

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tetbury

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115700

Headteacher: Mr G C Lewis

Lead inspector: Mr M H Cole
3369

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 257830

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 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 353 |
| School address: | St Mary's Road Tetbury Gloucestershire |
| Postcode: | GL8 8BW |
| Telephone number: | 01666 502275 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr R Waldram |
| Date of previous inspection: | March 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large Church of England primary school educates 353 boys and girls aged from four to eleven years. It is the only state primary school in the small town of Tetbury. The attainments of pupils starting at the school and their social and economic circumstances vary widely but, overall, are a little above average. A very small number of pupils is of minority ethnic origin and uses English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the nature of their needs is broadly typical. The number of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual time of admission and transfer is average.

The school has an Investor in People award (1994) and a Schools Achievement award (2003) for improved results in National Curriculum tests.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 3369 | Mr M H Cole | Lead inspector | Science Information and communication technology Music English as an additional language |
| 19426 | Mr C Farris | Lay inspector | |
| 23024 | Ms S Whitehead | Team inspector | English Geography History Foundation Stage |
| 28170 | Mr I Chearman | Team inspector | Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school**. Good teaching helps pupils learn and achieve well. Their standards of work, attitudes and behaviour are good. The headteacher leads the school well and management procedures are satisfactory. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards of work in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education are above average.
- Good, well-planned teaching ensures the great majority of pupils apply themselves well to their learning and achieve well.
- A caring ethos and very good provision for pupils' social and moral development leads to pupils' positive attitudes and good relationships.
- The quality of education in the reception year is mainly satisfactory but not as good as for other years.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given plenty of good quality help.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, assessment of pupils' progress is not sufficiently precise for the planning of future work that challenges every pupil.
- There are not enough careful checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- There are good links with parents and the community.

The effectiveness of the school has improved satisfactorily since its previous inspection in 1998. The many strengths reported at that time have been consolidated and the two key weaknesses identified have been resolved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Similar schools are those where pupils' social and economic circumstances are similar

Test results provided by school and unconfirmed

Overall **achievement of pupils is good**. Their standards at age eleven generally compare favourably with pupils' attainment when they start school and their test results are generally higher than for similar schools. Teachers provide a good level of challenge in the tasks they set and pupils apply themselves well to their work.

Foundation Stage pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well and at age seven pupils' standards of reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also achieve well and at age eleven standards of work seen in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education are above average. Although test results fluctuate from year to year, reflecting different profiles of pupils' abilities and of their special educational needs, the general trend of recent years has been of rising standards.

The great majority of pupils show **good personal qualities**. They behave well, have responsible attitudes and good self-discipline. As a result this is a calm, orderly and happy school. The school

does much to promote pupils' **good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. Pupils are given a strong lead about right and wrong and about acceptable behaviour. They also receive good help to acquire the personal understanding and skills needed to be good members of the school community. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. During the inspection several examples of good teaching were also seen in art and design, music and physical education. Teachers know their subjects well, plan well and use good methods that make for learning that is both systematic but also stimulating. They manage pupils well so that they concentrate, try hard and take care over their work. The great majority of lessons in Years 1 to 6 are good; in the reception year they are satisfactory.

The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 provides a satisfactorily broad and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum and receives good enrichment from activities outside lessons, such as clubs and visits. The Foundation Stage curriculum for reception pupils is unsatisfactory; it shows too little imagination in its content and organisation, and does not stimulate or challenge children sufficiently.

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and guidance are good. The extra support given to those in difficulty with learning or behaviour is good. Good links with parents and the community help to support learning and the care shown to pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher, his deputy and other senior colleagues give **good leadership** overall to the school. This is a purposeful and well-ordered school. Staff are hardworking and committed and they work well together in pursuit of clear, shared aims and the raising of standards. At the time of inspection, though, the provision at the Foundation Stage lacked suitably qualified leadership. **Management is satisfactory** overall and includes good management of funds and good provision of accommodation, equipment and staff training to support the teaching. However, checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning are not sufficiently rigorous to guide further improvement. Governors make a satisfactory contribution to leadership and management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views about the school. They particularly value the way that teachers teach well, have high expectations and are fair. Parents consider the school well led. Where a small minority of parents had dislikes, inspectors' findings did not show these to be significantly justified. Pupils also feel positive about their school, especially the helpfulness of their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide a more stimulating and challenging programme of activity in the reception year.
- Increase the rigour of checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning to identify and extend good practices and to show where improvements can be made.
- Improve assessment of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Use assessments in all subjects to plan work that fully challenges the most able pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 **achieve well** and the standards of their work in all of the core subjects are **good**. Children in reception achieve **satisfactorily** and attain the majority of the goals expected of them at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The oldest pupils' results in National Curriculum tests of English, mathematics and science in recent years have been generally above the national average and better than in similar schools.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6, the great majority making good progress in relation to their abilities and previous attainment.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well.
- While overall achievement is satisfactory in the reception year, it is unsatisfactory in the areas of creative and physical development.
- A minority of pupils with higher levels of ability achieve satisfactorily but are not consistently challenged to use their abilities to the full.

