, racism or other forms of harassment in the school.
9. Teachers are very good role models and have very good relationships with the pupils in their class. This ensures that pupils have very good attitudes to learning and try hard in lessons. Pupils' behaviour is good and they respect their teachers. A few pupils tend to get a little too excited at times and become distracted, but this is well managed so that it does not detract other pupils from learning in lessons.
10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured very well in assemblies and in class worship, which are occasions that create a real sense of belonging. Their spiritual and moral development is also developed in an outstanding way through many other aspects of school life. For example, pupils explored the theme of 'Shalom', God's peace, and considered how wonderful our hands are through art, drama, dance and poetry. As a result, a pupil spontaneously said, "All people in the world are special – whatever colour you are and whatever you are good at." Pupils are provided with many opportunities to consider children and others who are less fortunate than themselves. This successfully enhances their understanding of their responsibility towards others so that the pupils are very kind and thoughtful young people.
11. Pupils interact well because teachers give them many opportunities to work co-operatively. The school is considering establishing a school council to extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. The school's innovative approach to the

creative arts curriculum develops pupils' appreciation of their own cultural traditions and those of others, very effectively. The traditions of pupils from other cultural heritages represented within the school are celebrated and valued. However, they are less aware of the traditions of other faiths than they are of those associated with Christianity.

Attendance

12. Attendance is very good and punctuality good because the school has very good monitoring systems and there is very good parent co-operation.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.6(%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 4.4 | School data: | 0.0 |
| National data: | 5.4 | National data: | 0.4 |

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

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 | 77 | | |
| White – Irish | 2 | | |
| White – any other White background | 1 | | |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 1 | | |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 1 | | |
| Any other ethnic group | 1 | | |
| No ethnic group recorded | 2 | | |

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 quality of education provided by the school is good. The curriculum is good with some highly effective features. The school provides effective support and guidance for pupils and has very good links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, but the quality of teaching in art and design is excellent. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Teachers are supported by very good assessment procedures in English and mathematics.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 8 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and very good relationships with the pupils provide a very firm basis for learning.
- Teaching assistants are used well to enhance learning in all subjects.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and the use of teachers' specialisms is very effective and results in very effective creative arts lessons.
- Teachers plan a wide range of interesting practical experiences but pupils' independent learning could be developed further in some subjects.
- Teachers involve pupils well in evaluating their learning.
- There is not a consistent expectation about the quality of the presentation of pupils' work.
- Assessment procedures are very good in English and mathematics, good in the Foundation Stage, and science, but satisfactory in other subjects.

Commentary

13. The good quality of the teaching and effective support from teaching assistants are instrumental in the good progress that all pupils make from the start in the reception class to the end of Year 2. Pupils, and younger children in the reception class, enjoy coming to school because they have very good relationships with all the staff. Teachers use praise and gentle encouragement to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities want to work hard to please them. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in all classes in the school, based on high expectations of behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are provided with interesting activities well matched to their ability, so that they blossom and learn well. Their opinions are valued and this effectively motivates them to 'have a go' and not to be afraid to make mistakes.
14. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy and National Numeracy strategy and have successfully adapted the lesson structures to meet the needs of the pupils in the school. Younger pupils in Year 1 with limited experience of the Foundation Stage curriculum for example, are provided with a varied and interesting carousel of activities. All staff are well briefed, activities are carefully planned and continually adapted, so that these younger pupils are making good progress as a result.
15. Throughout the school, teachers are adept at planning a wide range of interesting practical experiences. Learning objectives are made very clear to pupils at the start of lessons and the end of lesson discussions are particularly effective in involving pupils, in a wide range of approaches, to evaluate their own learning. In English and mathematics pupils have individual learning targets that they use well to monitor their own learning and progress. As a result, pupils are clear about what they have learned, build upon their previous learning systematically and are clear about the next steps in their learning.

16. Teachers who have a particular expertise take responsibility for teaching art and design, drama, music and design and technology one afternoon a week in a carousel of activities. This highly effective strategy ensures that pupils' individual skills are very effectively developed, and they are challenged by the very wide range of exciting activities planned. Standards are exceptionally high in art and design for example, because pupils' individual talents are nurtured and they are consistently motivated by the interesting array of activities and the wide range of resources available. This arrangement also works very well for some talented pupils identified by the school.
17. Shortcomings in otherwise well taught lessons occur when some of the activities are too teacher directed. In addition, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to challenge pupils to record their ideas in a variety of ways. There is not a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting or consistent expectations about the quality of pupils' written recording, so that standards of presentation vary significantly in each class.
18. Teachers have a very good overview of pupils' progress and abilities especially in English mathematics. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection when they were judged not to be good enough. This information is used well to gain a good whole school overview of progress and set individual and class targets in these subjects and also in science. In other subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers have a broad overview of progress and achievement, but there is scope for further development of these procedures. Currently, staff do not have a means to identify and monitor pupils' development in individual subject skills, that they could use to plan lessons even more effectively.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good** and it has improved since the last inspection. It is enhanced by a **very good** and interesting range of additional activities. The curriculum for the creative arts is very effective with an outstanding art and design curriculum. The quality of the accommodation and resources is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The innovative creative arts programme has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and the standards they achieve in those subjects.
- The school successfully adapts the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in most subjects.
- The accommodation is good, the quality of the outside area is very good, but the hall is small.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils.

