

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SIMON DE SENLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121954

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Tracey Moulton

Lead inspector: Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 257474

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 10 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	352
School address:	Hilldrop Road East Hunsbury Northampton Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN4 0PH
Telephone number:	01604 661011
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julie Tite
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Simon de Senlis Primary School has 352 pupils on roll, 160 boys and 187 girls. Twelve children attend the Designated Special Provision Unit (special unit) for children with speech, communication and mild learning difficulties. Most pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and a minority are from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds. Six pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Twenty-one per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and 4.5 per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is well above the national average. Pupil mobility is broadly average with 16 pupils joining and 18 pupils leaving the school at times other than the normal admission and leaving times. Attainment on entry to the school is average. The school is currently changing from a First to a Primary school and this is the first year it has had pupils in Year 5. A number of staff are new to the school and a new headteacher has been appointed from Easter. The school gained a Basic Skills award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Paul Edwards	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, information and communication technology, music, physical education, English as an additional language.
9003	Bryan Findley	Lay inspector	
23566	John Iles	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology.
30398	Chris Scola	Team inspector	English, history, geography, religious education, special educational needs.
20704	Terry Elston	Team inspector	The work of the Designated Special Provision.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Although the school is in the process of transition from a first school to being a primary school, it provides its pupils with a **satisfactory** level of education. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some examples of very good practice. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English but most do not achieve what they are capable of in mathematics and science. The acting headteacher is leading and managing the school effectively. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good
- There is very good support for those pupils in the special unit and for other pupils with special educational needs
- Though the more able and pupils with special educational needs do well, most pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is unsatisfactory
- In some subjects, issues regarding raising attainment have not been effectively addressed
- The pupils achieve well in art and design and music
- Attitudes and behaviour are good overall
- There is a good range of enrichment activities
- There is a very good ethos and all pupils are fully included in all areas of the curriculum

The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved and the attendance and behaviour of the pupils is much better. Standards have been maintained in English although they are not as good in mathematics and science. The school has yet to devise effective methods of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.

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

*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*

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and most are on course to attain the goals expected of them in all areas by the time they enter Year 1. The below and well below average standards of Year 2 pupils reported in the table above are partly explained by the make up of the year group. Just under 30 per cent of pupils had specific learning difficulties, and boys, who do less well, outnumbered girls two to one.

This year in Years 1 and 2 pupils are generally achieving satisfactorily in reading and writing and standards are broadly average. By the end of Year 5 standards are above average. The key skills of reading and writing are taught effectively but some pupils could do better if marking was used more effectively to identify areas for improvement. Most pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics and science. Ineffective monitoring of teaching and learning has failed to identify and address areas for improvement and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 5, standards are below average in these subjects. However, more able pupils make good progress in mathematics. The pupils achieve standards that are above national expectations in art and design and music.

Pupils with special educational needs and those in the special unit achieve well because of the very good teaching and the very good quality of support they receive.

**The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** The pupils' attitudes towards school and their behaviour are good. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall. As a result of the very good teaching in the Foundation Stage the children make a good start to their learning. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are generally satisfactory in the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics but there is evidence that better monitoring is improving the quality of teaching. There were examples of very good teaching observed during the inspection but the effectiveness of this is diluted due to the lack of monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in some classes, particularly in mathematics and science. The school provides the pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities, which are enriched by a good number of out of school activities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall.** The acting headteacher is providing the school with effective leadership and management during the difficult transition from First to Primary School. However, the subject leaders have not been provided with the opportunity to monitor progress in their subjects and this has had an adverse effect. In addition, there has been too little monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior management team and this has resulted in weaknesses not being addressed in some subjects. The subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic but need the opportunity to carry out their duties effectively.

The governors are supportive of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, many are new to the role and they have been ineffective so far in ensuring statutory requirements are fully implemented and in holding the school to account.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The majority of parents are satisfied with the work of the school. A number expressed concern over the change from a first to a primary school. They are particularly concerned at the number of part-time staff. Parents felt that any issues or concerns were generally addressed well and they felt that they could discuss problems easily with staff.

Most pupils expressed a liking for the school and enjoy their lessons. Pupils appreciate the support provided by staff and indicated that all of the children get on well together.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do are:

- raise standards in mathematics and science;
- enable the subject leaders to monitor progress in their subjects more effectively;
- ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is monitored effectively by the senior management team;
- ensure that the governors take a more effective role in the development of the school.

The Governors' Annual Report to Parents omits information on school targets for improvement, the impact of professional development and the attendance rates.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement throughout the school is **satisfactory**. By the age of 10, standards in English are above national expectations but below in mathematics and science.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and most are on course to achieve the goals expected for their age
- Standards are above average in reading and writing by the end of Year 5
- Progress in mathematics and science is unsatisfactory
- Pupils with special educational needs and those in the special unit progress very well because of the good provision
- Standards in music and art and design are above average by the end of Year 5

#### Commentary

1. Table 1 below shows that in the national tests in 2003 for pupils aged seven, standards were well below the national average and the average for similar schools in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Results vary considerably from year to year because, for example, in 2003 just under a third of the pupils had special educational needs and a significant number of pupils joined the school after the Reception year. The results are also depressed by the attainment of pupils who are part of the special unit.

