

INSPECTION REPORT

SISSINGHURST CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sissinghurst, Cranbrook

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118717

Headteacher: Mr M Cooke

Lead inspector: Mrs G Beasley

Dates of inspection: 22nd to 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 257480

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	141
School address:	The Street Sissinghurst Cranbrook Kent
Postcode:	TN17 2JG
Telephone number:	01580 713895
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Beck
Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sissinghurst CE Primary School is a small village school situated in the village of Sissinghurst near Cranbrook in Kent. There are 141 pupils on roll including 21 children in the reception class, all of whom attend full time. Most pupils are of white UK heritage. A very small number are of mixed heritage. Very few pupils speak another language in addition to English in Years 3 to 6. They understand English well so do not require specific support. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Overall attainment on entry to the school is above average. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but socio-economic factors are more favourable than usual. A below average number of pupils have free school meals. There has been a considerable change in teaching staff over the last few years. There has been a job share in Years 1 and 2 for a number of years. There are four mixed-aged classes in addition to reception. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught as single-aged year groups every morning for English, mathematics, information and communication technology and personal, social, health and moral education. The classrooms are all mobiles situated at the back of the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27899	Mrs G Beasley	Lead inspector	Science Geography Music Foundation Stage
32698	Mr S Barker	Lay inspector	
23054	Mr G Johnson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Special educational needs English as an additional language
27654	Mrs R Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Sissinghurst CE Primary School is a **good** school. Achievement is good overall and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. The school has done well within limitations imposed by the cramped accommodation to provide a good quality of education for its pupils. Leadership and management are good. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- pupils achieve well in reception and Years 3 to 6;
- the headteacher's consultative and caring approach ensures all pupils and staff feel valued, and leads to high levels of self-esteem;
- most pupils are keen to learn in lessons, which makes a significant contribution to their achievement;
- higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough, especially in Year 2;
- teaching and learning are good in reception and in Years 3 to 6;
- subject leaders are not influential enough in raising standards partly because many are new to the role;
- links with the community are very strong.

There has been **satisfactory** improvement since the previous inspection. Mathematics' standards and achievement are higher in Years 1 and 2. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is now satisfactory overall reflecting good improvement from the previous poor provision. New schemes of work in all subjects are in place and, as a result, standards have risen in most subjects in Years 3 to 6. Weaknesses remain in the work of the subject co-ordinator. Satisfactory assessment procedures record precisely what pupils can and cannot do in lessons. However, while some teachers use the information well, it is not consistently used to plan work of a challenging enough nature for some pupils with higher ability in all classes.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Attainment on entry varies from year to year. However, in most year groups, children start school with above average levels of attainment. They make good progress in the reception year and nearly all achieve the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. A good number exceed these. The exception to this is the current Year 1. A higher than average proportion of pupils in this group have special educational needs who started school with below average attainment. All pupils made good progress and most achieved the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily overall. Standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. They are average in all other subjects inspected. In science, no pupils were assessed at reaching the higher level 3 in the subject and this year, none are predicted to gain this level in science and mathematics. During the inspection, inspectors observed several pupils capable of attaining this level and as a result the school is revising its targets for the end of the year.

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	C	A*	A*
mathematics	A	C	A*	A
science	C	B	A	B

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Year groups are small so it is not advisable to compare the attainment of one year group with another because attainment when pupils start school can vary considerably. Nevertheless, standards by the end of Year 6 in 2003 national tests show that pupils achieved in the top 5 percent of schools nationally in English and mathematics. Achievement overall was very good when compared to their prior attainment in Year 2. Inspection evidence supports these results. All pupils achieve well since starting school and standards are well above average this year. Those who speak a language in addition to English achieve very well. Standards are well above average in science and above average in all other subjects inspected except in ICT where they are average.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work in lessons and behave well. Attendance is above average and pupils arrive to school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are good. They are good in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are practical and pupils respond well within the confines of cramped accommodation because they have learnt to cope with it. In Years 3 to 6 and in the reception class, assessment information is used well to plan suitably challenging work for the different learning needs of pupils. As a result, higher attaining pupils receive the challenge they need to reach higher than average standards and those with special educational needs get the support they need to achieve well. Those who speak a language in addition to English achieve very well. Questions are used very effectively in these year groups to probe pupils' understanding and set up further work to extend their learning. The use of assessment information in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory overall. This is especially but not exclusively the case when those pupils in Year 2 work with Year 1 for science, history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs in these year groups are given good support from teaching assistants and their achievement is good. However, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 do not always get the challenge they need to achieve well except when they take charge of their own learning and engage in independent investigations.

The curriculum is good and is enriched very well by very good links with the community and a wide range of extra curricular activities and clubs. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and is a significant barrier to raising pupils' achievement. The school makes sure that pupils are cared for and kept safe while in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. Leadership is good. The headteacher has established a positive learning climate throughout the school. Management of the school is good. The approach to school evaluation and improvement planning as a whole staff includes everyone in discussions. Subject co-ordinators have not yet had the opportunity to take full responsibility for standards and achievement in their subjects in other classes because they are new to the role. The governing body gives good support to the school and challenges when necessary. It is not always

focussed enough on raising achievement because the school already has high standards. The governors' annual report and school brochure does not contain all the required information.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are positive about the school. They feel they are taken seriously especially those who are on the school council. Parents are equally pleased and are very supportive of the school and its work. Inspectors agree that while information provided is good overall, the information parents receive about their children's progress in their annual reports is not detailed enough.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- use assessment information more effectively to plan work of a more challenging nature, especially in Year 2;
- develop the role of the subject co-ordinators so they gain a clearer overview of provision in their subjects in all classes and use the information to raise standards and achievement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. It is good in the reception year and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Those who speak a language in addition to English achieve very well. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and achievement is good.
- Standards are above average in history, geography and physical education by the end of Year 6 and achievement is good.
- Higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics, science, history and geography in Year 2.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children start school with standards of attainment, which are generally above average. They achieve well in all areas of learning and most achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. A good number exceed these especially in their personal, social and emotional development. This means the children are ready to learn when they start in Year 1. The exception to this is the group of pupils in the current Year 1. There is an above average proportion of children with special educational needs in this year group who started school with below average levels of attainment. They all made good progress overall and most reached the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Few children exceeded them in this year group.

