

INSPECTION REPORT

ST DAVID'S SCHOOL

Moreton-in-Marsh

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115743

Headteacher: Mr R.W.Forster

Lead inspector: Mrs Rowena Onions

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th April 2004

Inspection number: 257631

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	320
School address:	East Street Moreton-in-Marsh Gloucestershire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr N Dicker
Date of previous inspection:	27/4/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St David's Church of England Primary School mainly draws its pupils from the town of Moreton-in-Marsh, although, a few pupils are transported on the school bus from the surrounding area. There are 320 pupils on roll. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual times is below average. The socio-economic profile of the pupils has changed somewhat over the last few years and is average overall. The school has a below average number of pupils taking free school packed lunches. Since the time of the previous inspection, there has been a gradual but significant reduction of the pupils' attainment on entry to the school. It is now very wide, but overall, broadly average. Almost all the pupils are of white British extraction and all but one have English as their first language. There are 41 pupils (13 per cent) with special educational needs, ranging from moderate learning difficulties to a number with physical or communication difficulties, which is an average percentage. Seven pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. In recent years, the school has admitted a small but significant number of pupils with complex emotional and behavioural difficulties, including a number who have not been successful in other schools. The school received a Department for Education and Skills school achievement award in 2001 and 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18354	Rowena Onions	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
14997	Valerie Emery	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage ¹ Science Art and design Physical education
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St David's is a sound school, which has some particular strengths and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils are helped to develop very good attitudes to school and they behave well. Currently, standards are average and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those of higher attainment, achieve in a satisfactory way overall. Those with complex physical, educational and behavioural difficulties do well. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but good in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. The school is led and managed in a satisfactory way overall, but there are strong aspects within this.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in English in Years 1 and 2 and in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology in all year groups.
- There is not yet a fully effective system for tracking the progress of individuals and groups of pupils in a way that provides clear information for the easy use of teachers and managers.
- A hardworking team of teachers and teaching assistants is particularly effective in developing good relationships with pupils that make them want to learn.
- Due to the vision, determination and good leadership of the headteacher, the school is very effective in helping pupils to mature personally, to develop very well spiritually, morally and socially and to behave well.
- There is very successful provision for pupils with complex physical, educational and behavioural difficulties.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher and some key staff have too heavy a workload to allow them to work to maximum effect.
- Consistent, good-quality provision ensures that children in the reception year have a good start to their education.
- Some classrooms are very cramped and this sometimes inhibits pupils' learning.

The school has improved satisfactorily since its last inspection. Pupils' achievement remains satisfactory and their attitudes to work have improved. Standards in design and technology and ICT have improved, as has the way the school promotes pupils' personal development. All issues identified in the previous report have been addressed, but further improvements are required in the way the school uses information from assessments.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Pupils currently enter and leave the school with average attainment. Due to well-judged school improvement work, however, pupils are now making better progress and standards are rising.

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

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.

Children in the reception year are achieving well and most will meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the year. Standards are now above average in English in Year 2. They remain average in mathematics and science because school improvement work, although effective, is not

as long-standing in these subjects. In 2003, pupils in Year 6 had not made as much progress as their peers in similar schools. The school has acted to rectify this and pupils currently in Year 6 are set to achieve as well as their peers in other schools. Standards in Year 6 are currently average in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve in a similar way, but those with complex physical, educational and behavioural difficulties achieve well as a result of particularly successful provision.

Pupils' personal qualities are good overall. Their attitudes to work and school are very good and their behaviour is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good overall**. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory** with some good features. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Teaching is good in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2. In all classes, teachers are very determined to help children to enjoy learning and in this, they are largely successful. Teachers manage their pupils very well and this means that pupils can work well both in groups and independently. Teachers are particularly skilful in helping those with particular behavioural difficulties to learn successfully. Teaching assistants give good support and pupils try hard to succeed. Assessment, although conscientiously undertaken, does not provide sufficiently clear information to assist teachers to know how the progress their pupils are making compares with that of others nationally, or to provide clear guidance as to what is needed to help them to improve. Prior to the inspection, the school had rightly identified the need to improve the way pupils' attainments are tracked as they move through the school. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but the school provides a good range of additional activities that further motivate pupils. The school is well resourced, but some classrooms are too small. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, especially those with complex difficulties, and higher-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall, but the current leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The headteacher has a clear vision and is committed to the full inclusion of all pupils and to the promotion of both the personal development of the pupils and to ensuring that they leave the school with a love of learning. Management is satisfactory. As a result of a lack of clear tracking of pupils' progress and of the very heavy workload undertaken by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and some key staff, the school was not as aware as it should have been of the progress being made by the pupils relative to progress nationally. This has now been recognised and improvement work is in place. The effects of this are evident in improved and improving progress. Key staff have led this improvement work well. The very tight budget is carefully managed. The work of the governing body is good. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development in the school. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school in all areas. They feel that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible and enjoy coming to school. The inspection team fully agrees with them. Pupils like everything about their school, in particular their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Streamline and improve the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress so that it provides clear, ongoing information for the use of teachers, managers and governors.
- Review and reduce the workload of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and some key coordinators to enable them to work to maximum effect.

- Work with the local education authority and the diocese to improve the school's accommodation

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall achievement is **satisfactory** but improving. Standards in mathematics and science are average in Years 2 and 6, as are standards in English in Year 6. Standards in English in Year 2 are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Due to school improvement work, standards in English, mathematics and science are rising.
- Children in the reception year make good progress in their communication and mathematical development and in gaining personal and social skills.
- Standards in spelling amongst older pupils are below average.
- Pupils' ability to calculate confidently, accurately and speedily, although improving, remains an aspect of relative weakness.
- Pupils do well in ICT and in design and technology and standards are above those expected.
- Pupils with complex difficulties make good progress in relation to the targets set for them.