**Table 1 Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.4 (12.3)	14.4 (14.6)
mathematics	17.4 (15.8)	16.5 (16.3)

*There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in English by the end of Year 5 but, for most, their achievements are unsatisfactory in mathematics and science. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are similar to those expected for their age. A significant minority of children enter with special educational needs, some to attend the special unit at the school. In the Reception classes the children are provided with very good support, enabling them to make good progress and achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1, most achieve the goals they are expected to in all areas of learning.
3. By the end of Year 5 standards are above average in English and they are average by the end of Year 2. The school has concentrated its efforts on raising standards in reading and writing and the pupils make satisfactory progress overall. In some year groups, for example in Years 2, 4 and 5, strong teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements, enabling good progress to be made. Group reading sessions and library activities are very effective in ensuring the pupils' reading skills develop well. The pupils' writing skills progress satisfactorily but could be better: few staff set challenging targets for the pupils and poor handwriting and presentation are too often accepted uncritically. Progress has been impeded in some classes by the high turnover in staff. These changes in staff have also affected the pupils' progress in

science and mathematics where standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigative and practical activities. In mathematics, the average pupils are not provided with sufficiently challenging work and this applies to the more able pupils in science. Although pupils' progress is assessed regularly, this information is not used by subject co-ordinators to identify and target areas for improvement. Throughout the school, the girls are achieving better than the boys, in line with what is seen nationally. However, in some year groups, for example the current Year 3 where there are twice as many boys than girls, the boys' attainment is much lower.

4. The improvement in the quality of computers and printers since the previous inspection is enabling the teachers to make more effective use of information and communication technology. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 5 are in line with what is expected for their age. The pupils achieve satisfactorily because of the regular teaching of skills that is undertaken. However, the pupils do not make sufficient use of computers to develop their understanding of subjects such as history and geography.
5. Standards in the creative subjects of art and design and music are above national expectations and the pupils achieve well because of the well-planned curriculum and effective teaching in these areas. The pupils achieve satisfactorily in most other subjects.
6. Pupils in the special unit achieve very well. They benefit from very good teaching and guidance from skilled teachers and support staff, and this ensures that they make very good progress in their academic work and personal development. Parents speak highly of this provision for their children. Other pupils with particular learning difficulties are supported well and benefit from the expertise of learning support staff and teachers, enabling them to achieve well and make good progress.
7. Standards in English, and in mathematics and science in particular, have been affected over the last four years by the changes in the leadership of the school, the lack of permanent or full time subject co-ordinators and a significant turnover in teaching staff. In comparison to similar schools, attainment at Simon de Senlis is depressed by the higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, high pupil mobility in some year groups and the much higher number of boys than girls. However, there is evidence that improvements in the quality of teaching is beginning to raise standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The pupils have good attitudes to learning. They behave well and there have been no exclusions in recent times. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The behaviour and attitudes of most pupils is good and it is very good in the Reception class
- There are high expectations of behaviour
- Assemblies have a good impact on the pupils' moral and social development
- Arrangements at lunchtimes are unsatisfactory
- Rates of attendance are consistently high

### **Commentary**

8. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They have positive relationships with teachers and support assistants, are eager to please, get on with their work and are keen to do well. Children in the reception classes have very good attitudes to their work because of high levels

of challenge and interest. Year 5 has been a difficult period for some pupils as they get used to the style of teaching from new teachers from the middle school and the teachers adapt to a primary school environment. Parents generally agree that pupils enjoy school and are treated fairly.

9. After a slow start for some, the pupils mature well at school and by the time they reach Year 4 and 5 they have developed their understanding of responsibility and fair play. They generally relate well to each other and show appropriate levels of respect, so that conduct is motivated by a sense of principle and an awareness of what is right. Older pupils willingly undertake responsibilities, such as supervising doors when pupils are moving around the school, and they set very good role models for others. There are a few boys in Year 1 and Year 3 with known behavioural problems who are not developing as well as others in those years. They often do not observe social boundaries and interrupt and speak over others. They will often answer when others have been asked to speak and the effect of guidance from staff does not last long. The school has put considerable effort into overcoming these problems and has been working closely with the Local Education Authority's behavioural support team.
10. Pupils are given clear guidelines of how they are expected to behave and can usually be trusted to conduct themselves responsibly. For example, they pass through fairly cramped cloakrooms at the beginning of the day in an orderly fashion without the need for any intervention by supervising members of staff. Pupils observe routines well and transfer around the school is orderly. They play well together at break times, observe unmarked boundaries for play and keep areas clean and tidy. There have been no exclusions.
11. The quality of assemblies is very high and each is a special occasion for the pupils. An atmosphere of family and communion is set through music and song, and assembly themes are linked well to important areas of the pupils' development and citizenship, such as the theme on recycling. Assembly time is also used well to acknowledge the festivals of different faiths. Good use is made of visiting speakers, such as local clergy, so that pupils get a flavour of life beyond the school. Displays around the school, including artefacts and illustrations of the cultures associated with different faiths and backgrounds, serve as an effective and lasting reminder.
12. Lunchtime arrangements are unsatisfactory because the school has no strategies in place to accommodate the extra pupils now at the school. Noise levels are too high and this encourages pupils to speak louder to make themselves heard. Conditions are cramped and dining time is rushed. Pupils keep their coats with them so chairs become cluttered and it is difficult for pupils to get to and from their seats. This in turn makes supervision more difficult.
13. Attendance has improved greatly since the last inspection and is now consistently above average.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. There are good links with parents and good procedures for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning and support in the Foundation Stage provide the children with a good start to their education
- The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science has not been high enough
- Teaching and learning in music and physical education are good
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support and achieve well

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14 (29%)	17 (36 %)	16 (33%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