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	16.9 (17.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.4 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.2 (17.3)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Standards in 2003 national tests were higher than at the time of the last inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. The biggest rise has been in mathematics, which at the time of the last inspection was below average and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. Standards are now above average in these subjects and achievement is satisfactory. Teachers assessed a very high number of pupils gaining the average Level 2 in science last year but no pupils were assessed at the higher Level 3. No pupils were predicted to get the higher levels in science and mathematics this year. Standards seen during the inspection identified several pupils capable of achieving at this higher level and as a result, the school is revising its targets for the end of this year in mathematics and science. To do this more challenge is required for higher attaining pupils in these subjects. This is especially so in science in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class where higher attaining pupils tend to be given the same work as pupils in Year 1. Those

in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class get the challenge they need because they are given the harder work planned for Year 3 pupils. Pupils with special educational needs get the support they need in lessons to make good progress. Most of these are boys and is one reason why girls appear to be doing better than boys at the moment in Years 1 and 2 in these subjects.

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and physical education are average and achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. In the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, work seen in lessons and in books indicates that the very few higher attaining pupils in this class do the same work as other pupils in geography and history, and so do not get the challenge they need to achieve well.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.3 (27.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	30.5 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.5 (29.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen since the last inspection. Results in national tests in 2003 were very high and in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally in English and mathematics, reflecting very good achievement for this group of pupils since they were in Year 2. This is because more than a third of pupils gained the higher Level 5 in both subjects. Fewer pupils are expected to gain this level this year. Standards seen during the inspection are well above average in English, mathematics and science. This reflects good achievement overall since pupils started school. While boys did better than girls last year in 2003 tests results, groups are too small for this to be statistically significant. Pupils at the early stages of English acquisition make very good progress. The need to practise and acquire a wider range of expressive language has been accurately identified. Careful monitoring of their progress since starting at the school ensures needs are very well met. As a result, pupils respond very well to the support offered, and applied themselves industriously in the lessons observed.
- Standards in history, geography and physical education are above average at the end of Year 6 reflecting good achievement in these subjects. Standards are average in ICT and achievement is satisfactory. No judgement about standards and achievement was made in other subjects, as they were not a focus of the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality at the school are **good**. Pupils' attitudes to school are **good** and they behave well in lessons. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well motivated and take an active part in lessons and the life of the school.
- Some younger pupils take a long time to settle to their work and find it hard to concentrate.
- Teachers do not always expect the same high standards of behaviour.
- Pupils take on responsibilities willingly.
- Pupils have high self-esteem and relate well to one another and to staff.
- The school has good procedures in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes during lessons and around the school are good. A significant number of pupils in Year 1 are sometimes slow to settle to their work, usually when tasks are not practical enough and which require them to listen and sit still for too long. Their attention wanders at these times and they find it hard to concentrate. Older pupils usually settle quickly to their lessons and respond well to the good and sometimes very good teaching to achieve well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 concentrate well and take a lively interest in their work. They are keen to answer questions and are confident in offering their own ideas and suggestions. They display very good attitudes when working co-operatively on practical tasks, despite being restricted by the lack of space. All pupils enjoy school and their good attitudes help them learn effectively and make good progress.
7. Pupils' good moral development is founded on the teachers' high expectations for their behaviour and the good relationships that are fostered throughout the school. As a result older pupils behave well towards each other at all times. They all know that any minor problems they may have will be sorted out quickly. Behaviour in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. School and class rules are discussed with pupils at the beginning of the year. These are displayed in the hall and in classrooms. However, in some classes there are so many written rules the pupils cannot remember them all. Different expectations of the many teachers that these pupils have leads to some confusion as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Despite this, pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The very positive ethos of the school fosters pupils' high self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to think about the world in which they live and to care for others and for the environment. Pupils know and understand the rewards that they can earn in their classes for good work, effort and behaviour.
8. Pupils are given an increasing range of responsibilities and grow in confidence and maturity throughout their time at the school. They are keen to contribute to the life of the school and the community. For example, many of them submit entries to the village flower shows held in the school. They are involved in the daily routines of the school, and responsibilities increase, as they get older. They carry out tasks for their teachers and their monitor duties, conscientiously. The school council provides good opportunities for personal development. Representatives are becoming mature, confident and responsible. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities gives pupils opportunities to develop their social skills, and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils provides a valuable opportunity for them to develop independence and self-confidence.
9. Spiritual development is good and is promoted well mainly through assemblies, the school's personal, social, health and moral programme and religious education lessons. Appreciation of the arts is fostered well through drama, art and dance and contributes to pupils' cultural development. This is supported by visits to a wide range of places of interest, and visitors coming into the school. In geography and religious education lessons, pupils are introduced to a range of different cultures and faiths.
10. Attendance is above the national average. Most absence is due to short-term childhood illness and a small number of families taking holidays during term time. The school effectively monitors attendance and punctuality and when appropriate enlists the help of outside agencies to reinforce the importance of regular and timely attendance.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.3
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** overall. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good. It is enriched very well by a wide range of extra curricular activities and clubs, and very good links with the local community. Links with parents are good. The school provides satisfactory care for its pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. It is good in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6 is good. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good subject expertise in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6 and, as a result, skills are developed well.
- There are consistently high expectations of behaviour in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are provided with good levels of challenge, which meet the needs of all pupils.
- Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are often given work, which is too easy.
- Information from assessments is used effectively to plan suitable work for all pupils in reception and in Years 3 to 6. Its use is unsatisfactory in Year 2.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils with special educational needs and to those who speak a language in addition to English.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Teaching and learning in the reception class are good. Many areas of learning are linked well so that learning is meaningful and set within real contexts. The new outdoor area is used very effectively to provide good opportunities for the children to learn outside if they choose. Adults know the children very well and careful note is made of how they approach the wide range of tasks on offer. The information is used effectively to plan activities matched to the differing needs of the children in the class. In all activities, suitable focus is given to the development of specific skills. This helps the children in their 'free play', for example, when writing and reading as part of their role-play, or when getting along together when playing in a group. As a result, all children behave and achieve well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	15	8	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3 to 6 because teachers plan lessons which ensure suitable challenge and support is in place for all pupils. Pupils learn in a wide range of different ways, through investigating, listening and talking about their work. This means all pupils apply themselves very well and are fully involved in lessons. This reflects pupils' very good attitudes in some lessons when they overcome the lack of space to carry out some tasks of a practical nature very well. All of the very good teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6. Pupils achieved very well in these lessons because teachers had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and expected them to plan, investigate and try things out for themselves. As a result, pupils gained a deeper understanding of what they were learning. Teachers' very good subject expertise is reflected in their challenging questions which make pupils think about what is happening and why. This provides good extension for higher attaining pupils in these year groups. Resources and time are used very effectively. As a result, pupils concentrated very well and produced good amounts of work in the time.
13. This is not always the case in Years 1 and 2. Despite teaching these pupils in year groups for English, mathematics and ICT, teachers do not always expect enough of higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 2. Too often pupils use the same worksheets to record their learning and, while most pupils achieve satisfactorily because they get the support they need to succeed in lessons, this does not always extend the learning of higher attaining pupils. When teachers' planning allows pupils to investigate by themselves, learning is much better because pupils set themselves the challenges they need to achieve well. The teachers who teach these year groups have different expectations and therefore pupils are not always clear about what they should do and how they should behave. This makes the teachers' job difficult as they spend more time on settling pupils down than they do on teaching specific skills in some lessons.
14. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory. They are very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' strengths and of the areas where they need further support because they know their pupils well and take a real interest in the progress they make. Procedures for monitoring pupils' achievements in reading are much more rigorous than those reported at the last inspection. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils' progress is closely tracked, and predictions of future performance are constantly adjusted in the light of additional information that the school collects. The results of assessment are used well in reception and in Years 3 and 6. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' current and predicted achievement and generally match pupils' work well to their learning needs.
15. In Years 1 and 2 the information is not used so thoroughly so the school cannot be sure that pupils are achieving as well as they might. The tasks planned for pupils are not always closely matched to their learning needs, particularly for those of higher attainment. There is some underestimation of what pupils know and understand. The accurate use of sharply focused assessment is critical here because these pupils are taught by several teachers, and the need for agreement on expectations, the quality of marking and predictions for pupils' achievement is of prime importance. Across the school, the quality of marking is variable. Some teachers make telling and constructive comments that show pupils how to improve their work, but generally teachers use praise too readily or simply tick work in recognition that it has been read.
16. The good procedures for assessing those with special educational needs and those who speak English in addition to another language mean that pupils' needs are promptly assessed, and appropriate support is arranged. Teaching assistants and teachers discuss things closely to ensure that planning is changed to suit individual pupils' needs, and this is monitored carefully to check progress. Pupils with particular needs are supported well by teaching assistants who help them to understand what is expected and to complete the practical and recording parts of the lesson. As a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve well, and those who speak English in addition to another language achieve very well.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good**, interesting curriculum that meets pupils' academic and personal needs well. It is enriched by a **very good** range of additional experiences and after school activities. The school's accommodation is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good range of activities for learning outside the school day.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts the curriculum and thus achievement in some subjects.
- The links with the local secondary school are good.