Commentary

19. The quality and range of the curriculum are good overall. The school meets all statutory requirements and implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education well. There is a good approach to sex, relationships and drug awareness education that is highly suitable for pupils in the school. The headteacher utilises the skills of individual staff well so that the school provides a practical approach to the curriculum whilst making learning interesting and fun. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides a good range of worthwhile learning experiences and is firmly based on the six areas of learning for children of that age.

20. The school effectively modifies the curriculum for different groups of pupils. The curriculum in Year 1, for example, was redesigned along the lines of the Foundation Stage to meet the needs of the very high number of pupils born in the summer who had only had a few weeks of full-time education prior to entry to the class.
21. The school has an innovative approach to the creative, aesthetic, performing and practical arts curriculum that is closely linked to pupils' spiritual development. There is a carousel of creative and performing arts on one afternoon per week so that pupils engage in two activities during the time available, linked to a whole school theme. The school is now planning to build upon this success and further develop the provision for geography and history.
22. Pupils' learning is significantly enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities including gardening and environment clubs, recorders, choir, gymnastics, French and tag rugby. A wide range of visits and visitors also enhance the curriculum. The whole school had lunch at the Sultan of Oman's UK residence, for example, and pupils have benefited from contact with a wide range of visiting musicians, story-tellers, dance teachers and artists. These events also ensure that pupils not only appreciate and understand their own cultural heritage, but also that of others.
23. The quality of the accommodation and resources is good overall. The outside area provides the school with a wealth of learning opportunities. The hall, however, is small and its central location sometimes has a negative impact on the lessons going on in the classrooms around it, particularly if those lessons require quiet and opportunities for reflection. The new computer suite is a valuable asset and is beginning to be used effectively to raise standards in information and communication technology and to support learning in other subjects.
24. The school is very inclusive. All pupils are valued and have full and equal access to the curriculum and additional activities. The school's provision for special educational needs is very good and it is very effectively led and managed by the headteacher. Pupils' needs are identified early and their progress is monitored very closely. Pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum because of thorough planning for their needs by the class teacher, related to targets in their Individual Education Plans and the good help they receive from learning support assistants.

Care, guidance and support

25. Pupils are **very well** cared for and the guidance and support provided is generally **good**. The school involves pupils well in its work and development. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of welfare support and pastoral care is very good.
- There are very effective child protection and health and safety procedures.
- There are very trusting relationships between pupils and staff.
- The school environment is very clean and secure.
- Pupils' views are valued.
- There is some inconsistency in the way assessment is used to guide pupils on how to improve their work.

Commentary

26. The school supports its pupils very well and provides a caring ethos that encourages them to do their best at all times. Staff are sensitive to the individual needs of pupils and the pastoral care afforded is effectively matched to those needs. Health and safety procedures are rigorous, very effective and have improved since the last inspection. The governors are involved in the monitoring of health and safety and external advice is sought where appropriate. The provision for first aid is good.
27. Children in the reception class, and pupils throughout the school, are very well supervised and are taught to use school equipment safely and to observe high standards of personal hygiene. The school is cleaned and maintained to a high standard. Child protection procedures are rigorous. Staff are well trained and exercise their child protection responsibilities with vigilance and care. There are well-established links with social services and other relevant outside agencies.
28. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good and a high degree of trust between pupils and their teachers is clearly evident. When asked, pupils say that this is a 'friendly school where teachers are fair and always available if there is a problem'. There are very good induction procedures for children entering the reception class and for pupils who join the school at other times. The arrangements for supporting pupils when they transfer to the junior school are also good.
29. Pupils' views are valued and taken into consideration. They are consulted and their views and opinions listened to. For example, they recently contributed to the redevelopment of the facilities in the playground, becoming particularly involved in the ground markings for various games and activities. In lessons teachers welcome pupils' opinions and ideas and older pupils are involved in reviewing and setting their personal targets. There is some inconsistency in the way that assessment is used to guide pupils on how to improve their work in some subjects. However, overall the high standards of care, guidance and support have been well maintained since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

30. Parents have very positive views about the school and like the quality of education it provides and its Christian ethos. The partnership between the school, parents and the wider community is **very good**. There are **good** links with other local schools.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with the school and its Christian ethos.
- The partnership between parents and the school is very good.
- Good information is provided for parents and the termly curriculum guides are excellent.
- A significant number of parents volunteer to support the work of the school.
- The links with the wider community are very good.

Commentary

31. Parents are very pleased with the school. Their positive views on the quality of education it provides, and the Christian ethos it promotes, are reflected in the pre-inspection questionnaires and minutes of the pre-inspection parents' meeting. The

partnership between parents and the school is very good. For its part the school provides good information on the progress that pupils make, produces an excellent curriculum summary each term and organises regular workshops to inform parents how best to support their children's learning both in school and at home. Parents are fully involved in discussions about the progress of pupils with special educational needs and they contribute to their Individual Education Plans which include useful guidance for supporting the child at home.