Commentary

1. Over recent years, as the school population has grown, the attainments of those entering the school, both into the reception year and those transferring from other schools have fallen significantly. Attainment on entry to the school was above average at the time of the previous inspection and is now average. This finding is supported by entry data kept by the school over several years. In addition, the school has admitted a relatively large number of pupils with particular behavioural difficulties, including a number who have experienced difficulty in other schools.
2. The school had been aware that standards at the end of Year 6 had shown a downward trend and had correctly identified that a significant reason for this was the declining attainment on entry of the pupils. There was, however, a failure to identify that, although pupils continued to progress at the rate they had in the past, that this rate of progress had not increased in the way that it had nationally. This meant that although standards in English, mathematics and science were average in Year 6 in 2003, the progress pupils had made between Year 2 and Year 6 was well below that made in similar schools. The school has now taken good action to improve standards. There remains, however, a need to further improve the tracking of pupils' attainment to ensure that the school is very clear about the progress individuals and groups of pupils are making year on year.
3. The school saw a significant drop in standards in Year 2 in 2003, particularly in reading and mathematics. This was partly due to a significantly higher number of pupils in the year group with special educational needs than is evident in other years. Three of the seven pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are in this year group. Additionally, some staffing difficulties adversely affected some of the pupils when they were in Year 2. The school has put extra resources into supporting these pupils in Year 3 and rising standards are evident.
4. Good strategies have now been used to improve standards in English. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are achieving well. Improvement work in English included the introduction of a scheme to teach pupils how to use the link between sounds and letters (phonics) to help them read and write unfamiliar words. This, together with the careful teaching of different types of writing, has helped standards to rise. They are now above average in Year 2 in both reading and writing. The impact of improvement initiatives is taking longer to affect standards for older pupils and there remains a particular need to improve spelling. Current Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress over Years 3 to 6 and achieved satisfactorily.

5. Work to improve mathematics is not as longstanding as that in English, but is well judged and having positive effect. Pupils in Year 1 are currently achieving well and attaining above average standards. Although pupils in Year 2 are being well taught and are currently making good progress, they have not had as secure a grounding and are set to attain average standards at the end of the year. Their overall achievement is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, satisfactory teaching is ensuring secure progress and achievement, but many pupils still lack a facility with number that enables them to work sufficiently quickly and accurately. The school is aware of this and work continues to ensure improvement.
6. Science has not been the focus of school improvement. Nevertheless, work has been undertaken to raise standards, for example, by ensuring that potentially higher-attaining pupils are given appropriate opportunity to attain higher standards. The success of this can be seen in the increasing number of pupils attaining higher levels in the national tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. More work is, however, needed to ensure that teachers are fully aware of the levels that each pupil is attaining so that work can be more securely pitched to stretch them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.9 (17.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.3 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3(27.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.8(27.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.3(30.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

7. Children in the reception class are receiving a good start to their education. Although broadly average when they enter the school, there is a wide range of attainment evident. A considerable minority have below average communication skills and an increasing number have limited social experience. Good provision in the reception class means that most of the pupils will attain the national goals set by the end of the year in all aspects of their learning. School data show that boys enter the school with lower attainments than girls overall because a greater percentage of them have communication and social difficulties. The school provides good extra support for these children in a 'ginger group' so that they make good progress. The difference between boys' attainment and that of girls does, however, remain throughout the school, as it does nationally.
8. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with relevant, additional support in lessons so that they achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils who have more complex learning needs, or those who are sometimes more reluctant to concentrate in lessons, are also helped sensitively. The headteacher and special educational needs team are highly supportive of both teachers and pupils. Their support and guidance is invaluable, so that when difficulties arise, the learning of other pupils in the class is not affected. This has a positive effect on the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils.

9. Good leadership of ICT has ensured that pupils have good access to all aspects of the ICT curriculum. Standards are above those generally seen because of the high percentage of the pupils who attain expected levels in all aspects of the curriculum. The 'design, make and evaluate' process is very well established in the school curriculum and in lessons. Pupils are very confident and knowledgeable about the various aspects of the process and standards of work in design and technology are above average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because of the clear direction and high level of involvement of the headteacher, the school is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development.
- As a result of the very good spiritual, social and cultural development, pupils' attitudes are very good.
- A positive approach to helping pupils behave well is very successful.
- The school very successfully promotes a strong set of values, which are based on self-respect and respect for others.

Commentary

10. The leadership of the headteacher has provided the school with a clear ethos and drive to ensure that all pupils develop personal attitudes and values that will stand them in good stead for their future. This clear leadership has been very successful. Pupils' attitudes have improved since the previous inspection and are now very good. They are keen to come to school and feel secure and confident. They are enthusiastic and keen to work and involve themselves in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They listen attentively in lessons and are interested in their work. Pupils with special educational needs are accepted well by all pupils. They work well with their teachers, teaching assistants and outside providers and are included in all school and class activities. Most children in the reception classes will attain the national goals set for their personal, social and emotional development.
11. Behaviour is good in the classroom, at playtimes and in the dining hall. The well-established, positive, behaviour policy is consistently applied in a quiet but assertive way. Pupils understand it, respond well and see it to be fair. All adults provide good examples of respect for each other and the pupils. As a result, pupils respect each other. They share resources well, such as in a science lesson when pupils were testing magnets. They shared the magnets very well and talked excitedly about the different responses of the magnets. A small but significant number of pupils who have additional difficulties with controlling their behaviour are very well managed by a team of very well trained teaching assistants who work in combination with the teachers to assist the pupils to learn to control their behaviour. A small number of exclusions have been used well as part of this very successful overall strategy.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	310	3	
White – any other White background	7		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Black or Black British – African	1		

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

12. The school council is very well established and provides very good opportunities for developing social responsibility and for the opinions and wishes of the pupils to be heard and acted upon. Representatives from the school council are elected by each class and they have responsibility for fund raising, keeping accounts and for spending their money. A good range of other responsibilities, for example, acting as prefects and librarians, sharing books with younger pupils and raising money for charities, are all part of the school’s very good provision for social development.
13. The pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong, which is promoted well by the school’s behaviour policy and in class rules. Well thought out assemblies and discussion sessions known as ‘Circle Time’² are also strong features of the school’s provision for moral development.
14. The school’s ‘Values Curriculum’ promotes different personal values each month and provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on such aspects as ‘courage’. This was a focus of one assembly and pupils had opportunities to reflect on what having courage meant to them, after hearing examples from adults. Issues of death were explored openly in another assembly. Pupils have good opportunities to explore and understand the cultures of other countries as well as learning about a range of other faiths in religious education. Visits and visitors, as well as links with other countries such as India, Kenya and Uganda, support pupils’ understanding of a multi-cultural society well. Pupils’ cultural development is good.
15. Attendance is good overall, although many pupils have very good levels of attendance. Figures for the last complete school year were above the national average but they have declined slightly since September of this school year. Office staff are careful to record attendance properly and are beginning to use the computer to assist them in tracking pupils who are absent and the reasons why. Most parents are supportive of the school’s policy for attendance, although significant numbers of holidays are taken in term time. The few families whose children’s attendance causes concern are supported well. Punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.0	School data:	0.2
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.