Commentary

17. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and is now well planned and provides a good range of interesting experiences for all pupils. The implementation of the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy and the improvement in provision for ICT have been important ways that the school has raised standards over the past four years. The curriculum provides pupils with important skills, which they use effectively in their learning in a range of other subjects.
18. The provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and health education is good. Pupils are given good opportunities to talk about a wide range of issues in weekly lessons in all classes except in the Year 5 and 6 class where these are incorporated well into other subjects. Drugs awareness is promoted well within the science curriculum and a suitable sex education programme that has been approved by the parents and governors is covered in Year 6. Opportunities to talk about a range of issues are developed well in all classes.
19. The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of extra-curricular activities, including music, chess, football, netball and cookery. Most are open to all pupils. Several other clubs run at different times of the year. School teams are becoming increasingly successful in football and netball. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument. However, pupils who learn instruments miss the same lessons each week and this is unsatisfactory. Visitors to the school, including music and drama groups, contribute well towards pupils' cultural development. Visits to historical places of interest and surveys of local facilities enhance the curriculum well. Residential visits for pupils in Year 6 enrich many areas of the curriculum and promote their confidence, independence and social skills. Pupils are prepared very well for their next stage of learning through the close liaison with the local secondary school. In addition to the usual visits and induction days there are good sporting links.
20. The school's unsatisfactory accommodation restricts many areas of the curriculum. The school has worked hard to minimise the effect of the cramped accommodation and makes every effort to create a stimulating learning environment. However, the indoor accommodation is extremely confined. The hall is small and restricts even the youngest pupils from moving freely in gymnastic lessons. There is no space to teach ICT so the school has invested in a suite of laptops. However, time is lost while these are set up and subsequent trailing leads do present a problem for pupils moving about. Because the library is used each morning for teaching a class, it reduces the access other pupils have to use it for research at this time. Classrooms are small and this has an adverse impact on work in practical subjects such as science and design and technology. Outdoor facilities are satisfactory and include a heated swimming pool, which is used in the summer term. Improvements since the last inspection include an all-weather play area and the hire of a field for sports and games. Pupils welcome the increased amount of space available at playtimes and larger team games in physical education. Resources are adequate but again the accommodation restricts storage space and