32. Parents respond by enthusiastically supporting the work of the school through volunteering to work on specific projects, such as the refurbishment of Anne's Garden in the playground, a project that was also supported by members of other village organisations. The co-operation of parents also contributes to the achievement of higher attendance than for most similar schools. Many parents support teachers in the classroom and there is a very active Parent Teacher Association that organises many fundraising and social events.
33. Through the Parent Teacher Association, and the strong links with the vicar and congregation of the Parish Church, the school has successfully placed itself at the centre of the village community. The Christmas Bazaar and Summer Fayre, for example, are whole village events and the school swimming pool is managed and promoted as a community facility during the warmer weather. Pupils' work is frequently displayed in the Church and at other local venues to recognise and celebrate their achievements, and the school choir often performs at various venues in the village.
34. There is a well-planned programme of visits to places of historic, cultural and religious interest and many interesting speakers are invited to address whole school assemblies. These visits and visitors, combined with the close community links, make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The links with other local schools are good. There is a close liaison with the receiving junior school and this supports the transition of pupils to the next stage of their education. The infant, junior and secondary schools all share a common heritage that dates back to the eighteenth century and this provides a common bond between the three schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is well supported by her staff. Governance and management are both **good** and governors effectively support the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear sense of direction and an innovative approach to school development.
- There is a very good team spirit and staff share a common sense of purpose.
- Experienced governors are knowledgeable and provide regular, good quality support to the headteacher and the school.
- Subject co-ordinators are good role models, and the school sensibly plans further to develop their monitoring role, which is not yet fully developed in all subjects.
- Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are managed very well.
- The School Development Plan is detailed and based firmly on raising pupils' achievements.
- The school's finances and day-to-day administration are efficiently managed.

Commentary

35. Since her appointment three years ago, the headteacher has led by example, with warmth and approachability but also with a quiet determination. The headteacher has developed a very strong 'team spirit' by involving all staff in the decisions she takes and continually motivating, supporting and inspiring them. As a result, all staff feel valued, and fully share her vision of educating the whole child and particularly an understanding of the role of the creative arts in achieving this vision. This innovative development has not been at the expense of standards in English, mathematics and science, which remain high. This is because the headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that key members of staff now have the skills to undertake a detailed analysis of test results, in order to identify and address areas for improvement.
36. In a small school with few full-time members of staff, individual teachers carry a number of responsibilities, including the headteacher. Although she does not have a deputy, she is well supported by the senior teacher who has non-contact time to fulfil her duties. Individual subject leaders support her well and are developing their skills for the benefit of the school. Their role has been well developed since the last inspection. The school however recognises that there is room for further development to include regular monitoring of the standard and consistency of pupils' work in all subjects and observations of teaching and learning in the non-core subjects. Recently the headteacher and governing body wisely made the strategic decision to appoint a number of additional teaching assistants and to increase the number of contracted hours of two part-time teachers in order to allow non-contact time for co-ordinators to fulfil their roles more effectively.
37. The headteacher is very committed to welcoming and including pupils of all abilities and backgrounds into the school. Her leadership and management of the special educational needs provision are very good. She works very closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive the best possible help. She has established very effective procedures to monitor their progress so that all pupils can benefit from the provision that the school offers.
38. Governors who have served on the governing body for some time have a good understanding of their role and are proactive in shaping the direction of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well. New and less experienced governors are at an early stage in developing their roles but good structures are in place to enable them to do this. The school development plan is detailed. The governing body is developing a five year financial development plan for the school and the headteacher is sensibly intending to link this to long term forward planning in the School Development Plan. Parents have also contributed their ideas for the future development of the school. Governors realise that in a small school the workload of staff can be considerable. They therefore contribute a great deal in terms of administrative support and expertise in different fields to ease the burden on the headteacher and other members of staff. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a clear view of the appropriate priorities for development.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 288 462 |
| Total expenditure | 300 559 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3 026 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 57 859 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 45 762 |
| | |

39. The budget has been carefully managed to rectify an overspend in the recent past. The governors now have retained a high balance, which currently stands at nearly fourteen percent of the total school income. This has been placed in reserve to go towards a much needed new hall and library provision. The governing body spends money wisely and carefully considers all its options when purchasing goods and services to ensure the maximum benefit for the school and its pupils. The school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, it is well led and the quality of the provision has been maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned and includes a good mix of independent and adult-directed activities. The two part-time teachers and teaching assistant work very effectively as a team, although there is scope for greater adult involvement in children's play activities. The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes very good, so that the children currently in the reception class make good progress, achieve well, and most are in line to exceed the expected goals for children of this age by the end of the reception year. Staff carefully assess and record children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals for pupils of this age so that activities are effectively designed to meet their needs.
41. Data shows that children's attainment on entry varies each year, but is average overall. This year it is not reliable to make an overall judgment about attainment on entry as only one third of the children due to start in the school are currently attending the class. At the time of the inspection, this group of children had been attending the class for only a few weeks fulltime. They are happy, settled and eager to learn, because staff provide interesting activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with parents enable children to make a smooth transition from home to school so that they settle quickly and happily into class routines.
- Children's empathy with other people and awareness of how they should behave is developed very well.