### Teaching and learning

14. The children are provided with a secure start to their education as a result of the very good teaching and support they are given in the Reception classes. The teachers and support staff work very well together and have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. There is a very good balance between teacher directed and child chosen activities which helps to develop the children's personal and social skills. There is a good emphasis on developing the children's literacy, particularly their listening skills, and mathematical understanding. The staff are very knowledgeable and they work together very effectively to ensure that all children are provided with work that is well matched to their needs. They provide a caring environment and this helps the children to feel happy and secure. Children who attend on a part-time basis and those who are part of the special unit are given every support to enable them to take full advantage of the wide range of interesting and exciting activities that are on offer. Throughout the Reception classes, children make very good progress. The consistently very good teaching ensures that most children achieve well and do as well as could be expected.
15. Whilst the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall, there are variations throughout the school with examples of some very good teaching. The basic skills of reading and writing are generally taught thoroughly, enabling most pupils to achieve satisfactorily. In the best lessons, there are high expectations of what the pupils can do and, as a result, the pupils achieve well. However, in some classes the teachers' expectations are low and the pupils present work that is untidy and not their best. Unsatisfactory marking of the pupils' work further compounds this. In numeracy, the pupils do not learn as well as they should. Although teaching is satisfactory and there is evidence of good challenge for the more able pupils, particularly in Year 5, there is a lack of challenge in a small number of lessons, an over reliance on mundane worksheets and too few opportunities for the pupils to carry out practical activities. Again, this is due to the lack of effective monitoring of the quality of teaching in the past. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now taking place and help from the Local Education Authority's school

improvement service has identified areas for development. The strategies that have been adopted are beginning to improve the quality of teaching.

16. The pupils do not achieve as well as they should in science. Some lessons are too long and the pupils find it difficult to sustain their concentration. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigative activities and they do not progress as well as they should in this area. The analysis of the pupils' work shows that the more able pupils are not provided with work that is sufficiently challenging in some classes.
17. In music and physical education, the pupils make good gains in their learning because of the consistently good teaching. The teachers are confident in these subjects and skills are taught systematically, building on what the pupils have previously learned. As a result the pupils achieve well throughout the school. In most other subjects, teaching is at least satisfactory.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The needs of these pupils are identified in good time and a suitable programme of learning is planned and work is very well matched to their needs. A good team of skilled and well-briefed teaching assistants support these pupils and deliver programmes of learning that are very appropriate. The targets that are set for pupils are relevant and address all areas of the curriculum including managing relevant aspects of behaviour. The specialist expertise of outside agencies is used effectively. Teaching assistants are very closely involved in the planning. Reviews, both formal and informal, are regularly held to check that the pupils are making sufficient progress. The pupils themselves and parents are also involved in this.
19. The teaching and learning in the special unit are very good. The teachers and support staff have a very thorough knowledge of pupils' needs and plan work carefully to ensure their very good progress. The excellent relationships in the unit mean that pupils feel safe and grow in confidence. In mainstream classes, pupils are supported very well by teaching assistants to ensure they take a full part in lessons.
20. In the best lessons, the teachers make effective use of the detailed assessment information that is available and work is planned well, matching the pupils' needs. However, this is not done consistently and this results in some pupils not making the progress of which they are capable.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory and the opportunities for enrichment are good. Staffing is satisfactory and accommodation and resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Aspects of some subjects are not taught in sufficient depth
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and community links enrich the curriculum
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is good

## **Commentary**

21. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. All schemes of work are now in place but there have been insufficient opportunities for the pupils to carry out work in problem solving and investigation skills in mathematics and science. This limits pupils' attainment and achievement in these subjects.
22. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to apply literacy skills across the curriculum, particularly in religious education, history, geography and art. For example the pupils write their own versions of Greek myths, hold live debates in the Greek tradition,

interview a 'Roman soldier' and take part in an Afro-Caribbean Art Week. The pupils have many opportunities to write for different purposes to extend their skills in many subjects across the curriculum. Subjects are often grouped together into topics and this good feature keeps pupils' interest levels high. It also raises their understanding of how learning in different subjects links together and helps to raise attainment in these subjects.

23. The quality of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The teachers' planning is thorough and there is a very strong focus on helping children to acquire their early literacy and numeracy skills and, as a consequence, overall progress is good.
24. Many opportunities are taken to enrich the curriculum. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that supports the pupils' learning, such as a very active Steel Band, recorder club as well as football, netball, French and a homework club. The school takes part in local sports events such as an 'international' Tag Rugby tournament. In the humanities and the arts, the school provides a very good range of visits to support the curriculum such as visits to museums, theatres and field centres as well as receiving visits from actors who play the part of Roman soldiers, a puppet theatre and a specialist arts teacher.
25. The school is involved in a "Healthy Eating" initiative and emphasises the importance of a healthy life-style. Pupils know the importance of eating fresh fruit, exercising regularly and recycling as much waste as possible. The school ensures there are opportunities to put these values into practice by, for example, recycling paper.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is well planned, effective and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are detailed and thorough. They contain appropriate targets, which are communicated well to all relevant staff. There is an effective team of skilled and caring support staff, who provide good support to pupils who have particular difficulties with their work or behaviour. The school has appointed a teacher with responsibility for more able pupils and this is beginning to have an impact on the standards achieved by these pupils in some subjects. Pupils who are gifted and talented in any area of the curriculum have been identified and receive support from this teacher.
27. The curricular provision for pupils in the special unit is very good. These pupils benefit from very good planning to meet their individual needs in the unit, and very good support in mainstream classes with other pupils their age. This system works very well, and ensures these pupils have every opportunity to learn.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school takes good care of the pupils' welfare and safety. Provision for support, advice and guidance is good. The school takes good account of pupils' views about the way the school is run.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Health and safety procedures and arrangements for meeting medical needs are good
- High quality of support for pupils with special educational needs
- Unsatisfactory training for lunchtime supervisors in child protection
- Effective pastoral support is very well planned and managed
- Good opportunities for pupils to influence the work of the school
- Pupils are inducted into the school well

### **Commentary**

28. Governors continue to be well involved with health and safety in the school. A formal site inspection takes place each term and findings are reported to the Governing Body. Staff report day-to-day concerns and these are recorded and attended to promptly. First aid expertise is high. The majority of members of staff have emergency aid training and there is adequate

coverage by formally qualified first aiders. Staff are also trained in specialist needs, such as pupils with allergies. Some parents expressed concerns about low walls in the playground but there is no evidence of any incidents giving cause for concern.

29. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good because of the close relationship that develops between assistants and the pupils they support. Assistants are well informed about the work pupils do and they are involved in evaluating the progress they make. The quality of support provided is fundamental to the success of the pupils' inclusion in the school programme of learning generally. The use of learning support assistants is excellent in the Foundation Stage and very good throughout the rest of the school.
30. Child protection procedures operate in line with recommended Area Child Protection Procedures. Information is used well to inform appropriate members of staff about the circumstances of pupils for whom there are concerns. However, lunchtime supervisors do not receive the same level of training as other members of staff.
31. The school monitors behaviour and personal development well through an integrated range of strategies that lead to specific levels of support beyond the provision made for pupils with special educational needs. Basic monitoring is in the classroom where merit points are displayed and can lead to stamps, certificates and public recognition in achievement assemblies. Persistent or serious misbehaviour is recorded formally and this includes incidents involving racially motivated behaviour. The school provides effective pastoral support for pupils with emotional needs; using a 'triangle of support', that includes the class teacher, learning support assistant and another relevant adult. This creates a constant core group for monitoring progress and enables more effective planning for any further support. A system of 'befrienders' provides confidential support for pupils who can make an initial approach through a 'worry box'. All these measures are well understood and valued by the pupils.
32. The school recently introduced a school council to which pupils have taken very well. Every pupil from Year 1 upwards is involved in school council considerations, either through discussions in the class or as class representatives at council meetings. Minutes of meetings show that the school takes pupils' views seriously and has already acted on suggestions made, for example the publication of hot dinner menus. The council is already planning fund raising activities to fund some of their ideas.
33. Induction arrangements are good because of the excellent contact with parents at the start and end of the day. Parents can stay with their children for as long as necessary. They are given joiners' packs and there are opportunities to discuss any entry-level considerations. Pupils starting later have a mentor and parents meet with staff to discuss pastoral arrangements and see the school. Parents think very highly of induction arrangements.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school promotes a good relationship with parents and carers. Links with the community and with other schools are also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents give very valuable help in the school and on visits
- Parents are very well informed about the pupils' progress
- The school provides good information about the work pupils are to do
- The Annual Report of the Governing Body to parents is incomplete in three areas
- There are strong links with local churches

## Commentary

34. The vast majority of parents think well of the school but a number expressed their anxieties about the changes in leadership as the school becomes a full primary school. Partnership arrangements generally work well and the school benefits from the valuable support of a sizeable core of parents who help in the classrooms and on visits. A very active school association raises substantial funds for school improvement. The school encourages this support through well-attended meetings to inform parents how, for example, mathematics is taught in the school. The school produces leaflets, such as 'helpers leaflets' and reading support guidance. Curriculum information is sent out at the beginning of each term, so parents can plan the help they give. Parents are consulted over policy changes, such as those for behaviour and travelling arrangements.
35. Reports on pupils' progress are of a very high quality with detailed information about progress in all subjects and especially in mathematics, English and science. Targets indicate the main focus for improvement and, overall, parents get a very good idea about strengths and weaknesses. Three consultation evenings are held with parents each year to discuss their children's progress and general development. The vast majority of parents feel comfortable approaching the school with concerns or suggestions. The quality of the information the school provides about pupils' progress was a significant concern for parents, but it is better than is found in most schools.
36. Information about the school is good with frequent and timely newsletters and a well-produced prospectus. The latest report of the governing body to parents is unsatisfactory and leaves out information about school targets, the impact of professional development on learning and attendance rates. Meetings have been held about forthcoming changes in the school but much still remains to be settled, especially with regard to new buildings, so information is presently incomplete.
37. The school has good links with the local community. The school steel band plays at functions throughout the year and gives performances at Collingtree Park Residential Home. Good use is made of community facilities, such as visits by the local librarian. Local clergy provide a valuable link to the community and take assemblies and talk to pupils in school. Visitors, including representatives from the local football and rugby clubs, enhance the work of the school.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the acting headteacher is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher provides a good role model for staff and governors
- The management of staff induction is good
- The roles of curriculum co-ordinators are underdeveloped
- The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good
- The leadership and management of the special unit is very good
- Governance is not sufficiently rigorous or challenging

## Commentary

38. The acting headteacher has led the school for a very short period of time. Governors have appointed a new headteacher to lead this transition from the start of the summer term. The acting headteacher is giving good pastoral support to staff and the community as they prepare for the school's major change from first school to primary school status. She has provided

good support and guidance to new members of staff, some of whom have only been in the school for a very short time. In addition, she is ably managing the considerable curriculum changes resulting from the older pupils now staying at the school. The acting headteacher is providing the school with a good, stabilising influence and laying good foundations for the incoming headteacher.