² During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils’ views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory** but improving. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** as is the overall impact of the curriculum. The care taken of pupils, the links with the community and with parents are all good. Aspects of the school's accommodation are unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. The use of assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage pupils very well. They try hard to interest and motivate them. This assists the development of very good relationships and makes pupils want to learn.
- The management of pupils with complex needs or behavioural difficulties is particularly effective.
- The teaching in the introductory part of lessons is generally of good quality. In some lessons, however, the work that follows the introduction could be better matched to the needs of the pupils.
- The system for checking pupils' attainment and progress is too complex to support teachers' planning and assist them in tracking progress.
- Teachers use teaching assistants well to support their teaching and to promote better learning.
- The cramped conditions in some classrooms inhibit the type and range of activities that can be used, and this sometimes affects the rate and quality of pupils' learning.
- In many lessons, teachers are careful to extend pupils' subject vocabulary well.
- Pupils' individual learning targets are relevant, but not all pupils are currently secure in using them to improve the quality of their work.

Commentary

16. The ethos of the school, effectively promoted by the headteacher, means that teachers view as very important the development of pupils' interest in learning. Subjects and activities are chosen to motivate, so that, for example, lessons for younger pupils in handling data are linked with an imaginary trip to the seaside. Teachers try to link subject matter so that, where sensible, pupils work on a topic. This helps to increase the relevance of the lessons and successfully increases pupils' interest. Efforts are made to give pupils a varied diet of types of work and to give them opportunity to work in pairs and groups as well as individually. Pupils show themselves capable of working in these different ways and levels of concentration and application are generally good. ICT is used well to increase the range of types of activity that is offered. Teachers also try hard to ensure that pupils are confident learners. In this, they are largely successful, although there remains a lack of confidence amongst some of the older pupils in mathematics, which is caused by their lack of facility with number. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection, there being a greater proportion of lessons in which teaching is good.
17. In most lessons, the way the teacher teaches the whole group of pupils is good. Explanations are clear and delivered in a lively way, and questioning is used well to check understanding and to promote thinking and learning. Subject-specific vocabulary is taught well, and this provides the pupils with the skills and knowledge to think and talk about what they do. The successful delivery of the first part of lessons has been a focus for school improvement, particularly in mathematics, and the quality of this part of lessons indicates the success of this initiative. In some lessons, however, the activities that are chosen to follow these introductions are not as effective. Although teachers are careful to plan different activities for different groups of pupils in the class, these do not always promote maximum learning. This is, in part, because teachers are not always sufficiently sure of the levels at which their pupils are operating and thus are not as precise in targeting the next steps as they could be. Better tracking and use of

whole-school data should help with this. This less effective teaching in the middle part of lessons is more often seen in lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6 than it is in lessons for younger pupils.

18. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and use a good range of very positive approaches, to ensure that pupils can learn in a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Pupils with more complex learning needs, or those who have difficulties conforming to normal classroom rules, are supported sensitively, yet firmly. The work of the teaching assistants is invaluable and they are professional in their work. As a result, they make a valuable contribution to learning and ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are able to work at their own pace. At the same time, teachers try hard to ensure that work is relevant and matched to the individual learning needs of the pupils. Assistants understand the planning, are carefully briefed and teachers use them well, so that during whole class sessions they are supporting individual pupils or taking notes about pupils' responses or attitudes.
19. In general, however, teachers tend to rely on planning simple written exercises for lower-attaining pupils in the 'follow up' parts of lessons. Most teachers lack confidence to plan individual or small group activities that utilise a wide range of resources and approaches to make learning fun, motivating and relevant for pupils who find learning basic skills more challenging. This affects progress made over time so that it is satisfactory overall. Teachers use the good quality skills of teaching assistants well in a variety of other ways. As well as teaching pupils with special educational needs, these assistants work with other groups of pupils, supporting them well.
20. Teachers in some classes are hampered in the choice of activities they can plan and deliver by very cramped conditions. It is a tribute to the skill of some of the teachers, particularly in Years 1 and 2, that they manage to provide the pupils with good opportunities to undertake practical work. There are, however, occasions throughout the school when pupils would learn better if they had more space and where teachers would be able to support pupils better if they were able to get round classes more easily.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (9%)	20 (47%)	19 (44%)	0	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.

21. Since the previous inspection the school has worked hard to improve the way that it assesses pupils' progress and attainment. The school now has a highly detailed system for assessing pupils' work, and senior managers analyse and monitor the progress of groups and individual pupils, particularly in English and mathematics, in great detail. Consequently, the school has a wealth of data available. The current system is, however, too complex and cannot be used constructively by teachers to plan work matched to pupils' learning needs. It does not enable teachers and managers to have, at their fingertips, a clear method for monitoring the progress made by individual and groups of pupils, especially in relation to National Curriculum levels of attainment. This is particularly necessary because there is a very wide range of ability and age of pupils in each class, which makes the work of teachers more challenging. Assessment is, however, used well in the reception classes to help teachers identify the next steps for each child.
22. Teachers generally provide good verbal support in lessons and handle misconceptions well. The ends of lessons are used successfully to check on learning and provide pupils with useful pointers for future work. The marking of pupils' work is generally supportive and evaluative, and is particularly successful in English, where regular individual marking conferences provide pupils

with useful targets for improvement, which are shared with them. Group targets are also planned and shared with pupils in English and mathematics. Whilst these are positive features, pupils are not always fully aware of their targets and do not make the best use of them when working. This has a knock-on effect on the progress that they make over time.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is **satisfactory**. The variety of school visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs used to extend learning is **good**. The accommodation is **unsatisfactory** because of the small classrooms for large classes. The school is **well resourced**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception classes benefit from a well-planned practical curriculum, which meets their needs well.
- The curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship plays a significant part in helping pupils to mature personally.
- Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, ensuring that each has full access to the curriculum, which is suitably adapted to their needs.
- The school arranges a wide range of clubs and other activities outside lessons.