Commentary

42. Parents appreciate the visit the reception teacher makes to their homes prior to their child starting school and the time they spend getting to know them. As a result, relationships between staff and children are warm and very supportive and routines are very well established. Very good drama sessions, led by specialist staff, help children to make links with their learning in other lessons. For example, one drama session built very effectively on the theme of feeling different, lonely and having no friends so that the children could talk in simple terms about ways in which they could help another child who might be feeling unhappy. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently very good so that the children achieve very well as a result and are in line to well exceed the standards expected by the time they start in Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are skilled at enriching children's understanding and use of language.

- Children listen very well, confidently offer their own ideas in discussions and make good progress in their early literacy development.
- Writing skills could be further developed.

Commentary

43. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and during practical activities such as cooking, staff effectively develop children's language by asking questions and encouraging them to describe what they see and feel whilst simultaneously using a wide vocabulary themselves. These sessions successfully develop children's spoken vocabulary such as when they consider whether butter is 'bright or pale yellow' and agree that sugar crystals are 'gritty'. Activities are carefully planned so that children gain in confidence and communicate successfully with one another and staff, and they are not afraid to ask questions and make relevant observations. They listen attentively to stories, although they become a little restless if the teacher talks for too long. They are developing a good range of early reading strategies including looking at pictures and applying their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them make sense of the text. Children achieve well and make good progress overall, especially in their use of oral language and in their reading, where they exceed the expectations for their age by the time they enter Year 1. However, progress and achievement in writing is satisfactory. This is because although staff provide opportunities for children to write for a purpose in role-play activities, there is scope to provide more writing opportunities.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of good teaching, children are developing a good knowledge of numbers and shapes.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to apply their developing mathematical skills in practical contexts.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning when they start in Year 1. This is because of good teaching, based upon well planned and resourced practical mathematical activities, that ensures that children make good progress. As a result, many children can confidently count up to and back from 20, with most able to recognise numbers from 0-10 and write them legibly. Teaching ensures that more able children are challenged so that this group of children can already complete simple addition and subtraction sums up to 10 and can identify a range of two-dimensional shapes from the properties that the teacher describes. Teachers are very skilled at linking children's learning in mathematics to other areas of learning. During an art activity, for example, children were learning the correct use of mathematical language such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than' as they cut rectangular arms and legs for a Santa mobile. Teachers also use the improved outdoor environment successfully to support learning, and encourage children to find examples of shapes such as the square planter, triangular roof on the bird table and rectangular bricks in the walls.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision for the development of knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a variety of interesting experiences that enable children to develop good early scientific understanding.
- Children are developing a good knowledge of their own culture and beliefs and have some awareness of those of other people.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good and children make good progress in developing an awareness of the world around them. The children achieve well and are in line to exceed the expected goals when they start in Year 1. Children develop a good understanding of some of the features of living things by planting bulbs and other plants and observing the changes that occur as they grow. Interesting practical activities engage the children's interest and because of effective prompting from the teacher, they also notice how materials such as butter and sugar change when they are mixed and describe the differences they can see. Teachers tell the Christmas story very well so that children listen carefully and are then able to talk about the major characters and events in the story and explain why Christians celebrate Christmas. Staff have taken opportunities for children to gain awareness of other cultural traditions. However, there are only a limited number of planned activities that enable children to explore aspects of other cultures and beliefs as part of class routines.

Physical development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan very effectively for the development of children's large motor skills so that they move with increasingly good control and co-ordination.
- Many opportunities are offered for children to develop their skills using a good variety of tools and implements.

Commentary

46. The quality of teaching is very good and children make very good progress. A key factor is very effective planning that progressively develops early gymnastics skills so that older reception children are attaining well above expectations for their age by Year 1. Children try hard and achieve very well, as they explore a range of ways of moving their bodies, including pushing and pulling with their hands and feet and spinning and sliding. Teaching is challenging so that children successfully transfer the skills they have learned on the floor to their work on the apparatus, moving backwards and sideways, under and through the equipment. They jump and land with confidence. They also recognise some of the changes that happen to their bodies during exercise, such as getting warm. Children have good control of large wheeled toys and use the large space available for outdoor play well. Through enjoyable activities such as manipulating dough and using cutters to make cookies, drawing and cutting out shapes they are also developing good hand control.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for children to develop their imagination in free play activities in the classroom and through teacher-led drama lessons.
- There is scope for opportunities for imaginative play to be further developed through outdoor activities.