easy access to these. Although there are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the curriculum, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have several teachers during the week. This is unsettling, affects the continuity of their work and the progress they make.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **satisfactory** care for its pupils. The school provides **good** guidance and support. It takes **good** action to ensure pupils' views are sought, valued and acted upon.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have good caring relationships with pupils.
 - Individual targets are used effectively to guide and support pupils' personal development.
 - Not all staff are aware of the correct child protection procedures.
 - The pupil council gives pupils in Years 4-6 a strong voice in the school.
 - There are not enough mid-day supervisory staff in the school.
21. Pupils at the school are happy and feel secure. Because of the way classes are organised, many pupils stay with one teacher for two years and, as a result, strong caring relationships are formed between all staff and pupils. All school staff know the pupils well which helps them to guide and support their behaviour so that this is good by the time they leave the school.
 22. Individual pupil targets are set and regularly reviewed for literacy, numeracy and personal development. Most pupils know their targets and are aware of the progress that they are making towards them. Younger pupils' targets are often related to aspects of behaviour. The targets make an increasingly strong contribution to the guidance and support for both pupils' academic and personal development as they move up through the school.
 23. The school's child protection policy and procedures are clear, accessible to all, kept up to date and regularly reviewed by the teaching staff. However, the induction procedures for new staff do not routinely ensure that everyone is made fully aware of the correct child protection procedures. Checks are made to ensure that everyone who attends and visits the school is kept safe and secure.
 24. The pupil council is highly praised by parents and is clearly valued by pupils in the school. Pupils in Year 6 can clearly demonstrate how their opinions have influenced what happens in school. Personal lockers for their belongings, new playground equipment, a new all-weather surface and a dedicated football area are all clear indications to pupils that their voices are valued and acted upon by the school. Younger pupils are not always aware of the influence of the school council because its membership is limited to pupils in Years 4 to 6, and as a result a significant number of pupils do not feel that the school seeks, values and acts on their views positively.
 25. Mid-day supervisory staff are always hard-pushed to provide effective supervision because the outside playing facilities at the school have areas where children can play and not be seen. This was pointed out in the previous inspection report as a potential hazard. When it is raining, it is very difficult to supervise two classrooms and the hall. While the headteacher and deputy make sure that adequate supervision is in place by carrying out the duties themselves at these times, it does open up the possibility that some pupils are unsupervised for some of the time.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and is very highly regarded by them. Links with the community are **very good** and those with other schools and are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school regularly and effectively communicates with parents.
 - Links with local business and other community partners make a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.
 - Reports do not provide satisfactory guidance about what pupils need to do next to improve.
 - There are strong curriculum and transfer links with the local secondary school.
26. The school works well in partnership with parents to support pupils' learning in school and at home, through regular contact and homework activities. A good range of information is provided regularly to parents on all aspects of the curriculum. All policies and some curriculum planning are displayed prominently in the entrance hall for easy and open access. Parents are consulted fully on a range of issues and the school has responded positively to the feedback it has received from them. This is evidenced through the range of extra curricular activities provided and in the recent consultation that the school undertook concerning the teaching of sex and relationship education.
27. The school makes very good use of the wide range of local community links, including a wealth of valuable visitors to the school. The visit of a member of the local fire service to the reception class enabled the children to develop their speaking and listening skills well by asking questions and talking to the fire officer. This experience proved highly motivating and exciting for them, reflected in the subsequent imaginative role-play situations they acted out. It also made a valuable contribution to their understanding of some of the important safety issues associated with fires and fire prevention. The school has very strong links with the village church. The vicar is well known to pupils because he takes assembly in school every Monday and leads regular school services in the church.
28. The selection of reports to parents given to inspectors contain detailed information about what pupils can do, but do not consistently contain satisfactory guidance or information on pupils' progress and the steps they need to take in order to improve their learning.
29. The school has a strong partnership with a local secondary school, which is a specialist sports school. This link has led to improved transition arrangements and enhanced provision of specialist physical education at the school since the previous inspection. Tennis coaching, specialist gymnastics teaching and the establishment of a dance club have all been made possible. The school is part of a local cluster of schools that co-operate on a variety of issues, including staff training and special educational needs provision. Links with the local feeder nursery school are satisfactory and ensure effective transfer of information on new children coming to the school so that suitable provision is put into place as soon as the children start school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **good leadership**. The management of the school is **good**. The subject co-ordinators provide **satisfactory** leadership, although they do not have sufficient influence over the development of their subjects in other classes. The school's governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The experienced headteacher provides caring and thoughtful leadership.
- The headteacher and his senior teachers facilitate the school's open and team approach towards making decisions.
- Subject co-ordinators have too little responsibility for the development of their subjects.
- Governors are involved fully in decisions about the school's future and therefore most have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The school evaluates its performance well and correctly identifies areas where it needs to improve.

- The school tracks the progress of individual pupils well, but systems put into place to bring about improvements in their learning are not yet effective throughout the school.

Commentary

30. The hard-working headteacher provides clear direction to the work of the school. His consultative approach to leadership ensures that the implications for improvements are thoroughly weighed and discussed with all involved before they are implemented. Standards among pupils in Year 6 are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection because teaching and learning have improved, and the curriculum is well planned. His reflective and team approach to leadership ensures that he takes full account of the views of others before decisions are made. As a result, staff feel valued and are generally well motivated to do their best for the pupils. The knowledgeable deputy and a senior management team complement and support the headteacher well, and together they are committed to maintaining high standards in achievement, attitudes and behaviour.
31. In an attempt to raise achievement, the headteacher and his staff have taken some difficult decisions concerning the management of the curriculum for younger pupils. The children in reception are now taught as a separate group and this means that they follow a relevant and rich curriculum suited to their age and learning needs. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught in year groups for English, mathematics, ICT and personal, social, health and moral education. This has resulted in more focused teaching and most pupils make satisfactory or better progress. Some differences remain in the expectations of the teachers concerned, and these need to be resolved, especially in what is expected of higher attaining pupils in Year 2. The headteacher uses the expertise of his staff well. However, subject co-ordinators do not have a clear enough overview of provision in their subjects in all classes and do not currently exert influence over their development. For example, there is no system to check that things that have been agreed are being consistently used in all classes. There is little monitoring of teaching and learning, and teachers' expertise is not shared widely enough.
32. The management of the school's cramped accommodation and its resources is very good. Space is generally used well, but accommodation is so restricted that there is little room for flexibility. For example, the use of the library for teaching in the morning has restricted its use by pupils in other classes for research purposes. Some teachers have overcome this with the imaginative use of the Internet and the good use of homework. The staffroom is very small and multifunctional. This restricts access for staff during the day to plan the curriculum, and hampers opportunities for whole staff meetings and training. The school constantly evaluates its performance and has thorough systems for gathering information about progress in English, maths and science. However, the information for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not used rigorously enough for predicting achievement and for planning more precisely for the learning needs of individual pupils.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning to speak English as a second language is managed well. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils receive the right degree of support. Individual education plans are maintained well, although the targets they identify are not always specific enough to guide staff in planning pupils' work. The school sometimes supplements its resources for special needs provision to good effect. For example, additional help was provided to support the needs of older pupils, and this has made a positive impact on their achievement and is resulting in higher standards.
34. Members of the governing body keep in constant touch with the school's developments. They have a good understanding of its strengths, and several display a close understanding of how it needs to develop further. Governors are well briefed through their contacts with headteacher, staff and parents, and offer the right level of support and challenge to the work of the school. Their advice and experience help to shape its vision and direction; for example, in the

preparation of the school's development plan. Governors meet their statutory requirements satisfactorily. There are some minor omissions in their annual report to parents.

Financial information

35. The governors' finance sub-committee receives regular reports on the school's income and expenditure. It receives detailed explanations from the school's well-qualified finance officer, and is therefore well placed to make the right spending decisions. These are guided by the priorities in the school's development plan. This detailed document is too complex and therefore does not define the school's priorities for development sharply enough, nor specifies clearly the criteria by which successful outcomes may be judged. The school prudently monitors its spending while constantly seeking to improve its facilities and provision. The school receives good financial support from its parent-teacher association to buy extra resources for the benefit to all pupils.
36. The school makes very good arrangements for the day-to-day administration of its budget. The headteacher and chair of the finance sub-committee receive regular and detailed information about the school's budgetary position so that they can monitor spending closely. Care is taken to make sure that bulk supplies are purchased at advantageous rates. The school readily seeks advice from the appropriate authority when making large purchases or seeking to secure major improvements. Some checks are made to measure how well the school is performing in comparison with other schools. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	302,326
Total expenditure	302,955
Expenditure per pupil	2,195

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6,885
Balance carried forward to the next	6,256

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well planned curriculum links learning effectively in a number of areas.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- The outdoor area is used very effectively.
- All children achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- Links with parents are good.