Commentary

23. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection and the school now provides consistent curricular entitlement for pupils in each year group. The school provides pupils with a broad range of learning opportunities, and statutory requirements are met.
24. The curriculum is appropriately planned to meet the needs of its pupils. It is reviewed regularly and action taken to improve. Recently, for example, the school has changed the way English is taught, with a greater emphasis on the teaching of English through other subjects. The school is beginning to think about how to make the best use of the time available and improve the relevance and enjoyment of lessons for pupils. This has not yet had time to be established fully in order to raise pupils' achievement and develop all their capabilities. The grounds of the school are used well to enrich learning opportunities, and frequent visitors and visits add further enjoyment for the children. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and the children achieve well in both reception classes because of this.
25. The schools' provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved considerably since the previous inspection, due to the hard work of the headteacher and special educational needs team, who manage the provision well. As a result, the overall quality of the provision is good. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage, and relevant support is provided. The provision for pupils with more complex needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, is very good and a strength of the school. These pupils receive additional, highly relevant support, so that the school successfully ensures that all groups of pupils have access to the curriculum and all other opportunities that the school provides.
26. The school's curriculum is extended well and enriched by the use of visitors and visits to places of educational value. The range and number of clubs available to pupils outside lessons are good, covering a wide range of activities such as French, music, chess and Christianity. Sporting activities are also well represented, and there are good opportunities to take part in matches and tournaments. A small number of parents commented about a lack of competitive sport, but the inspection team does not agree with their views.
27. The school has a satisfactory number of teaching and support staff, but the number of pupils in each class is larger than is usual in a situation where pupils of different year groups are taught together. This presents staff with additional challenges. Resources to support learning are plentiful and of good quality, but restricted space makes storage difficult. The school benefits

from very extensive and well-managed outside areas and teachers use these well, both for sporting activities and for lessons in other subjects. For example, the younger pupils greatly enjoyed a mini-beast search during their science lessons. Classrooms are, however, very small for the number of pupils now in the school and the restrictions this places on teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The school is, however, very well maintained and attractively presented.

Care, guidance and support

Standards of care and welfare, including the guidance and support given to individuals, are **good** throughout the school. Pupils are provided with very good personal support and guidance and good efforts are made to involve them in the work of the school and its development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very secure and trusting relationship with adults in the school.
- Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities to guide and support all pupils.
- The school values pupils as individuals and regularly seeks their views.
- Pupils with complex learning and behaviour needs receive very relevant support advice and guidance from the special educational needs team and learning mentor.

Commentary

28. As at the time of the previous inspection, standards of care are good. The school provides a happy and relaxed environment for all pupils. Their individuality is valued and promoted. Pupils say they like their teachers and readily turn to them for extra help and guidance. They also help each other. Positive relationships are a strong feature in the school, and staff patiently encourage pupils to think and make the right choices and decisions. Staff know pupils very well and informally monitor and track aspects of their personal development.
29. Governors oversee aspects of health and safety appropriately. Staff are experienced and knowledgeable in, for example, first aid and in child protection. The newly-appointed named person for child protection has yet to update her training, but suitable arrangements have been made for this and in the meantime, she is being well supported by the former holder of this responsibility. It is rightly planned that whole-staff training needs in this important area are revisited very soon. The new post holder has been very active in reorganising paper work to a very good standard. Mid-day supervisors look after pupils well during the lunch break and first aid is managed and administered efficiently.
30. Pupils with special educational needs receive good-quality care and advice overall. All pupils with special educational needs are involved in reviewing their own progress towards their individual learning or behaviour targets and this ensures that they have ownership of their own progress and development. The quality of the support they receive has improved since the previous inspection. The school works very closely with a wide range of outside agencies and acts quickly upon advice received. As a result, pupils with more complex learning needs are successfully supported and are valuable members of the school community. In particular, a programme of individual mentoring is used very effectively to support pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties. This makes a positive and highly effective contribution to their growing ability to conform to the school's rules and also helps develop their confidence and self-esteem. Parents greatly appreciate this support.
31. The well-run school council is firmly established in the school. Pupils value being a part of it and know and understand its purpose fully. They know that different views and opinions must be listened to. Circle Time is timetabled across the school and staff patiently encourage responses from all pupils. Sensitive issues are dealt with carefully. Pupils are taught how to assess basic risks and to do their best to keep safe. At the end of Year 6, 'exit interviews' are undertaken. Pupils' opinions are analysed thoroughly and their suggestions are acted upon.

Overall, there is a good range of procedures for seeking pupils' views and opinions, including when planning changes and improvements for the school.

32. Induction arrangements for new pupils are satisfactory and improving all the time. Good relationships are established with parents, who are encouraged to get involved in their children's learning from a young age. There are satisfactory links with nearby nurseries but home visits are not currently organised and children have limited opportunities to join classes prior to their admission in September. Parents say, however, that arrangements are more flexible than they were and that their children generally settle in happily.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents and with other schools and links within the community are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents recognise the school as a very welcoming place and many get involved in helping on a regular basis.
- Overall, the information provided for parents is satisfactory. Although there are many strengths, parents are not always being given enough information about some aspects of school.
- Links with the local church are well established.
- There is an increasingly good range of purposeful links with many schools in the area.

Commentary

33. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and most, especially those of children in reception and Years 1 and 2, support their children's learning in meaningful ways. They are keen to help with reading and spellings at home, and many assist small groups in classrooms in well-structured activities. The Friends of St David's group is very supportive and events they organise are very well attended and raise significant sums of money. Parents help with sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs. A small minority of parents is reported to be less active in supporting the school and their children, but inspectors feel that, on balance, this is not a significant issue for this school.
34. Relationships with parents have improved since the previous inspection. Many praise the much more friendly style of leadership now in place and say they find staff approachable and helpful. Parents believe their children are well looked after. They are generally happy that positive attitudes and values are promoted well in the school and they appreciate that some challenging behaviour can be disruptive on occasions but that it is well managed. A small number of parents told inspectors that they are unhappy with the lack of competitive sporting opportunities provided by the school, but there is evidence to demonstrate that this is not the case. Pupils compete regularly against other schools and within school.
35. The good range of information within monthly newsletters keeps parents fully informed about school events. In addition, parents receive clear information about what is being studied in each class. They also get copies of targets that are being addressed within classes. A senior learning support assistant works very effectively with many parents, who drop in to the school for advice and guidance. The style of presentation of the school's prospectus and annual report from governors has some strengths and information is very readable, however, these documents lack sufficient detail about standards achieved, provision for pupils with special educational needs, attendance, security and target setting to give present and prospective parents a full picture of the school.
36. The school has established good links with many organisations and groups within the town. The building is now used regularly after school hours, not only by children who use the after-school care facilities but also by adults who join classes in the evenings. Several businesses and shops are supportive of its fund-raising efforts and donate prizes. There are good links

with the church located adjacent to the school grounds. Pupils visit it for services and ministers also regularly take assemblies in school. These links with the church are firmly established and pupils speak positively of the services they attend.