39. Due to significant changes in staffing and personnel on the Governing Body, the pace of progress has lacked rigour. Governance is unsatisfactory, in part because some statutory duties have not been fulfilled. For example, the governors have not reported on attendance rates in their Annual Report to Parents. Governors do not have a sharp enough view of standards and have not been sufficiently involved in school improvement planning. They are aware that they have not asked enough challenging questions to gain an in-depth understanding of the current priorities. Governors are undergoing training and are receiving advice from the Local Education Authority's school improvement service in their desire to improve the quality of their governance.
40. The senior management team is not effective enough. The team is much larger than average in size and includes several part time staff. Meetings are not attended with sufficient regularity to secure corporate decisions. This is why progress and the pace of change are slow. While staff analyse test results, the information is not used well enough to identify weaknesses and to take action to raise standards. Co-ordinators of mathematics and science are employed on a part time basis and have not been given sufficient time and opportunity to gain an overview of standards across the school and to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. There are no strategies to support subject development during periods when co-ordinators are not employed.
41. The commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity is a strength of the school. The management of induction and exit procedures to support the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at non standard times are good and pupils receive good support. Mentors ensure pupils and their families receive good information and communication systems are effective.
42. Not all of the key issues raised in the previous report have been addressed sufficiently well. There is no cycle of monitoring and evaluation to enable staff and governors to monitor progress and judge standards. The school needs to address this issue urgently to raise expectations and to enable staff to take a full part in initiating change. Until recently, teaching and learning have not been monitored or evaluated rigorously enough to inform staff of the strengths and weaknesses and the action needed to bring about improvement.
43. Performance management has relied too heavily on whole school issues. While work with partner institutions has supported staff development the lack of cover for key staff members during long period of absence has led to a lack of co-ordination and limited progress.
44. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The school has a higher than average proportion of children with special educational needs who attend the school from beyond the immediate area. The school has a high reputation for supporting these pupils. The special needs co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well organised. Systems for identifying and supporting pupils' needs are effective. Good use is made of support from outside agencies such as the psychologist and behaviour support services. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils in the special unit are very good. The co-ordinator's high expectations of pupils and staff and the very good organisation of the provision account for the unit's success in giving pupils the skills and self confidence to thrive.
45. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage of learning are very good. The teacher effectively manages this stage of learning and works well with the team of staff to ensure children's early learning experiences are positive. She has a very good understanding of the needs of the age range and staff work very well as a team, consistently implementing

policy into practice. Links with pre school settings and with Year 1 staff are good, ensuring a smooth transfer to the next stage of learning.

## **Financial information**

### **Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	742,844
Total expenditure	802,919
Expenditure per pupil	2,847

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,000
Balance carried forward to the next	-40,075

46. Financial management is satisfactory. The bursar monitors expenditure and provides detailed information for the headteacher and governors. Funds are linked to priorities in the school plan. The difficulties arising from the school's change of status are underwritten by the local authority. There were no issues of concern raised in the most recent auditors' report. The significant deficit is a result of sickness cover for long-term absences.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

47. The provision in the reception classes has improved since the previous inspection and now provides the children with a very good start to their education. There are currently 59 children in the two Reception classes, a very small number of whom attend on a part-time basis dependent on their individual needs. Two children who attend the special unit also spend time in the Reception classes. The accommodation is good overall although it lacks an outdoor covered area, which would enable the children to use the outdoor play equipment in inclement weather.
48. The children achieve as well as they do because of the quality of teaching which is consistently very good in all areas of learning. There is a good level of staffing and this enables all children to receive well-targeted support. The learning support assistants play a very significant role in the children's progress; they are knowledgeable, well informed and help to provide an environment which balances the children's independence and support. The staff know the children very well and the very clear assessments are used very effectively to identify the next steps in the children's learning. Very good relationships exist and this enables the children to develop confidently. Strong leadership has provided clear guidance for the staff and the willing acceptance of new initiatives has ensured the continued development within the Foundation Stage.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff take very good care of the children
- There are very good opportunities for the children to develop their social skills
- There is a good balance between teacher directed and child chosen activities

#### **Commentary**

54. The very good quality of teaching and learning support ensures that all children make very good progress and achieve well in this area of their development. By the time they enter Year 1 most children achieve the goals that are expected of them. At playtimes and at the end of the day children dress themselves with confidence and ask for assistance when they need to. In their play activities there are many signs of sharing toys and equipment and much role-play involves co-operation. The learning support assistants play a crucial role in providing a high level of personal, social and emotional support for the children. The one-to-one support offered to children with special educational needs is of a high quality and enables these children to achieve their potential. There is a very good balance of activities that are directed by the staff and those that children choose for themselves. In all activities children are secure and confident and know that they can rely on the adults who care for them. There are good induction arrangements in place with home visits by the staff and parents and children visiting the school prior to them starting. Children who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and this enables them to participate in all areas of the curriculum. A particular strength of the Reception classes is the way in which children with more severe learning activities are fully supported, enabling them to take a full part in all activities.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills
- The development of the children's literacy skills is well planned, enabling them to make good progress

### Commentary

54. The very good teaching ensures that most children achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1. The children enter the school with poorly developed listening skills and the staff work hard to improve this aspect. The teachers and support staff engage the children in high quality conversation and discussion and this ensures that even the least confident children are supported and make progress. During the inspection children were observed trying out new words and phrases on their classmates and in their conversations with adults. Role-play and games are used to very good effect to raise awareness of language and motivate the children in their responses. Early reading and writing skills develop well. The children are encouraged by the system of rewards and recognition that accompanies their success. The children are provided with very good opportunities to practise 'writing' and the early writing skills are built on very effectively. By the end of reception most write their names and simple sentences with reasonable accuracy. The teachers plan work very effectively, ensuring the children have the opportunity to listen to a wide range of stories and nursery rhymes and to develop a love of books. As a result, most understand that text carries meaning and by the end of Reception many are reading simple stories.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for the children to promote their mathematical understanding
- Children quickly become confident in their use of numbers and achieve well

### Commentary

54. Teachers recognise that a wide range of practical activities need to be provided to ensure that the children make very good progress in this area. There are no missed opportunities. For example, when the register is taken in the morning, the children are encouraged to count the number present and calculate how many are absent. The teachers are skilled in adapting their questions and planning to suit the different levels of ability in the class. In both classes the children regularly sing and recite counting rhymes to reinforce their knowledge of numbers and simple problem solving. The teachers use correct mathematical vocabulary and this encourages the children to follow suit and to gain a better understanding of 'more than, less than, bigger and smaller'. The use of number lines helps to develop the children's recognition of numbers and they become increasingly confident in writing numbers correctly. The more able children show a good understanding of patterns and sequences. As a result of the high quality of support and strong teaching most children achieve the goals they are expected to by the time they enter Year 1.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of visits and visitors enhance the children's learning in this area
- the children make good use of computers to improve their learning in other areas