Commentary

37. The curriculum is planned in half termly blocks using a thematic approach to link learning meaningfully for the children. This means that learning always has a context and the children know exactly what they are learning and why. The current theme is 'People who help us' and the children have thought for themselves about the range of people who they know. A number of visitors have come into school to talk about their work and this has provided good opportunities for the children to ask questions, to write and draw pictures to show what they have learnt and to gain a better understanding about the people they know. Role-play areas build successfully on these visits so that the children have lots of ideas for their own imaginative play.
38. Despite restrictions imposed by the accommodation, provision for children in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the previous inspection and remains good. The classroom is very small which makes it difficult to have as many activities available inside as the school would like. This means that some activities and resources are not always available for the children when they choose. While this does not stop the children from achieving well because staff make sure that relevant resources are available and the children are given the freedom to develop their own ideas within a framework, there is not the same breadth of freedom as available in other settings. For example, the role-play areas have to take up a small corner of the room, and it is only possible to have either a writing or a make and do activity out all of the time, rather than both. The newly extended outdoor area provides good opportunities for the children to choose to learn outside if they wish. Activities cover the full range of curriculum so that the children are able to develop a range of skills when playing outside. Good adult intervention keeps the children on task and focussed on purposeful play. Adults assess the children's involvement and learning as they are playing and ask questions to find out what they are thinking and thus what they are learning. The information is used effectively to plan follow up work and activities. The needs of the very small number of children with special educational needs are met effectively in this way. When it rains however, the children have to come inside, as there is no covered area for them to continue to learn outside if they wish.
39. Links with parents are good. Those waiting to pick up their children at the end of the day only had good things to say about the way the school has helped their children to settle into school routines. The opportunity to greet and meet staff is available, but this is restricted by the accommodation, which is not in itself welcoming. The mobile classroom has no designated area where parents can wait and therefore there is no notice board to explain what is going on in the classroom, or a convivial area for them to wait. The school does what it can to provide good information to parents and to make them feel welcome in school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Children soon learn to share and take turns when playing together in groups.
- Children take care of their own needs well and make decisions confidently.

Commentary

40. Teaching and learning is good in this area of learning and, as a result, the children make good progress to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. There is a clear expectation that the children will follow certain rules when playing and working together, and adults offer gentle reminders about the rules when necessary to give the children quiet reinforcement. Some children respond extremely positively to these. For example, during the inspection, one boy waited very patiently, keeping his hand held high until he could tell the teacher that the hands on his clock face were too loose to stay in place. Children's ideas are welcomed which leads to high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, the children are keen to have a go at new things for themselves, not at all worried that they may make a mistake because they know they can always try again. The children are confident to make decisions for themselves. When rain stopped play outside, they came in independently, hanging up their coats before choosing an activity inside. One boy kept watch and let everyone know when it was dry enough to go back outside.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good focus is given to learning formal reading and writing skills.
- Children are given good opportunities to listen to each other's ideas and to talk about their own work and experiences.

Commentary

41. Learning is planned around the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing so that the children make a good start in developing these important skills. The sessions are organised so that while the children are engaged in self initiated play, they work in groups with either the teacher or teaching assistant, who has been identified on the planning, to read together in small groups. As a result, some are beginning to predict the ending of a story and most recognise some familiar words in the text. The children are proud to learn their spellings at home and enjoy reading to another adult. A range of writing on display reflects the children's ability to have a go at spelling new words with confidence and while some of these are not correct, many are phonetically plausible. All make good, independent attempts at writing their own name. Due to good teaching, nearly all children will achieve the goals they are expected to in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. A few will exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are practical and set within the children's experience.
- Learning for higher attaining children is not always extended in whole class sessions.

Commentary

42. 'What's the Time Mr Wolf?' proved a popular story and the children enjoyed playing this traditional game to work out the times of the day when they come to school, have dinner, go home and go to bed. All were fully involved because it was a game and all had clock faces so they could show the times Mr Wolf said. Higher attaining pupils recognised the written numbers and when asked could count and recognise numbers beyond 20. When asked they could indicate half past the hour and some were ready to learn about quarter to and past, a natural extension not developed in this lesson. This practical way of learning is the usual organisation and the children are fully involved in their learning through games they play. By the end of the reception year, all children achieve the goals they are expected to and some exceed them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are linked and are meaningful to children.
- Good opportunities are planned for the children to use their imaginations.
- There are fewer planned opportunities for children to learn about other people's beliefs and cultures.

Commentary

43. Learning is linked in themes which allow the children to learn a range of skills in one activity. For example, when acting out the work of the post office, the children used their imaginations to re-enact the work of the people, developed their speaking skills to ask for a particular item, weighed parcels so that the correct postage could be put on, accurately addressed labels so that the parcels would arrive at their correct destinations and learnt to be responsible citizens by ensuring that everyone had an up-to-date tax disk for their cars. The work of fire fighters was captured through the children's lively paintings of fire tenders. Working with red, yellow and blue paint, the children mixed the colours they needed with confidence. The foldaway ladders on the models were very imaginative and reflected the children's good ability in solving problems. Planning indicates that there are not so many activities planned to develop the children's awareness of other people's beliefs and cultures. By the end of the reception year, all children will reach the goals expected in these areas of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is used well to run, skip, hop, ride and scoot.
- Good opportunity is planned for the children to develop their ball skills.
- The weekly physical education lesson in the hall provides good opportunity to develop climbing, crawling, jumping and balancing skills.

Commentary

44. Whenever they have the chance the children choose to go outside into the designated space. The all weather surface enable this to happen even when the ground is wet. This and the use of the playground and hall mean that the children develop their physical skills of movement well. By the end of the reception year, they all have good skills and many exceed the goals expected in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well between Years 3 and 6 because teachers' expectations are high.
- Standards in reading have improved across the school since the last inspection.
- Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not always offered tasks that are sufficiently demanding.
- Between Years 3 and 6, teachers motivate pupils well so that they rise to the challenges they are set.
- Marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work.
- Writing is used imaginatively to support learning in other subjects between Years 3 and 6.