Commentary

47. The indoor environment is very effectively used to develop children's creative skills. As a result of this high-quality provision children assigned roles to one another when playing in Santa's Grotto, and very much enjoyed acting out the story of Santa and his reindeer delivering presents to a sleeping child. Such provision also makes a very strong contribution to the development of children's speaking and listening skills. They use their imaginations equally well in teacher-led drama sessions, where they enact different roles and consider other people's viewpoints. Children greatly enjoy singing and painting bold pictures, and develop their skills well because of the effective way that they are taught and involved in whole school activities. In this respect teaching is good, so that children achieve well and make good progress. Most are in line to exceed the expected goals when they start in Year 1. Adults sometimes participate in children's play, extending possibilities and also their use of language. There is potential for the role of the adult to be further developed in this respect, particularly with regard to outdoor play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Standards are well above national expectations at the end of Year 2, and standards in speaking and listening are very high.
- Teaching is good, pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' handwriting is untidy and the use of a joined style is not consistently developed.
- Pupils use speaking and reading skills very well in other subjects, but the use of writing is less well developed.

Commentary

48. Attainment in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 2 shows that standards are well above the national average in reading and writing. Standards have improved significantly from the average standards attained in the 2002 tests and have also improved from those reported in the last inspection. Inspection findings are that standards in reading and writing are well above the national expectations. Pupils enjoy literacy and try hard in lessons. As a result, pupils of all abilities are achieving well and make good progress in relation to their individual capabilities.

49. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very high at the end of Year 2. Pupils are articulate and speak with maturity on a range of topics. The vast majority of pupils listen very well to staff or their friends in lessons. This is because teachers are adept at using a wide variety of interesting ways for pupils to practise these skills. The use of drama is particularly beneficial, and specialist teaching ensures that it successfully enhances pupils' creative and imaginative use of language. This organisation is very effective. It not only ensures that spoken language skills are very well developed, but has a knock on effect on the quality of pupils' writing and their ability to discuss the characters in their reading texts.
50. Pupils make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. The recent introduction of reading, writing, and spelling workshops has enabled pupils to be effectively involved in evaluating their own work. As a result, they have regular good quality opportunities to review, practise and enhance these skills further. This ensures that pupils of all abilities are well supported, and because they are clear about what they need to do to improve, they achieve well. Pupils and parents value these opportunities and especially like the reading and spelling workshops which pupils state are "really helping them to learn". Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities to explore spelling patterns and gaining confidence to spell unfamiliar words. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing among the more able pupils. As a result of these initiatives, the standard of spelling is improving, and more pupils are on target to attain the higher level 3 in writing than in the previous year.
51. Despite this positive picture, pupils' handwriting is often untidy and work is not always well presented. There is not a consistent expectation about the quality of the presentation of pupils' written work across all subjects. The use of a particular handwriting style, for example, is not consistently taught or developed across the school. As a result, some pupils use a neat joined up style, and others in the same class have immature and untidy handwriting. This makes it difficult for many pupils to read their own work in order to correct mistakes and is a factor that is preventing standards in writing from being even higher.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features, and has improved from the previous inspection. Relationships between staff and pupils are particularly very strong. As a result pupils feel valued as individuals. They are not afraid to 'have a go', and because all their efforts are praised, they strive to do even better to please their teacher. This has a positive impact on pupils' overall progress and level of achievement, as they try hard to complete a given amount of work in the time. Planning is detailed, and teachers use their knowledge of pupils' abilities well to plan a range of interesting activities. Teaching assistants play a valuable part in ensuring that when working with groups of pupils, less able pupils are supported but also more able pupils are challenged. The end of lesson discussions are used particularly well to involve pupils in evaluating their own learning, celebrate achievements and ensure that pupils understand the 'next steps' in their learning.
53. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has a good awareness of the subject and areas for development. Recent initiatives to improve writing and spelling are beginning to bear fruit. Together with the headteacher, the subject leader has worked hard to improve assessment and planning since the previous inspection, with good results. Very detailed assessment procedures and the detailed tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress are a key factor in the rising standards and the good progress that has been made since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

54. Overall there are a good range of opportunities for pupils to use and improve their literacy skills in other subjects. In particular pupils have a very good range of opportunities to develop their reading and speaking skills. Drama, role play, debates, interviews and presentations are used extensively and successfully throughout the school. However, there are missed opportunities to use other subjects, especially geography and history as a vehicle to further practise and refine writing skills, and to inspire pupils to write in a range of styles.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some imaginative teaching approaches make learning in mathematics fun, so that most pupils have positive attitudes and achievement is good.
- Pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of number, shapes and measures, though their problem solving skills are less well developed.
- The standard of presentation of pupils' work is inconsistent and the recording of pupils' findings is sometimes unclear.
- Teachers usually adapt tasks very effectively for pupils of different abilities but this is not consistent.
- Assessment is used very well to track pupils' progress and to identify areas for whole school development.