### **Commentary**

54. Activities are well planned and provide a wide range of opportunities for the children to learn about the world. The staff make very effective use of current situations to enhance the children's understanding. For example, a visit by parents with babies was used very effectively to enhance the children's understanding of young and old. In discussion they demonstrated this when indicating that grandparents were old and that their parents were not so old. The children are provided with good opportunities to learn about the area around the school and walks to the park are used effectively by the teachers to enhance their knowledge of the natural world. The children gain a secure understanding of their own and other faiths through the regular assemblies and teaching of religious education. The children use the computer suite regularly and they demonstrate good keyboard and mouse skills as a result of these opportunities. By the time they enter Year 1 most children achieve the goals expected for their age.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching effectively promotes the children's physical development
- There is no outside covered area and this limits the opportunities for the children's physical development

### **Commentary**

54. The children achieve well in the area of learning as a result of the very good teaching which provides them with opportunities to run, jump, balance and climb during the regular physical education sessions in the hall. The teachers encourage the children to learn from others and most make very good progress. A minority of the younger children need considerable help and guidance in using scissors and holding pencils correctly, but very good teaching and support ensures most achieve the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. The use of the outdoor area provides the children with good opportunities to develop physical skills through the use of wheeled vehicles. However, there is no covered area and this means that during poor weather the outdoor sessions are curtailed.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a wide range of activities for art and craft
- There is a good balance between teacher led and child chosen activities

## Commentary

55. The children are provided with very good opportunities to explore a wide range of painting and craft activities. They develop a secure understanding of how to mix paints and other activities reinforce these skills, for example when dyeing materials. The children are provided with opportunities to cut and glue materials, for example when making a get well card for 'Miss Polly's dolly who was sick. A strong feature of this area is the balance provided between teacher directed and activities that the children choose for themselves. This helps to maintain the children's enthusiasm. Music is a strong feature of the school and this aspect is nurtured well in the Reception classes. The teachers encourage the children to sing nursery rhymes and provide opportunities for instrumental playing. As a result of the very good teaching and support, most children achieve the goals they are expected to by the time they enter Year 1.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 5 standards are above average
- Recent initiatives have improved standards in reading and writing
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported
- The library is very well used
- Presentation, handwriting marking could be better

## Commentary

56. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in both standards and teaching. In Year 5 standards are above average in reading and writing, with more pupils working at or above the level that is expected for their age than in most schools. In 2003, standards in Year 2 were below average, but this was because almost a third of the pupils had special educational needs. In the present Year 2 standards are average. Across the school all pupils make at least satisfactory progress and in Years 2, 4 and 5 many pupils achieve better than this.
57. Good recent management, including the careful analysis of what is needed to raise standards and subsequent action to do this, has brought about improvements in the teaching and learning of English. This has involved improving the quality and range of reading resources, providing better opportunities for writing and a closer focus on what motivates boys to learn.
58. Overall teaching is satisfactory. However, there are signs that it is improving. The basic skills in reading and writing are taught thoroughly so that pupils of all abilities develop confidence in facing challenging work. The pupils are keen to write because there has been good discussion of their ideas. The teaching takes account of the way they learn and they are provided with suitable resources to support their writing. This particularly supports boys' learning. There has been great emphasis recently on ensuring that all pupils make good progress in their spelling by providing many opportunities for them to learn these in a very structured way building on their knowledge of sounds. This is starting to have an effect, but there is, nevertheless, inconsistency in teacher expectations leading to low standards of handwriting and presentation in the work of some classes. This is compounded by uncritical marking and teaching that does not make clear to the pupils how they can improve their work. This particularly applies to classes that have had several different teachers over a short period.

59. The group reading sessions are very effective in ensuring that the pupils read at a suitably challenging level and are motivated and interested in their reading. The provision of many new reading books has ensured that there is now a wider range of books for pupils of all abilities to read. Many pupils regularly read these books at home and receive support and encouragement from their parents. For those who do not there is good regular support from the teaching assistants. The pupils pay good attention to punctuation when they read and show a good understanding of what happens in stories. The library sessions are very effective in developing the pupils' ability to use books to find out information and learn about and enjoy the works of different authors. Year 4 pupils, for example, read a wide range of different authors and talk enthusiastically about why they like different authors.
60. Speaking develops well through the teachers' good encouragement and prompts that enable pupils to extend their replies. Most teachers are good at insisting that pupils give answers in sentences and the pupils' language reflects the good vocabulary used by teachers. The value placed on the pupils' contributions to discussions encourages their speaking skills. The pupils' listening skills are not as good as their skills in speaking. In one lesson for example, some less able Year 3 boys found it quite impossible to have a discussion in small groups as they only wanted to put forward their own views and not listen to anyone else's. The school is working hard to improve this aspect of the pupils' learning
61. Caring, sensitive and skilled teaching assistants are very good at supporting pupils who have difficulty in learning or behaving. This ensures that these pupils are fully included in classes and make good progress in their learning or in improving their behaviour. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the high quality support provided for a small group of pupils meant that they were able to enter fully into the class activity of developing their skills in identifying the different sounds of certain words, because they had been helped to explore their ideas when finding examples of these words with a classroom assistant.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

62. Generally, satisfactory opportunities are provided for the pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects. However, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets in some subjects and this inhibits the development of writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average for pupils aged 7 and 10 and pupils do not achieve as well as they should
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their practical skills
- Test results are analysed but information is not used effectively to raise standards
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory
- Very good quality teaching is accelerating progress for high achieving pupils in Year 5
- Teaching assistants provide good quality support for pupils with special educational needs

### **Commentary**

63. Standards in mathematics are below average for pupils in Year 2 and have declined since the previous inspection. The change in status of the school to primary has introduced Year 5 pupils to the school and the standards they achieve are also below average. Pupils transfer from the Foundation Stage with good knowledge and understanding of number work and the school is failing to build on this good start.