Commentary

45. Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. These differences in standards arise principally because pupils in Years 3 to 6 are offered more challenging work that engages their thinking and sets them high, but realistic targets. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, many higher attaining pupils are writing independently at length, but teachers do not always show them how to improve the content and structure of their work to improve achievement more. Some of the tasks offered are not demanding enough. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, which is good improvement since the previous inspection when progress in reading was unsatisfactory. Standards among the oldest pupils have risen as a result of better teaching. Across the school, those with special educational needs make good progress and those who are learning to speak English make very good progress in both reading and writing because they are well supported in their efforts.
46. Standards in speaking across the school are above average and pupils acquire new skills at the expected rate. Pupils are articulate and respond well in class discussions. Teachers sometimes ask testing questions that challenge pupils to think carefully and explain. For example, those in Year 3 were asked to define the meanings of '*ferocious*' and '*serrated*' when they were discussing a text. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to justify, illustrate or explain their answers because teachers often ask questions that anticipate the length and nature of pupils' responses. Pupils' listening skills vary in Years 1 and 2. In some lessons, a few boys find concentration difficult, which slows the pace of learning. In others, pupils display good listening skills and concentrate well. Listening improves progressively between Years 3 and 6, so that the oldest pupils display well above average skills. They remain focused for long periods, listening carefully to others in paired or class discussions. They pay careful attention to the teacher because they are well motivated to learn.
47. Standards of reading are above average in Years 1 and 2, and are well above average by the end of Year 6. They have improved significantly since the last inspection because the school now ensures that skills are taught thoroughly and systematically. The achievement of younger pupils is at least satisfactory. By Year 2, many display a good knowledge of the sounds that

constitute common words and are beginning to acquire a fluency that enables them to derive pleasure from reading. Teachers have good systems for checking progress, and pupils are well supported in learning to read in school and at home. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils achieve well in reading because teachers offer them a wide range of challenging texts in their lessons. In Year 6, most pupils read confidently, discuss characters and content and anticipate likely outcomes of the plot of a story; however, accomplished readers could receive more guidance when choosing individual library books.

48. Pupils' standards of writing are above average by Year 2, and they achieve satisfactorily overall. In Year 1, pupils achieve more highly when they are expected to write at length and when the nature of the task or the use of worksheets does not limit their efforts. In Years 2, pupils mostly relate events or thoughts in a logical sequence, but their work is not always well structured and they do not have sufficient opportunity to improve upon or redraft their original ideas. As a result, some of the higher attaining pupils are not challenged to achieve as well as they might. Standards are well above average overall by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because teachers' expectations are high. They write for a range of purposes and audiences, and writing is used imaginatively to support learning in other subjects, such as history and religious education. In Years 3 and 4, many pupils already write competently, demarcating sentences accurately and using dialogue to bring characters to life, while higher attaining pupils in Year 6 skilfully try to adopt a particular style of writing, using a wide range of vocabulary to capture mood or feeling.
49. Standards of spelling are good across the school. In Years 1 and 2, handwriting and presentation are average. While pupils practise thoroughly the formation of letters and their joins, they are not always encouraged to transfer this careful work to their everyday writing. Standards of presentation are good by Year 6, and a few pupils produce well illustrated work of very high quality, for example in history and science.
50. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Good teaching also occurs in the younger classes, but expectations here are more variable. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are sometimes expected to write only one or two sentences when they are capable of more. In others, pupils write at length, but teachers do not always show them how to improve on their original efforts. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is consistently good because expectations are high, lessons move at a brisk pace, and teachers set a clear agenda for what they intend their pupils to achieve. Pupils rise to the challenge, some producing work of high quality. In one very good lesson, the teacher set targets for completing each phase of the task. This encouraged sustained effort and led to high achievement. The quality of marking varies. It is very good in one class, but in most classes it does not show pupils exactly how to improve their work. As a result, not all pupils have a clear idea about what to do next to achieve more.
51. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and is a very good practitioner. However there are too few formal opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in other classes. As a result, she is not fully aware of whether pupils are achieving as well as they should and is not well placed to offer advice on raising standards further. There are good procedures for tracking pupils' progress, but this information is not used well in every class to determine future learning needs and match work at a challenging level.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Language and literacy are developed well across the curriculum. Writing is imaginatively used to support learning in other subjects, such as history and geography. Currently the library is not used often enough for independent research because of its use as a classroom.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- Good teaching has led to the pupils' good achievement.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always identify what pupils need to do to improve.
- The subject co-ordinator does not have a clear enough whole school overview of teaching and learning.
- Investigation skills are not as well developed as other areas of mathematics.

Commentary

53. Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above average at the end of Year 2. Achievement is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, which is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was unsatisfactory. In Year 3, pupils start to make good progress and by the end of Year 6 standards are well above the national average, higher than at the time of the last inspection. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 including those with special educational needs achieve well. Those who are learning to speak English in addition to another language achieve very well. There is evidence of very good achievement in numeracy. However, pupils' investigation skills are not as well developed because they do not have enough opportunity to develop these in all classes. While standards are not as high in this aspect, pupils achieve well in tests because they have the ability to think things through for themselves.
54. Teaching and learning are good overall. Some teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in these year groups have high expectations of pupils' commitment and effort. They explain tasks clearly so that pupils understand new work and can start quickly. The good balance of teaching basic skills and pupils being given time to practise is most effective and pupils complete a lot of work in lessons. However, despite pupils' good knowledge of the processes they are not always given the opportunity to explain their own strategies or share ideas. Occasionally, all pupils are asked to complete the same initial task when more able pupils would benefit from starting the more advanced work straight away. In a lesson where the plans had been adapted to meet the learning needs of the different groups of pupils, they were excited by the task and were totally involved in solving the challenging problems set. This was an outstanding example of good practice, which is not used in all classes.
55. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Although pupils of the same age are taught in smaller groups, there is still a wide variation of abilities in each class. Lessons are planned with different activities for these pupils and practical activities reinforce what has been taught. However, identical worksheets are used too often and at these times, some pupils struggle to understand what is required and others do work that they can do already. This excessive use of worksheets inhibits the development of pupils' presentational skills and independence. It also makes it difficult for pupils to refer back to previous work when starting a new but related topic. When more able pupils finish the set work, they enjoy the opportunities given for them to set themselves challenges by applying what they have learnt using higher numbers. They achieve well at these times.
56. Skilled teaching assistants are deployed effectively and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress as a result. Marking is satisfactory. Older pupils mark their own work in the lessons so teachers are able to help those who have problems. Praise is used well to encourage pupils to do well but more able pupils are not shown how they can develop further.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role so has not had the opportunity of sharing good practice or of gaining an overview of standards and achievement in the subject. Assessment procedures are satisfactory because they provide enough information about how well pupils have done. However, the information is not always used effectively in Year 2 to set work of a challenging enough nature to extend the learning of higher attaining pupils. The information is used well in Year 3 to 6.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Teachers make good use of mathematics across the curriculum and link work well with ICT. Pupils are given good opportunity to develop their mathematical skills as they create line graphs in science and geography, investigate shapes in art and measure accurately in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical lessons make learning interesting for pupils and help them to develop important investigative skills.
- Higher attaining pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class are not given enough challenge to achieve high enough standards.