Commentary

55. Attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 2 in the 2003 national tests is well above the national average. Boys attained slightly higher standards than girls, but the inspection did not reveal firm evidence why this should be so. This is a feature the school is investigating. Evidence from the inspection confirms that all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards are well above average in knowledge and understanding of numbers, shapes and measures at the end of Year 2. However, the pupils' ability to select appropriate strategies to solve problems is average and is an area for development the school has identified.
56. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall and firmly based on the content and approaches of the National Numeracy Strategy. There are some very good examples of imaginative teaching, which really engage pupils' interest. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils used their knowledge of non-standard units of measurement to measure strings of tinsel and other Christmas objects. They could explain why some units of measurement are suitable for measuring some objects, whilst others are not. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved very well because tasks were effectively modified to meet their needs and the expertise of the teaching assistant was used well. However, throughout the school, tasks are not always so effectively modified to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. This results in more able pupils enjoying a challenging problem, but less able pupils sometimes wait for adult help rather than trying to tackle the problem themselves. This impacts on the progress that these pupils make in the lesson. In addition, there are inconsistent expectations about the quality of pupils written

recording, which can be untidy. This does not help them to clearly record answers to aid accuracy of working.

57. Teachers very carefully assess and track the progress of all pupils towards the achievement of the objectives for learning set out in the National Numeracy Strategy. Individual targets are set sometimes in discussion with the pupils themselves. Pupils' performance in national tests is carefully analysed to identify areas for development. This has contributed to the good improvement in standards achieved since the last inspection.
58. The quality of leadership of the subject is good and has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a clear sense of direction and successfully identifies areas for development. She has monitored the quality of teaching and given helpful feedback to staff but there is room for further development of her role to include the monitoring of teachers' plans and pupils' work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Provision for mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. The new computer suite is beginning to be used well to develop pupils' investigative skills. Although pupils are given opportunities to apply their developing mathematical skills in other subjects such as design and technology, such opportunities are sometimes missed in other subjects such as science and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and work well together.
- There is good emphasis on the development of scientific language and concepts.
- The outside environment is used well to support teaching and learning.
- Assessment procedures are good overall, but there is no assessment of pupils' investigational skills to support planning.
- There is a lack of consistency in the way pupils record their work.

Commentary

60. On the basis of teacher assessments, pupils' attainment is well above national expectations. Inspection findings indicate that standards are well above the national average and similar to those found in the last inspection. Science is a popular subject with pupils. They enjoy the practical aspects and many have been inspired to find out further information at home. This enthusiasm for the subject, together with good teaching of key subject facts, ensures that pupils of all abilities, make good progress, enjoy learning and achieve well.
61. By the end of Year 2 pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of materials and physical processes. The vast majority of pupils in Year 2, have a very clear understanding of how electricity flows through certain materials, because teachers have taught these skills well. Pupils construct a circuit with a switch, and explain the processes involved. They understand and explain why a circuit will not work with a

break, and in a lesson seen during the inspection began to consider why electric flexes are covered with plastic. One Year 1 pupil stating, 'the plastic protects you'. Most pupils speak with very clear understanding about 'reversible' and irreversible' changes, and use key subject words such as 'electrons', with maturity. Standards in these strands of the subject are very high.

62. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers are adept at introducing key concepts and encouraging the correct use of terminology, so that pupils are confident and articulate when explaining their ideas. Resources and the extensive school grounds are used particularly well to support teaching and learning, so that pupils have a very good understanding of living things. Homework is used well to encourage independent learning and pupils are often spurred on to research facts at home.
63. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to carry out investigations. As a result pupils of all abilities are able to make sensible predictions and test these out. Pupils work sensibly and safely, during these times, supporting each other very well. Lessons provide very good support for social development and promote mature attitudes. However, a weakness in teachers' planning is that opportunities to investigate are too teacher directed and are the same for all pupils. This is a missed opportunity to provide a further level of challenge, especially for more able pupils. This is because teachers do not have clear understanding of pupils' attainment in this important element of the subject. Pupils' recording of their work is generally untidy and does not do justice to their very good level of knowledge and understanding. The quality of their written recording does not help pupils to clarify their ideas and evaluate their learning.
64. The subject is led well by a part- time member of staff. In the limited time she has available, she has monitored the provision and pupils' work carefully. She has a good action plan, and is very aware of the need to develop more rigorous assessment procedures and increase teachers' confidence to encourage pupils to undertake independent investigations. She is already investigating ways to improve this. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. The outside environment has been further enhanced, and information and communication technology is beginning to be used successfully in the subject to support learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and Communication Technology is **satisfactory** and improving rapidly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above national expectations overall but pupils' keyboard skills are below average.
- A new computer suite is supporting pupils' rapid progress
- The planning for further development is good
- The use of information and communication technology across all curricular areas is developing well.