64. The scrutiny of pupils' work confirms test results. The coverage of work in some classes is unsatisfactory, particularly in investigative mathematics. There is also an over reliance on mundane worksheets in some classes.
65. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and committed to raising standards. However, she is in school for only two days a week and there is insufficient time for her to meet the responsibilities of leading a core subject in a large school. No arrangements are in place to cover the leadership of the subject on days when the co-ordinator is not in school. Additionally, the role has expanded as older pupils have joined the school. Opportunities for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning have not been identified. Time to discuss these important issues with teachers is very limited. The pupils' performance in the national tests is analysed, but insufficient use made of this information to address weaknesses. The school has not developed a strategy to measure the rates of progress of pupils as they move through the school in order to trigger early intervention and address difficulties.
66. The governors of the school do not monitor or evaluate progress in the subject. There are no structured arrangements in place to enable the governing body to discuss issues with the subject co-ordinator or to gain knowledge of standards.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but there is evidence that it is improving. Most of the teaching is satisfactory but not of a high enough standard to enable pupils to achieve their best. The grouping of pupils according to ability in Year 5 has resulted in some very good teaching with more able pupils making good gains in their learning. In these lessons the teacher has very good subject knowledge and skills to immediately engage pupils' attention and interest. Through challenging, timed activities pupils develop an enthusiasm for mathematics. These strategies underpin progression in learning. Attention is given to developing and reinforcing number skills while maintaining a rich delivery of other areas of the subject, for example shape work. These good qualities are not evident in all lessons. In the less effective lessons, the teaching lacks excitement and pupils lose interest and become noisy. In these lessons there is a lack of challenge that slows the pace of learning. In discussion, it is clear that the pupils are enthusiastic to improve their knowledge and to apply their mathematical skills in a range of experiences.
68. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Their needs are addressed through well-planned activities and the learning support assistants ensure they are on task throughout lessons and are available to encourage and provide appropriate support. A very good feature of their work is the way in which they reinforce mathematics with language.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. There are links developing with other subjects. Pupils are learning to display their results in science using graphs, occasionally through the use of ICT. Year 5 use their knowledge of shape to design effective artwork based on Ancient Egyptian cartouches.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Too few pupils achieve the higher levels at the ages of seven and ten
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop investigational skills
- Some lessons are too long which leads to a lack of sustained concentration and interest
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported

## Commentary

70. The standards achieved in science in Years 2 and 5 are not high enough. Pupils do not make enough progress compared to their achievements at the end of the Foundation Stage. Too few pupils reach the higher levels. In the four lessons seen during the inspection teaching was at least satisfactory and two good lessons were observed; however, the analysis of pupils' work shows that the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met well enough. Pupils of different abilities usually complete the same work and there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils. Pupils with special needs receive good support from teaching assistants and make good progress. While the co-ordinator has led training to introduce more rigorous assessments of learning these have not been implemented in her absence. Consequently, progress is not tracked well enough and teachers do not take enough account of pupils' previous learning when planning new work. The most able pupils, therefore, do not make the progress they could.
71. The science curriculum is based on the national guidance with additional suggestions of links with English. Teachers are encouraged to provide relevant activities to support teaching and learning and extension activities for higher achieving pupils by the co-ordinator but the practice is inconsistent. Lessons in some year groups extend throughout the afternoon. Pupils are unable to sustain their concentration over such a long period and this results in slowing down learning. There is a limited amount of work recorded in pupils' books and this is often poorly presented. By the age of seven pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and by age ten talk about factors that affect the rate of evaporation. Links with mathematics are developing as pupils present data of their findings using charts and graphs.
72. The school has forged close links with a local college. Every year students visit for a Science Day for each year group. This day is devoted to practical activities and promotes science well.
73. The school has identified assessing the pupils' attitudes to science as part of their performance management. This has enabled the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and give teachers feedback on the work observed. However, her temporary absence has not been covered and consequently no further development is taking place. In discussion, the co-ordinator has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses and knowledge of how to improve provision. Overall there has been too little progress in raising standards since the last inspection.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils develop a satisfactory range of computer skills
- The subject is taught regularly and systematically following a clear scheme of work
- Resources are good
- Not all teachers plan to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects

### Commentary

74. Only one lesson was observed where direct teaching of ICT was observed. However, an analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and staff show standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 5, the pupils' skills in information and communication technology are broadly average. The pupils enter the school with average skills and the regular teaching enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress. The teachers make effective use of the computer suite for the teaching of skills but, apart from

using programs to develop reading, spelling and mathematical skills, less effective use is made of computers in classrooms to support learning in some other subjects.

75. The pupils develop satisfactory keyboard and mouse skills because these are taught specifically. In the lessons observed, pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language were provided with good support, enabling them to make progress in line with their peers.
76. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have secure word processing skills and samples of work show satisfactory skills in their ability to combine text and pictures. Good use is being made of digital cameras to record activities and visits. Discussions with pupils show that they make some use of the Internet to carry out research in subjects such as history and religious education. The school is following national guidelines and the subject leader has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has recognised the need to develop the pupils' skills in the use of modelling.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

77. The school makes some use of computers to support learning in other subjects, for example in English, mathematics and science. However, the teachers do not make clear in their planning how they will develop the use of ICT in other subjects and this has been recognised by the school as an area for development.