37. This is the only maintained school in the town but nevertheless, the school ensures it is not isolated from other schools and colleges in the area. A joint music project for all pupils in Year 6 in the secondary school's catchment area, for example, is very effective in enabling pupils to get to know their peers before moving on. The transition arrangements are further strengthened by visits to the secondary school in the summer term and by some visits to St David's from staff from the secondary school to talk to pupils in Year 6. Information concerning pupils with special educational needs is appropriately shared. Links with colleges are in place and many students are welcomed on short placements. Sporting fixtures, which are much enjoyed, are organised within the local group of schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. Governance is **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff are **good**. Management of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development and in welcoming, including and supporting pupils of all abilities and backgrounds.
- Some staff, including the headteacher, have a heavy workload, which adversely affects the quality of school management.
- Assessment information is not used effectively as a basis for moving the school forward.
- The governors are highly supportive and have developed good links with staff.
- The headteacher has developed a strong team spirit and he is supported well by hard-working staff.
- The school's finances are managed well and good use is made of limited funds.

Commentary

38. The leadership of the headteacher is good. He shows clear vision and aspires to provide pupils with an education that prepares them well for their future lives. He has very successfully ensured that the school is fully inclusive. Since the previous inspection, for example, the headteacher has been very successful in welcoming and supporting, an increased number of pupils with complex learning and behavioural difficulties. By his leadership and example, he has been effective in promoting a climate where all views are valued, and a strong sense of team-work is evident. As a result, he has successfully developed a caring Christian community where all staff and pupils can prosper and learn. Good thought has been given to the development of the curriculum, both how it can best support the raising of standards and how it can provide for the 'all round' development of the individual.
39. All staff have high aspirations for their pupils. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher, who due to his encouragement and opportunities provided to undertake professional development, is currently an 'acting headteacher' in another school. Other staff are equally supportive and share his vision of developing a school where pupils can flourish and enjoy learning. Staff who are new to the school are provided with good-quality support and they quickly develop their teaching skills to become successful members of the school team. It is a measure of the success of the headteacher's leadership, that pupils have very good attitudes to school, are caring of each other and are becoming responsible young citizens.
40. Despite the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and key staff, the management of the school is only satisfactory and this has had an impact on the achievement of pupils. The headteacher has a very significant teaching commitment and shoulders several key responsibilities, in addition to leading and managing the school. Similarly, some other senior

staff hold several positions of responsibility. This has been due to a very tight financial situation in the school caused by a significantly below average income per pupil. As a result, until recently, school performance has not been monitored closely enough or improvements targeted sufficiently precisely. Though improved since the previous inspection, procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are not having the impact they might. The school has a vast amount of assessment data available, but this has not been converted into school improvement targets with quantifiable success criteria, which can be easily monitored. Consequently, the meticulous analysis of assessment data has not had a significant impact on driving the school forward and improving the progress that pupils make. This has a knock-on effect on the way in which governors can support the strategic development of the school because they also are unable to gain a clear view of the progress the school is making. The school is aware of this issue and has already begun to refine and streamline the system.

41. Governors have developed their skills well since the previous inspection and have a good understanding of their role. They ensure that statutory responsibilities are met. They are supportive of staff and work in close partnership with them. Governors are aware of the work of the school through various committees and are kept well informed by the headteacher and subject leaders. Each governor is linked with a subject and works closely with the subject coordinator. They are well informed about their link subject and able to provide valuable information for other governors. Consequently, governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The finance committee manages the very tight school budget astutely. Despite having very limited financial flexibility, they have ensured that funds have, for example, been available to improve the information and communication technology provision, which has had a positive impact on standards. Currently, they are holding a carry-forward budget to pay for their share of a new classroom and to improve staffing levels in Years 1 and 2, in order to ensure that the school continues to provide a good start to pupils' time in the school.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	688,823	Balance from previous year	39,376
Total expenditure	688,992	Balance carried forward to the next	39,207
Expenditure per pupil	2,244		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. On entry to the school, a small, but significant, number of pupils have below average speaking and listening skills and limited social experience. These children are provided for well with extra support and good adaptations to the curriculum. The teachers concentrate on the development of language and social skills. As a result, the children make a very positive start in the reception classes and they make good progress. All children achieve well because the teaching is consistently good in all aspects of their learning and the good, well thought out, practical curriculum provides a wide range of interesting and challenging activities that are well matched to their age and needs. The provision is well managed and the children's progress is monitored well. All adults manage the children well and the good ratio of adults to children ensures that the needs of all are well met. The quality of the provision has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because the good teaching ensures that they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions at an early age.
- The children reach standards expected for their age by the end of the year, even though standards were below average for some children when they started.

Commentary

43. The teachers ensure that the environment provided helps the children to learn quickly the way in which to behave and to work and play independently. Class rules and routines are soon established and children are corrected gently but firmly, when necessary. Teachers expect the children to act responsibly, taking every opportunity to encourage this. Numerous examples were seen during the inspection, where children worked unsupervised for extended periods, behaving sensibly and sharing resources, for instance, working sensibly in the 'Garden Centre' creative play area. They priced the flowers and planted seeds in pots, using the compost with care. A signal of familiar music is well established for children to collect and tidy all the resources in the classroom and this is done quickly and well, with little support from the adults.
44. All adults encourage the development of social skills. Children are, for example, encouraged to take turns when cutting up and examining fruits and seeds. They take turns talking to the teacher and each other, discussing what the similarities are and where they think the seeds are. The stimulating nature of activities offered, helps children to maintain concentration and work sensibly. Children were, for example, making 'perfume' in the water-play area with lavender and thyme, which they carefully put into spray bottles and then invited various adults in the class to sample. As a result of the range of activities offered, children maintain attention for suitable periods of time and are confident to try new things. Children who come into school with below average personal skills are provided for very well and overall, most children are likely to meet the goals in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Writing and reading skills are taught regularly and well.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's communication skills.

Commentary

45. Good teaching and regular attention to the acquisition of phonics (the link between sounds and letters) in interesting ways and the development of good control and knowledge of letter shapes, help standards in reading and writing to be a little above average by the end of the reception year. Time is set aside each day for these activities and there is regular monthly monitoring of writing progress. Teachers and other adults regularly share books, such as *Jack and the Beanstalk*, with the children. These stories are used in other activities, such as using the climbing frame in outside play for Jack to climb to the giant. Parents give good support to hearing these children read at home. Many children are reading simple stories and some are fluent. All children write letter shapes recognisably and many write simple sentences independently. Their achievement in this area of learning is good.
46. In all activities, there are good opportunities for children to develop their language skills and children achieve well. The good number of adults who are often present in the classrooms are trained to extend the children's speech and model clear speech themselves. An adult worked, for example, with children in the 'Flower Shop'. While helping children to make bouquets and bunches of flowers, the work was carefully focussed on listening skills and the extension of speech.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and places a strong emphasis on children learning through practical and interesting activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to good use across all areas of learning.