Commentary

65. Standards are above expected levels at the end of Year 2 and are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. The school has recently made a major investment in resources, resulting in the development of a new small computer suite. Together with the employment of a technician each morning, these initiatives effectively enhance teaching and learning. This development is significant given the limited space available. It has led to an increased use of computers by pupils, and improved confidence of teachers. This is as a result of the determined leadership of the headteacher and governors. Pupils of all abilities use the suite on a regular basis, and are rapidly gaining in confidence and skills. These improved resources have not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on the pupils' level of achievement, which is satisfactory currently, but improving rapidly.
66. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all abilities enjoy using the computers and most are able to save, print and retrieve their work. More able pupils can insert pictures and text, and most pupils can access the internet to research topics. Pupils have a good level of skill, and they are proud of the work they produce. They talk with enthusiasm about the subject and most pupils can move icons across the screen, using the mouse with a good level of control. They are also able to programme a toy to move around a complex planned route. However, pupils' keyboard skills are below average and most are slow when using their word processing skills. This affects their level of achievement and standards they attain in this aspect of their learning.
67. Teaching is satisfactory overall pupils are making satisfactory progress. During the inspection it was only possible to observe teaching for short amounts of time. This was delivered by teaching assistants who are well briefed. Together with the pupils, they are supported well by the technician. The use of the teaching assistants to deliver some lessons is providing, good value for money. They teach specific subject skills well and are encouraging and supportive of pupils learning. Pupils respond well to the instructions and are becoming increasingly independent as a result. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the school has plans to develop them further. On occasions, work is planned for topic coverage and not to match the individual skills of pupils, which affects the rate of progress made.
68. The subject is well led. There has been good progress made since the last inspection. The subject leader has worked hard to ensure staff have received relevant training. She has recently developed a portfolio of marked and assessed work to support teachers, and is currently trialling an assessment scheme. The co-ordinator has planned well for the use of the new resources and relevant developments and improvements are well thought out.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum.

The use of the subject in other curricular areas is good, developing well and has improved since the last inspection. This is due to the increased confidence of staff and new resources. Pupils use the suite regularly to support learning in reading, spelling, art and design, and mathematics for example. Digital cameras have captured the pupils' interest. They have been used well to support science and literacy, when pupils produced non fiction books about mini- beasts.

HUMANITIES

69. In humanities, work in **geography** and **history** was sampled. No lessons were observed in geography, and one lesson was observed in history. Teachers' planning, and pupils' work was analysed. Discussions were held with pupils and the subject leaders.
70. The indication from pupils' work is that standards are above expectations in **geography** and **history**, by the end of Year 2. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection. Pupils talk enthusiastically about both subjects and have a good knowledge and understanding of topics studied. They have made satisfactory progress during their time in the school and their level of achievement is satisfactory.
71. A good feature in both subjects is the way that teachers use the local area to enhance learning. They utilise a practical approach to teaching and learning, and this ensures that learning in history and geography is meaningful for the pupils.
72. Leadership in both subjects is satisfactory. Both subject leaders have monitored the subjects informally and have recognised that there is a need to develop assessment procedures, so as to provide teachers with a clear knowledge of pupils' subject skills. They have already sensibly begun to seek advice about this development. They are keen to develop the subject planning in line with the best practice elsewhere in the school and have appropriate plans to develop the subjects further.

Religious education.

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills but opportunities for writing are not consistently developed.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well.

Commentary.

73. As found at the previous inspection, by the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards that are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They are thoughtful and have a very good understanding of what it means to belong to the 'Christian family', because teaching is good and challenges pupils to think about the meaning of the stories they hear. As a result, most pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, its ceremonies and special people associated with the church. Pupils have a good and developing understanding of other faiths they have studied. They are beginning to recognise for example, about the importance of light to many religions. More able pupils could draw comparisons with Divali and the Christian festival of Christmas. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, make good progress and are developing some mature ideas.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Through activities such as acting in role, interviews, simple debates and assemblies, religious education makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and the development

of their speaking and listening skills. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very good, so that they are not afraid to make their opinions known and act out in role. As a result, pupils are developing an appreciation of how actions impact on emotions and are able to link this understanding to the Christmas story. One boy, for example, expressed anger that King Herod wanted to kill all the baby boys. They use terms such as 'special', and 'peaceful', with understanding, and are not afraid to ask questions to clarify their thinking. However, the amount of recorded work in pupils' books is limited and does not reflect their actual knowledge or their level of understanding.

75. The subject is being well led by a temporary part time teacher. She has made a positive start, and her detailed audit of the subject, has highlighted relevant areas of development. Her hard work and expertise is providing the school with a welcome and valuable pair of extra hands. She has good plans to further enhance the provision. She recognises that links with other faith groups and other subjects could be developed more to further enhance learning. The development of assessment procedures is also a key priority and she is working closely with other schools to develop a consistent and relevant approach. The quality of the provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design was inspected in depth because this is an outstanding strength of the school and makes a very strong contribution to the very good creative arts programme. Design and technology, **music** and **physical education** were inspected in less detail. Work was analysed, discussions with pupils and subject co-ordinators were held and four lessons were observed.