Commentary

59. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are now well above average at the end of Year 6. Due to the very good support, and an expectation that pupils will explain what they are doing and what is happening in lessons using relevant scientific terms and vocabulary, all pupils achieve well and those who speak a language in addition to English achieve very well. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. This reflects satisfactory progress since this group of pupils started school. No pupils were assessed at the higher Level 3 last year and none are predicted to get the higher Level 3 this year. During the inspection, several pupils are likely to attain this standard because they get the challenge they need in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class to enable them to achieve well. As a result, the school is revising its targets. Achievement is satisfactory overall.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Planning in Years 1 and 2 does not always match the needs of individual pupils well enough. This means higher attaining Year 2 pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, often investigate things they already know the answer to. For example, during the inspection pupils were finding out which materials were attracted to a magnet even though most of them already knew that they would '*only stick to metals*'. No opportunity was provided for them to find out whether all metals were attracted to magnets thus extending their understanding. Work in books is mostly the completion of identical worksheets which are too easy for higher attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils are supported well by teaching assistants so they are able to complete the sheets correctly and record their learning accurately. Lessons always contain practical exploration and this makes sure pupils are involved and interested in lessons. However, in one the lesson observed, some younger pupils were not fully involved because they were waiting for their turn to use the magnet. This led to a few boys losing concentration.
61. Lessons observed during the inspection in Years 3 to 6, and older Year 2 pupils in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class, were very good because all pupils were actively engaged in carrying out their own investigations, which they have planned for themselves, either in groups or as a class. Teachers ask very astute questions to probe pupils' understanding and steer them towards a successful conclusion. This ensures that pupils' important investigative skills are

developed in a relevant first hand way. Teachers and pupils overcame the cramped accommodation extremely well to carry out a range of practical tests. As a result, all pupils in these classes understood whether a test was fair. Older pupils successfully planned a fair test for themselves, keeping the variables the same when necessary. Work in books indicates pupils are used to planning and carrying out investigations independently or in groups, a weakness identified at the time of the last inspection, which has now been dealt with well.

62. Good development of literacy and numeracy skills ensure that pupils are using these skills well to support their learning in science. Careful measurements of changes that occur during testing are recorded as table and graphs enabling pupils to interpret these results and to form conclusions about what is happening. Sometimes computer programs are used so that results can be displayed instantly and any changes observed as they happen. However, the use of computers is limited because it takes so long to set them up and they take up valuable space required for the practical nature of the tasks.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall as changes have led to higher standards in the subjects since the previous inspection. However, the weaknesses in challenge for higher attaining pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class have not been successfully dealt with because work and pupils' progress and achievements are not checked often enough in a formal way. Assessment procedures are good and used well to check how much progress pupils have made and to plan suitable work for older pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No overall judgement may be made concerning provision in information and computer technology (ICT), because only one lesson was seen.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the subject have risen since the last inspection because teachers' subject knowledge and computer resources have improved.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects in Years 3 to 6.
- The school makes good use of its resources despite cramped accommodation.

Commentary

64. Standards across the school are in line with those expected, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were well below average and pupils' achievement was poor. In Year 1, pupils successfully manipulate the mouse to vary the colour, size and position of images, while in Year 2, pupils use the computer for simple word-processing. In Year 3, pupils use information from the Internet to practise note-taking skills, while older pupils successfully produced *PowerPoint* presentations, employing a range of computer functions to achieve the desired effect. Those with special educational needs make progress similar to that of other pupils. This is because teachers organise the use of computers so that those needing support work with pupils who have already acquired a certain proficiency. In the lesson seen, pupils shared computers sensibly, discussing ideas and exploring ways of achieving an agreed effect.
65. No judgement was made on the quality of teaching, because not enough was seen. However, pupils' work indicates that teachers' knowledge and skills have improved significantly since the last inspection because work is planned at suitable levels and skills have improved as a result. The single lesson observed was of good quality. The teacher displayed a very good knowledge of what was being taught, and used questioning skilfully to help pupils to understand the advantages and limitations of using that particular computer program. Between Years 3 and 6, teachers use ICT imaginatively to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils use clip-art to liven up the presentation of their work in geography and history projects.

66. Leadership of the subject is good overall. The co-ordinator, a good practitioner, offers advice to staff and has demonstrated the use of certain programs. This has led to the good improvements in provision since the previous inspection. Management is satisfactory overall. There is no formal system to check that the quality of teaching and learning is consistent in all classes. There is no formal assessment of pupils' progress. Resources are used well but accommodation for the lessons is cramped. Pupils share laptop computers, and the preparation of the machines alone for each lesson takes at least fifteen minutes. Pupils need to remain seated throughout the lesson because of the dangers of trailing wires. This is a matter that requires urgent attention.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils use word processing frequently in their history or English lessons, printing their work on coloured paper to enhance its appearance. Older pupils use their word-processing skills very well to produce poems or narrative. The Internet is used imaginatively to develop research skills, and as a source of information to teach note-taking skills or to enrich pupils' knowledge in science or geography. Pupils in Year 1 use well-chosen programs to sort data and construct simple block graphs for mathematics, while those in Year 5 use *PowerPoint* presentations to illustrate fables. Pupils enjoy applying their skills in a range of subjects, and a significant number use their computers at home to continue work started in school.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected under a different inspection and will be reported separately.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils research for geographical facts so that they have a good base of knowledge by the time they are in Year 6.
- There is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class.
- Pupils do not have a good enough understanding of how to read maps in Years 1 and 2 because they do not do enough of this work.
- Pupils in Year 4 and 5 carry out a range of surveys in the local environment, which develops their geographical skills well.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure pupils do not cover the same thing twice.
- There are too few formal opportunities to check the quality of provision in the subject.

Commentary

68. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and at the end of Year 2 are average. They are above average at the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 3 to 6. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 but recorded work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is sometimes unsatisfactory. This is because there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in particular. Recorded work is nearly all identical worksheets, which do little to challenge thinking or to develop specific geographical skills. Few pupils could recall using maps to locate places and therefore their knowledge of other places is weak. During the inspection good use of resources was seen and this interested pupils so much that they were all keen to learn more about life in India. They all remained on task to work out what each artefact was used for.