Commentary

47. Children achieve well in their mathematical development because they are interested by the exciting and practical activities that are carefully planned. A role-play train activity was, for instance, used for a child to collect a specified number of children as indicated from the roll of the dice. All activities which followed were practical and interesting and involved the children, whilst extending their knowledge of the concepts of 'one more' or 'one less'.
48. Children use mathematical language confidently and develop ideas to solve problems through play, for example, saying what is one more or one less than the number on the dice thrown in a game of matching numbers, or how many beans are to be planted. By the end of reception, children have a well-developed understanding of numbers to ten, and a good proportion have an understanding of numbers beyond this and understand the mathematical meaning of 'more', 'less', 'subtraction' and 'addition'. Overall, a good majority are likely to meet the Early

Learning Goals³ and about one third are likely to exceed them. This is a little above the average for children at the end of their reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with many opportunities to learn about the world about them.
- The outside environment is used well.

Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well because of the wealth of opportunities provided for them. Visits and visitors strongly support learning and this enables the children to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Activities are planned to extend the depth and range of children's experience. They have, for example, visited a café and the fire station and have recently visited the local flower shop. Work in the classroom is then based on these experiences and thus children's interest is used to add depth to their understanding of the world in which they live.
50. Children are actively encouraged to develop their ability to use their senses. They investigate objects carefully and with interest, such as autumn smells, textiles and colours, using all their senses well. They have observed tadpoles and frogs and caterpillars in good detail and frequently use the extensive school grounds to investigate wildlife and seasonal changes. Children used their senses to make perfume with rosemary and mint in one class and were carefully looking at seeds with a magnifying glass.
51. Children are comfortable and confident with using computers and use them independently. They use, for example, a simple programme to build a picture of a garden using mouse control effectively. They understand the use of the printer but need help to use it. Children are likely to meet the expected goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they complete their reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are successfully taught to gain increasing control in undertaking physical activities.
- Frequent opportunities are provided for children to gain dexterity in using pencils, scissors and other tools.

Commentary

52. The scope of the inspection only allowed for the observation of one physical play activity, but the work seen was good. The children were learning well in outside physical activities, where the skills of using balls and hoops were being taught well, followed by practical play and experience. Others were using balancing and climbing apparatus well, with good links to the current favourite story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Tricycles and a range of other wheeled

³ Early Learning Goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

vehicles were being used to help children to learn to steer accurately. Children are given daily opportunities to practise such skills.

53. There is good emphasis given to the development of skills in finer movements, with children being taught to use equipment, including pencils and scissors, properly and with increasing dexterity. Children are on course to attain the goals set for the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are taught to develop their imagination through play.
- A wide range of activities are planned to help children enjoy creative work.

Commentary

54. Children are helped to develop creatively. They will meet the goals set by the end of the reception year. Children use the role-play areas well for creative play. They greatly enjoyed their flower shop and used the time they have in there to play being both shop keeper and customer. There was a good range of painting, printing and collage on display in classrooms. Children like these activities and talk with pride about their own work. They sing a number of songs by heart and like to try to join in with singing in school assemblies.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of letter sounds in Years 1 and 2 has improved, and standards in reading and writing are rising as a result.
- The use of drama and puppets successfully helps younger pupils develop their speaking and writing skills.
- Overall standards in writing in Year 6, although improving, are currently limited by below average standards spelling and the difficulty some pupils have in sustaining their ideas when writing at length.
- The quality of teachers' marking is good and aids learning but pupils do not always know and use their writing targets.
- Assessment of pupils' work is very detailed but is not easily used to help teachers plan their lessons.
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

55. There has been a good improvement in the standards attained at the end of Year 2 since the previous inspection, due to higher expectations and improved teaching of letter sounds. In 2003, standards in reading dropped significantly from previous years. This drop was largely due to the significantly higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs within the year group. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading and writing are currently above average and the gap between reading and writing has narrowed. There is a significant improvement from the standards attained in the 2003 national tests.

56. Due to the hard work and consistently good teaching by new teachers, all groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, achieve well, enjoy learning and delight in their new-found confidence and skills. Boys who find writing a more difficult chore are well supported and encouraged, so that they are also gaining confidence to write for a range of purposes. A significant reason for the improved standards is the way that pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking skills in a variety of interesting activities. Boys in particular enjoy using puppets and drama activities to help plan their stories. As a result, pupils' speaking and listening skills are also above average by the end of Year 2. In addition, because pupils now have a secure understanding of letter sounds, they are not afraid to 'have a go' at spelling or reading more complex words and this has a knock-on effect on overall standards attained.
57. At the end of Year 6, standards in English are average, which is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. This represents satisfactory progress and achievement for all groups of pupils in relation to their attainment when they started in the school. A small but significant number of pupils in the school, including the present Year 6, have language and emotional or behavioural difficulties. Many of these are boys. The school is working hard to motivate these pupils and as a result, they are achieving as well as others in the school.
58. As at the previous inspection, at the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are in line with the national average. New reading resources and the recent introduction of separate reading lessons are relevant but have not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on standards attained. There is the potential for standards in writing to be higher but although many pupils make good attempts to spell words, they also make basic errors. Many state that they find spelling activities and tests boring. When writing, pupils tend to choose words they feel more confident to spell, rather than choosing more powerful or effective words. In addition, although many pupils start off their writing well, they do not sustain these ideas and writing tends to 'fizzle out'. These factors impact on overall standards attained at the end of Year 6.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In all classes, teachers have developed good relationships with pupils and have good class management skills. This is particularly important when a significant number of pupils have emotional, social, or behavioural difficulties and ensures that lessons run smoothly, so that all pupils can make progress. Teaching assistants are deployed well and are effective in their work. They offer good support to pupils with special educational needs and ensure that they are included in all activities. Teachers in Years 3 to 6, however, have to teach a very wide range of ability in each class. Although teachers try to make the lessons interesting, and start off lessons well with a brisk pace, in general they do not use a wide enough variety of teaching approaches to make learning of basic skills fun and motivating for less able pupils and this affects the progress they make over time. They are also hampered by the small size of their classrooms, which limits the variety of activities they can offer.
60. Teachers have good systems for marking pupils' work, and they are supportive and evaluative in their comments. Pupils like the opportunities to be involved in writing conferences, where they identify with their teacher areas for improvement. Although this is a good feature, pupils tend to be confused when they have additional group or special educational needs targets and as a result, do not make the best use of these to improve their work. This is another factor that impacts on progress over time. Although teachers regularly assess pupils' work, and keep copious records, the current complex system of assessments does not help them to keep a clear track of pupils' progress and does not provide a sufficiently useful tool to aid planning.
61. The subject is led and managed well by the headteacher and a colleague on the senior management team. Despite having many other commitments, they have worked hard with the local education authority to improve writing and as a result, standards are rising at the end of Year 2 and the gap between reading and writing is closing at the end of Year 6. New initiatives to improve reading and develop curricular planning are relevant and have begun to bear fruit.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. The use of literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. In the past, there has been too much emphasis on the use of paper exercises in other subjects and limited opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills in more meaningful ways. Recent changes to the curriculum have seen an improvement. History, for example, is beginning to be used successfully as a vehicle to develop literacy skills and ICT is now used well. These initiatives are not yet consistently developed and have not been in place long enough to have impacted on the overall quality of the provision.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good work to improve teaching and learning in mathematics is having a positive impact on the progress pupils are now making.
- Pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are not yet sufficiently confident or competent in making calculations.
- The teaching at the beginning of lessons is usually of good quality, but this is not always followed up with such good quality activities.
- Although there is a comprehensive system for assessing pupils, the information gathered is not yet used as well as it might be to track the progress of pupils or to match their progress to that made by pupils nationally.