76. In **design and technology** pupils make good progress and achieve well. By the end of Year 2 observed standards are above national expectations and similar to those reported at the last inspection. As they move through the school, pupils undertake an increasingly complex range of design and make tasks. Teachers demonstrate particular techniques effectively but could allow a little more room for pupils to explore for themselves how mechanisms such as hinges work and are used.
77. In **music**, the quality of singing is very high, by the end of Year 2 and has improved since the last inspection. The expertise of the subject leader is used effectively to enable pupils to achieve very well. This is because, pupils are taught very good breathing techniques and to follow directions by a subject specialist. As a result, they sing very sweetly and joyously, in two-part harmonies and use tempo, texture and dynamics to aid their performance. The school song was composed by a parent, with the pupils' help, and has recently been professionally recorded by them. This exemplifies the very high standards attained and very effectively enhanced pupils' spiritual development.
78. In **physical education** only one dance lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a secure judgment on overall standards. In this one lesson the quality of teaching was very good and pupils achieved very well. By the end of Year 2 pupils move with very good control and imagination to music, stretching and holding shapes. They concentrate intensely, try hard to improve their movements and reach a very good standard of performance because of challenging, but encouraging, teaching and good support from teaching assistants. The school hall is quite small and is just big enough for gymnastics but there is a large field and a swimming pool.

79. In these subjects the co-ordinators act as very good role models for their colleagues and specialist expertise is shared effectively. The quality of planning and the curriculum has been improved since the last inspection. However, opportunities for monitoring and assessing pupils' subject skills have been limited. The astute action of the headteacher and governing body has recently provided them with regular time with which to develop this aspect of their role.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work creatively with a very wide variety of visual, tactile and sensory materials and their work is of a very high standard.
 - Teachers progressively develop pupils' skills during arts workshops so that they are then ready to apply them successfully in whole school art projects.
 - Pupils' artistic development is very strongly linked to their spiritual development.
 - Community involvement in many art projects has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and achievement.
80. Standards are excellent by the end of Year 2. Pupils make excellent progress and their achievements are excellent, because of the exciting and innovative way that the subject is planned and taught. The school is noted for its work in art and design. The local education authority regularly uses pupils' work as a model of very good practice. The school uses a themed approach and all pupils contribute to a large project each term. Flags using printing techniques, quilts, clay sculptures of hands, large 'mini-beasts' in an outside trail and boxes depicting the history of the school were among the striking examples of their work on display. Pupils are adept at researching, practising and refining their skills using their sketchbooks before completing a piece of work and evaluating it.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. This is based on very good subject knowledge a high level of expertise. The high quality modelling and teaching of specific skills is extremely effective in developing learning. In particular teachers are very skilled at nurturing pupils' spiritual development through their work in art. For example, teachers play soothing background music to create a calm atmosphere to aid pupils' concentration as they work. Pupils of all abilities are totally engrossed in their work as a result. Following the teachers' careful exposition, pupils of all abilities understand the importance of looking carefully in order to capture details of pattern, shape and texture and the high quality of their drawings reflect the seriousness of purpose that marks lessons.
82. The subject co-ordinator is an artist in her own right and provides excellent leadership through inspiration and demonstration. For example, banners at the Eden Project in Cornwall provided the inspiration for the class flags that pupils made. During staff meetings teachers identify the skills pupils need to be taught in preparation for making their individual contributions to whole school projects. Staff practise these skills themselves so that they are confident in teaching them to pupils, with the result that they produce work involving a variety of techniques to a very high standard.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. The subject was not a main focus of the inspection and only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work so no secure judgement can be made about the quality of the provision. However, the school sees pupils' personal development as very important. In class discussions pupils share their opinions and respect those of others and are developing a high level of awareness of other people's needs. For example, in the one lesson seen, the teacher presented pupils with a selection of poems on the theme of friendship. She had written some very good questions for pupils to think about which provoked some thoughtful responses about what it is like to be new and to want to belong.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

Examples of outstanding practice.

The art and design curriculum is excellent. It utilises specialist teaching in a highly effective manner to support planning and to develop teachers' skills.

A particularly strong feature of the provision is the balance the school achieves between the teaching of specific skills that pupils will need and their creative application in a variety of exciting whole school projects. The crucial skill of drawing from close observation, for example, is taught from the earliest years. Examples of drawings in the art co-ordinator's own sketchbook are used not only by her, but also by other members of staff, to explain the processes involved in drawing objects to a very high standard. Teachers make explicit and demonstrate some of the key techniques such as looking at an object and tracing round it with a finger before drawing it. The skills pupils develop are then used creatively, to striking effect, in large-scale work. Pupils' appreciation of some of the intangible things in life, the growth of their self-esteem and pride in their work are palpable. The creative impulses of individuals are harnessed in each class's contribution to a school project, which adds to the sense of the school as a community. This approach is used by the local education authority as a model of the very best practice.

The enthusiastic involvement of members of the community in art projects is another distinctive feature of the school's provision which has a very positive impact on standards.

A number of visitors became involved in the 'Shalom' project, on the theme of world peace. Pupils and adults made clay figures inspired by Antony Gormley's 'Field' installation. The work was further developed through examination of Rodin's sculptures and Durer's drawings of hands and pupils then made their own clay sculptures using wire armatures. The standard of their work was very high compared to that expected for their age and nurtured their spiritual development in an exceptional way so that they were able to reflect thoughtfully on how wonderful hands are.