### **HUMANITIES**

No lessons were seen in **geography**. It is therefore not possible to form a judgement about provision. However, there is every indication from the pupils' work that standards are at least average and pupils are achieving well. Good use is made of the local area to extend the pupils' understanding of the positive features of the environment and what could be improved. Year 4 pupils have taken part in a field trip through which they gain experience of field work in different localities and widen their understanding of environmental and conservation issues. Year 3 pupils have visited a local waste disposal centre to learn about how waste is recycled. The subject leader provides good leadership. She has set out clearly what needs to be taught and has put in place a good system of assessment in both geography and history.

### **HISTORY**

Provision for history is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good programme of visits supports the curriculum
- Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum
- There is a well-structured scheme of work

#### **Commentary.**

78. Standards in history are average. The pupils enjoy their history lessons and achieve well. The school provides an interesting range of visits. For example, the pupils develop their knowledge of the Greeks by visiting the British Museum, studying Greek Myths, holding debates and putting on Greek plays. Visitors to the school, such as a Roman soldier, enliven the subject and motivate the pupils. The pupils visit a local Roman Settlement. They go to the local museum to learn about Northampton's boot and shoe industry. The pupils say how interesting they find the subject. There are good links with literacy, art and design and technology. The 'Town Wide Agreement,' a locally agreed syllabus, provides a well-structured curriculum and a good range of resources to support the pupils' learning. In the two lessons seen the pupils

were enthusiastic in their learning. In the Year 5 lesson the teacher used very good strategies to develop the pupils' understanding of chronology. The pupils also gained a good understanding of how much they are able to learn about ancient civilisations, such as the Egyptians, by the objects they have left behind, their buildings and their art.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good programme of visits supports the curriculum
- Links with literacy are well developed
- Assessment is under-developed

### Commentary

79. Standards in religious education are average. The pupils learn about a range of faiths including Christianity. They are aware that there are many different ways of worshipping. The school has good links with local churches. During a field trip the pupils make comparisons between two very different churches. Representatives from Christianity and Judaism have come into school to lead assemblies and Year 5 pupils visit a local Hindu Temple as part of their work studying Hinduism. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are good links with Literacy. The recently appointed co-ordinator has identified developing assessment systems as a priority.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Analysis of work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicates that standards in **art and design** and **design and technology** are good. Two lessons were seen in art and design and a further two in design and technology. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about provision. Teachers' planning is linked to national requirements and provides appropriate coverage.

In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils successfully created motifs based on Egyptian designs and used them to decorate cartouches. Good links were made to learning in history and the work supported cultural development well. The other lessons were satisfactory and included opportunities for pupils to print, work in the style of William Morris and develop observational drawing skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress because they are interested in their work and enjoy the opportunity to work practically. Pupils of all abilities and groups are included fully and challenged appropriately. Those with special educational receive good support. In discussion, pupils talk about the artists they have studied for example Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso and are delighted to show the work on display; clay sculptures and models of making musical instruments. Displays are of good quality and enhance the environment.

There are long gaps between the teaching of these subjects. For example, pupils understand the design process but their experiences are limited and there are not enough opportunities for them to make decisions and plan projects independently and regularly. Pupils say they enjoy art and would like more opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge. There are some examples of the use of ICT as a resource to support the design process but these are not developed well enough. The skills learned in literacy and numeracy are beginning to be linked systematically to creative subjects. Criticisms about timetabling have not been addressed since the last report.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is good
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and pupils enjoy taking part in them
- The extra-curricular activities make a valuable contribution to the subject

### **Commentary**

80. A total of six lessons were observed in dance, gymnastics and games. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5 standards are in line with national expectations in these two areas. Records also show that standards are sound in swimming and most pupils swim the distance expected for pupils of this age. The teachers plan a good range of activities for the pupils. The curriculum is planned to ensure that the pupils' skills develop as they move from year to year. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do and make very effective use of pupil demonstrations to promote good practice. The quality of teaching is good overall with the staff demonstrating a secure understanding of the subject. This makes physical education interesting and exciting for the pupils. The staff are very good at ensuring all pupils participate and those with more severe learning difficulties are very well supported, enabling them to take a full and active part in the lessons. Dance is used well to promote the pupils' cultural understanding
81. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Appropriate assessment procedures have been put in place but it is too early to determine the impact of these. Good use is made of extra-curricular activities to enrich learning. Visitors from the Northampton rugby and football clubs work with staff to develop the pupils' skills. The school works hard to introduce the pupils to a wide range of games including tennis, rugby, football, kwik cricket and hockey in addition to country dancing and Maypole dancing. The school recognises the need for the continuing development of staff subject expertise as it retains the older pupils.

## **MUSIC**

Provision for music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is good
- The steel band provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to enjoy music-making and to perform

### **Commentary**

82. Two music lessons, both in Key Stage 2, were observed in addition to a performance by the steel band and singing in assemblies. Standards in music are above average by the end of Year 5. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
83. The school employs a teacher to provide some class music tuition and other staff follow the school's scheme of work. This ensures all pupils are provided with regular opportunities to practise and develop singing and playing skills. The good quality of teaching ensures that most pupils achieve well and make good progress. A particular strength of the school is its steel band. All pupils learn to play through this medium and, in addition, there are opportunities for the more skilled to perform for a variety of audiences. These pupils develop a high level of skill and all pupils enjoy playing with, and listening to, the band. In addition, a large number of pupils

receive instrumental tuition for guitar, violin, cello, viola and drums. The pupils enjoy singing and they are encouraged in their enthusiasm during assemblies and lessons.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

83. During the inspection evidence was collected from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and talking to staff and pupils. There are appropriate arrangements for the teaching of sex education and raising pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs misuse. The school has a set of topic areas, based on national guidance, planned and co-ordinated with the topics and themes studied in religious education. Talking to older pupils shows that they have a good understanding of the part they play in the community of the school. Many displays and posters around the school celebrate their achievements and raise their self-esteem. Class assemblies are used very effectively to encourage the pupils to think about their actions and how they might and should react in certain situations.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
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	3
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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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