Commentary

63. Standards in mathematics in both Year 2 and Year 6 are currently average and are similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection. Overall, pupils are achieving in a satisfactory way. Over recent years, standards have fluctuated year on year, as has the progress made by pupils between Year 2 and Year 6. In 2003, although standards in Year 6 were average, the progress the pupils had made since Year 2 was well below that made in other schools. Standards in Year 2 in 2003 were well below the national average, reflecting a year group in which the proportion of pupils with special educational needs was much greater than in the rest of the school.
64. The quality and impact of teaching is currently satisfactory overall. Over the last two academic years, mathematics has been the focus for school improvement and the results of this are now evident. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are well taught and standards in Year 1 are above average. These pupils are achieving well. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are ensuring that pupils develop good strategies when working in mathematics, that they have a wide mathematical vocabulary and that they work confidently and successfully when making computations. Despite their current good progress, however, because Year 2 pupils did not have such a consistent start to learning in mathematics their overall achievement is satisfactory.
65. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are not as consistent in these year groups and are satisfactory overall. Much of the recent school improvement work has been rightly focussed on the development of whole-class teaching, particularly on the teaching of mental mathematics. The success of this is seen in the almost uniform good quality of the whole-class teaching parts of lessons. There remains, however, a need to continue to promote this learning as pupils are not all sufficiently competent when working with numbers. In some lessons, teachers are not fully successful in choosing activities that follow their good introductory teaching to precisely target the needs of individual pupils and promote as good learning as possible. Activities are sometimes too difficult and

pupils' confidence is lost. At other times, they are too easy and are not successful in promoting maximum learning.

66. Mathematics is now being led and managed well. The coordinator has worked hard to raise standards and this work is proving successful. Work has not only included training and advice for teachers but has also provided information for parents to help them to support their children at home. End-of-year assessments have been carefully analysed and aspects for improvement identified. There has not, however, been sufficient analysis of the rate of progress of individuals and groups of pupils to assist managers to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in provision and to target support accordingly. This has contributed to the fluctuating rates of progress seen. Prior to the inspection, the school had identified the need to improve this tracking.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Pupils have opportunity to practise and extend their mathematical skills and knowledge in subjects such as ICT, through work on data analysis and design and technology, for example, making accurate measurements of materials. Although the ICT link is often well planned, other links are more incidental and thus do not link sufficiently closely with teaching and learning in mathematics. More systematic planning of links would ensure a more consistent impact on standards in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of work to develop the subject, standards in Years 1 and 2 have improved.
- The leadership and management of science are good and are leading school improvement well.
- Assessment information does not help the school to track pupils' progress easily and clearly.

Commentary

68. In the 2003 National Curriculum teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2, results were well below average in terms of those who had achieved Level 2 or above and average in terms of those reaching the higher Level 3. In the tests at the end of Year 6, results have dipped to average after being above average and well above average in the previous two years. Current standards are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, which broadly reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The pupils enter the school with broadly average knowledge and understanding and their overall achievement is satisfactory. Improvements at the end of Year 2 are due to improved teaching and the fact that teachers have higher and more appropriate expectations of pupils. In the recent past, the school has focussed on improving provision for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 and has been successful in this. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been fairly static, in contrast to the rising national trend. When compared to similar schools, the progress made by pupils between Years 3 and 6 was well below average last year but due to improvement work is now satisfactory.
69. Although science has not been a specific area for school development recently, the co-ordinator has worked hard to remedy identified weaknesses and her leadership and management are good. She has worked with teachers in Years 1 and 2 to implement a culture of higher expectations and a target of Level 3 for higher-achieving pupils and this work has been successful. Additionally, there has been a good focus on increasing the number of higher-attaining pupils at the end of Year 6. Training for teachers in matching work to ability and for the improvement of investigative work has also been undertaken by the co-ordinator. These areas are improving but the development and application of scientific skills when working independently is not yet consistent in all classes.

70. Teaching and learning in science are satisfactory overall and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching is now good in Years 1 and 2. Lessons seen in these years were highly motivating to pupils because they were held outside. All the adults used to support small groups were well prepared and briefed about questioning, which developed pupils' vocabulary and recording skills well. In a lesson in Year 2, whilst pupils were being briefed to explore mini-beasts in the wild-life area, all pupils were given the opportunity to observe a hedgehog, which was scuttling across the playground. The teacher gave the pupils good information, which related well to habitat, protection and camouflage. The pupils were excited, interested and eager to learn from this opportunity to observe a hedgehog at first hand. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to gain skills and knowledge in science and lessons are well managed to give pupils a good atmosphere in which to learn. Lessons are not yet, however, as uniformly stimulating as they are for younger pupils and activities are not always sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in a class are all suitably challenged. In some instances this is because the level of work set is based on pupils' skills in English rather than their level of attainment in science.
71. Teachers undertake regular assessments in science at the end of each topic. This provides a wealth of information but in its present format, it is not easy for teachers to track individual pupils' progress through the school to check that each is making as much progress as they could. The co-ordinator has identified this as an area for development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management have ensured that pupils receive a balanced education in ICT that allows them to achieve well in all aspects of the subject.
- Pupils are confident users of computers.
- Teachers have good up-to-date knowledge of the ICT curriculum.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

72. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in ICT. The subject coordinator has had a clear vision about the way in which ICT in the school should be developed and has implemented a programme of improvements that has paid dividends. Provision in ICT is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. The school has adapted a national scheme of work to its own use. This means that pupils have good access to all aspects of the required curriculum and are successfully helped to develop skills and knowledge in all areas. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 is high and thus standards are above average and achievement is good.
73. Pupils are highly motivated by the use of computers. Their well-developed skills mean that they approach new learning and the use of new programs confidently, as in a lesson in Year 2 when a significant number of pupils learned to use simple functions of a spreadsheet, despite its seeming complexity. Pupils are confident to assist teachers, both in the setting up of computers for lessons and in using the teaching computer to demonstrate. The pupils' confidence and skill help them to learn quickly.
74. Teaching and learning in ICT are good. Teachers have been well trained and supported and they have good up to date knowledge of the ICT curriculum and they use their knowledge well when planning lessons and teaching. Good use is made of a variety of teaching techniques, such as the use of both interactive whiteboards and projected demonstrations for direct

instruction and guided practical work. Pupils work well both with their teachers and with each other and the support they give each other further promotes learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Good links are made with other subjects, both through the subject matter in ICT lessons being linked with other subjects, making it more relevant to the pupils and through the use of ICT to promote learning in other subjects. Teachers make good use of digital cameras to record experiences and the Internet to provide additional information. They make good use of ICT to help them demonstrate and teach more clearly.

HUMANITIES

History was inspected individually and is reported on in full below. Work in geography was sampled.

76. No lessons in **geography** were observed during the inspection. Inspectors looked at teachers' planning, talked with pupils and examined their work. This evidence indicates that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' knowledge of topics covered, such as rivers and local and contrasting environments, is secure. They have benefited from visits to support their learning and the use of ICT for independent research is well established and is used well to support teaching and learning. Work in pupils' books, however, consists mainly of paper exercises that are similar for all pupils. Although teachers now have a broad overview of pupils' knowledge of each topic, which has improved since the previous inspection, they are not able to clearly monitor progress and so use this information to plan lessons that systematically develop geographical skills.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources and visits are used well to stimulate learning.
- Links with other subjects are developing so that pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.

Commentary

77. By the end of Years 2 and 6, as found at the previous inspection, pupils of all abilities have a secure and satisfactory awareness of topics covered and standards are in line with national expectations. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' capabilities. Pupils enjoy the practical activities planned and visits are used well to make learning more relevant for pupils. In general, however, by the end of Year 6, pupils are not secure in realising that events in history might be portrayed differently depending upon your point of view and this prevents standards being higher.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but some good teaching was observed during the inspection. Recently, when planning lessons, teachers have begun to make relevant links with other subjects, such as English, and there has been a move away from written exercises that are similar for all pupils and not inspiring. Pupils are more interested in history as a result. Old-fashioned swimwear and artefacts, for example, were used well to inspire younger pupils to work together to sequence the artefacts and explore vocabulary related to time. Older pupils left a lesson about the Blitz in World War 2 buzzing with excitement because of the many interesting activities that had been planned to make learning relevant, both in relation to their abilities and to their level of maturity. One higher-attaining pupil, for example, after researching and writing a mature letter in a formal style to parents, urging them to evacuate their children said, "I didn't think history could be so interesting".

79. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. History has not been a focus of development in the school but a review is planned for the near future. In the meantime, although links with other subjects are being developed and information and communication technology is used well to encourage research, this is not consistently planned and used throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology was inspected individually and is reported on in full below. Work in music and physical education was sampled. Work in **art and design** was not inspected.

80. One lesson was observed in **music** and teachers' planning was scrutinised. Music plays an appropriate part in the school curriculum. Teachers have suitable knowledge and understanding to plan lessons and the lesson seen was of good quality. Pupils are encouraged to learn a musical instrument and the school provides facilities for this. Musical activities, such as a recent concert of 'Jungle Book' songs by all the schools that feed the local comprehensive, together with some of their pupils, provide good links with other schools and help pupils to make a smooth transition to secondary education.
81. In **physical education**, two games lessons were seen where there was satisfactory teaching and achievement. Rounders and tennis skills were taught systematically by the teachers and there were appropriate opportunities to practise these skills in paired activities. This enabled pupils to improve their skills before taking part in real games.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Design and technology has a high profile in the school and well-directed effort has been put into ensuring that teaching and learning are of good quality.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the complete design-and-make process.
- Pupils like the practical nature of the subject and work hard to succeed in what they do.

Commentary

82. Design and technology has been led and managed well over a number of years. This has meant that staff have been helped to develop good understanding of the subject. Monitoring has identified any areas of relative weakness and good action has been taken to improve these. As a result, teaching and learning are good, pupils achieve well and standards are above national expectations and are higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection.
83. Careful planning and the good use of a national scheme of work ensure that pupils are taught to evaluate existing examples of a product, to use this information to design their own product, to decide on the best materials for the job, to make products carefully and to evaluate their efforts. Pupils are also taught the specific skills they will need in the course of their work, for example, a range of techniques for joining materials. This gives pupils a clear understanding of how to design and make, as well as the skills to enable them to do so. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and there is generally a good balance between instruction by the teacher and pupil activity. Pupils very much like their lessons and this enthusiasm is translated into extra effort and enhanced learning.

Example of outstanding practice

A very effective way of teaching a skill in design and technology

Pupils aged five, six and seven are being taught how to use a pattern to cut a puppet shape out of material. The teacher uses music as a background and does not talk. She looks at her pattern, puts it down and cuts from memory her shape, she matches it with her pattern. As it is clearly very different, she dramatically mimes throwing it over her shoulder. She then holds the pattern onto her material and tries again. Once again, the poor effort is dramatically discarded. Finally, she mimes a thought and gets a pencil, which she uses to draw round her pattern on the material before cutting – success! The pupils are mesmerised by the mime – and all go about using a pattern properly when they cut out their puppet. It is a technique they will not forget!

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. Sex education is appropriately taught and drugs education is covered through a 'Drugs Awareness' topic.
85. Personal, social and health education lessons and Circle Time are used to good effect. Sessions are planned to explore personal responses to a wide variety of issues. A lesson was observed, for example, where pupils were thinking about how to behave responsibly. They referred to risk posters, which had been the focus of a previous lesson and discussed the danger of knives and how to behave responsibly. Other contrasts of responsible and irresponsible behaviour were dramatised by the pupils, such as the danger of 'going with strangers'. The teaching was good, included everyone and learning was good for all pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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