70. The planned work in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 indicates that pupils collect a range of geographical information from first hand which helps them to develop the skills they need to interpret evidence. There is a good balance of work so that over the year, pupils collect and interpret information and research a range of facts about their own and contrasting environments. This ensures they have a good breadth of knowledge and understanding by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to support learning in the subject. Computers are not used so much because of the difficulties setting these up for pupils to use in lessons.
71. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall because staff discuss issues as a whole during specific meetings. While the whole school approach to checking whether standards and achievement are as high as they should be has led to satisfactory achievement overall, there are not enough formal opportunities for the co-ordinator to check whether provision is consistent in all classes. There is no specific focus for review and therefore the weaknesses in challenge in Years 1 and 2 have not been picked up. Assessment is satisfactory but the information is not used effectively to identify priorities for improvement. There is insufficient focus on raising standards in the subject with much of the review focussed on resource provision.

History

No overall judgement on provision in history may be made, as insufficient lessons were observed to judge the quality of teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, standards are higher than those reported at the last inspection.
- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good because teachers use a range of methods and resources to enhance pupils' understanding.
- ICT and literacy skills are used well to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

72. Analysis of work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are at least in line with those expected by the end of Year 2, and are above those anticipated by Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
73. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils know that children's lives and circumstances in the past were different from their own. They compare Roman, Tudor and Victorian houses and outline some of the characteristics of each, although they have little idea of the chronological order of these periods of history. Pupils understand the dangers children faced in the Second World War, and describe in detail air-raid shelters, rationing and barrage balloons. Work in books indicate that pupils in Year 2 in the mixed Year 2 and 3 class get higher levels of challenge and therefore Year 2 pupils achieve better in this class. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils achieve well. Those in Year 3 wrote sensitively about the Blitz, empathising with the plight of evacuees and describing the role of women in the war. Older pupils learnt about features of seventeenth century life and thought about the effects on people's lives brought about by the Plague and the Great Fire. Pupils are constantly encouraged to imagine the thoughts and feelings of those who experienced such momentous events of the past. This considerably enhances their understanding, and personal interpretation of the evidence that leads to good progress.
74. Teaching cannot be judged across the school because only two lessons were seen, but both of these were of good quality. The teachers displayed good subject knowledge, and used questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and the reliability of evidence. In the mixed age class for Years 2 and 3 pupils, Edwardian and Victorian artefacts were used well to provoke

lively discussion as pupils puzzled out their uses. This led to secure learning about the hardships people of the past encountered and provided good challenge for the Year 2 pupils in this class. Teachers' expectations are high. Pupils in Year 6 complete detailed projects on aspects of life in Victorian England, and a few of these are of very high quality. Older pupils deploy well-developed research skills, and teachers provide a wide range of resources that encourage enquiry, investigation and the accurate presentation of facts. The Internet was used effectively for some of this research. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Some individual teachers use the information effectively to set challenging work for pupils.

75. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The curriculum is organised in a way to make sure pupils do not cover the same content more than once. Planning focuses sharply on the development of skills. While staff discuss developments of the subject and evaluate provision well together, there are too few opportunities to check whether what has been agreed happens consistently in all classes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Inspectors talked to pupils and staff and looked at work in **art and design, design and technology** and **music**. No lessons were observed so no judgement was made about overall provision in these subjects. Work in **art and design** shows that pupils have generally achieved satisfactorily. In the lesson seen, achievement and teaching were good, and standards were satisfactory. Artwork on display was often of a good quality, and showed pupils succeeding in using a variety of media, including painting, drawing and collage. Several pupils enter their work in the village flower show. Art is used linked well to other subjects, including science by exploring different materials and literacy by illustrating stories of mythical creatures. The subjects are managed satisfactorily through whole school discussions and plans have been adapted to the needs of the school. In **music**, performance skills are developed well. Singing in assembly was of a good standard. Pupils take part in a range of musical performances during the year and these provide them with good opportunities to develop performance skills and to forge very close links with the church and local community.

Physical education

Provision for Physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good resulting in good achievement.
- There is a very good range of clubs after school.
- The hall is inadequate.

Commentary

77. In the lessons seen, pupils' standards in gymnastics, dance and outdoor problem solving activities were good. In both gymnastic lessons and the Years 5 and 6 dance lesson, pupils' movements were restricted because the hall is too small. Achievement is good because pupils are skilled at working round each other and because lessons are adapted to make the most use of the space.
78. Teaching is good. Learning is hampered by lack of space. Lessons are well planned and pupils understand the importance of warming up at the beginning of the lesson. The good balance between teachers giving instructions and pupils practising the skills means time is used effectively. Pupils are given good opportunity to evaluate each other's work, and, as a result, refine their own moves well. In a well-planned lesson, all pupils were fully involved working very collaboratively in their groups to solve a challenging problem. They listened carefully to each other's ideas and learned to work well as a team.

79. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Standards and achievement have been maintained since the previous inspection despite the difficulties posed by the accommodation. The school's records show that nearly all pupils swim the expected distance of 25 metres by the time they leave. The curriculum is good. Older pupils experience outdoor adventurous activities such as canoeing and abseiling on their residential visits. There is a good range of activities after school to develop pupils' skills, particularly in football and netball. Pupils are doing increasingly well in competitive sports against other schools. The outdoor facilities, which include a heated swimming pool, are satisfactory. Improvements since the last inspection have been the addition of an all-weather playing area and the hire of an adjacent field. The school benefits from good links with the local secondary school with specialist sports status.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council provides good opportunity for some pupils to make decisions and consider the impact of these decisions on others and the school.
- Very good opportunities are planned for pupils to get involved in community projects and events.
- Staff have not yet received the training they need to expect the same high standards of all pupils.

Commentary

80. Representatives on the school council take their responsibilities seriously by acting as 'buddies' at playtimes. For example, they find playmates for those who have no one to play with or are having a problem getting someone to share a favourite toy. They know that if they cannot sort things out for themselves, that they should approach an adult. This is effective at playtimes when teaching staff are on duty. At lunchtimes, some of the pupils' actions are ignored because staff at these times have not yet received the training they need to reinforce consistent expectations because they are not sure what these are themselves.
81. Through the very good links with the local community, the pupils get many good opportunities to take part in a range of village and church events. This helps them know from first hand what it means to be a responsible young citizen. Their contribution is welcomed and celebrated by the village and this helps them grow in self-esteem and confidence, as they get older.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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