Commentary

1. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests have risen steadily in the long term, leading to a national School Achievement award earlier this year. In the most recent years, results have generally been above average.
2. The results achieved by seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 in the 2003 tests were average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. This is true when results are compared with both the national average and the average for schools in similar circumstances.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.7 (17.5) | 15.9 (16.0) |
| writing | 15.8 (15.5) | 14.8 (14.5) |
| mathematics | 17.5 (17.3) | 16.4 (16.6) |

*There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year
The average points scores for over 90 per cent of schools are in the range 11 – 19 points.*

3. The results achieved by eleven-year-olds at the end of Year 6 in the 2003 tests were average in English and mathematics and above average in science when compared with the national averages. Compared with results for schools in similar neighbourhoods the school's scores were average in English and above average in both mathematics and science.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.7 (28.6) | 27.0 (27.2) |
| mathematics | 27.4 (28.3) | 27.0 (27.0) |
| science | 29.5 (29.1) | 28.8 (28.6) |

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

The average points scores for over 90 per cent of schools are in the range 23 – 31 points.

- In both sets of tests, for pupils aged seven and eleven, results in 2003 were not quite as good as in 2002. In both cases this is explained by differences from year to year in profiles of pupils' ability and in levels of pupils with special educational needs. When pupils' results are compared with their earlier attainment on starting school, or in tests at an earlier stage, most are found to have made good progress. This is consistent with the picture from work, from teaching and from learning seen during the inspection. Pupils achieve well because they are generally set challenging tasks by teachers to which they respond with attitudes of care and endeavour and with good behaviour.
- Work seen during the inspection was of good standard in Years 1 to 6 in information and communication technology (ICT) and in physical education. In science in Years 1 and 2, inspectors' observations endorsed teachers' own formal assessments showing standards to be good. Where evidence was available to judge standards in other subjects it pointed to overall average standards, but with some examples of good work in music and art and design. The standards found in the range of subjects exactly mirrors the school's improvement priorities (as well as national ones) in recent years. Most attention has been paid to developing provision for the core areas of literacy, numeracy, science and ICT and this has led to a successful raising of standards. Time devoted to the development and teaching of other subjects has been limited, but sufficient to maintain satisfactory standards.
- The great majority of pupils achieve well in relation to the wide range of abilities, needs and backgrounds they represent. As nationally, boys do a little less well than girls, though the gap in this school has been narrowing in the last two years. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive good additional help and guidance from teachers and support staff and this helps them to make good progress towards their individual targets. In contrast, a small minority of pupils with relatively high ability are not always fully challenged by their work to achieve all they are capable of, but their achievement remains satisfactory. In striving to raise standards, priority in recent years has been given to helping pupils of lower ability, including those with special educational needs, to do as well as they can. This has been largely successful and the school's evaluation of itself recognises that an area for future improvement now is the help given to the most able to support achievement of their full potential.
- Reception pupils are soundly taught and, overall, achieve satisfactorily. At the end of the reception year they are likely to meet national expectations for their attainment in their personal and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, weaknesses in the provision for the creative and physical areas of their learning mean that here they do not achieve satisfactorily and are unlikely to meet the expected standards. A lack of strong and well-qualified leadership for the reception year is reflected in the relatively weaker provision found in this part of the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes towards learning and their school life and they behave well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported and they develop a growing recognition of the needs of others around them. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their school life and most are well motivated to try hard.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Most pupils behave well and enjoy the very good relationships they have with both staff and fellow pupils.
- The school is largely free from any form of harassment because staff work hard at eliminating it.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and feel that their ideas are listened to by staff.

Commentary

8. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and to school life in general. They settle down to work quickly and without fuss and continue working even when not directly supervised. They are interested and responsive and enjoy their learning, particularly when the lesson is challenging. They work well both individually and collaboratively in pairs and groups and they give willing support to classmates who find the work more difficult – as seen in a Year 6 ICT lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are confident because they are fully included by teachers' planning and by the good support of the teaching assistants. They have good attitudes to learning in this secure and stimulating environment.
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with that for social and moral development being very good. The curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education helps pupils to make the right moral and social choices as they grow in maturity and also helps to widen their understanding of the needs of others around them. Pupils' cultural development is less well supported. They have little opportunity to appreciate great works by famous artists and composers and, although pupils learn about different religions in religious education lessons, there is little in the curriculum to prepare them for life in a modern multicultural society.
10. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is good. The school has concentrated on eliminating bullying and improving the general standard of behaviour, which was seen as sometimes challenging at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, the school environment is now calm and non-threatening. There have been no exclusions from school in the last year. Staff provide good role models and their sensitive approach to managing behaviour contributes much to the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils also enjoy good relationships with their peers and are especially supportive of those who have disabilities. They respect those who are different from themselves in gender, background or race. Responsibilities, such as membership of the playground council, help increase pupils' confidence and pupils appreciate having a part to play in the running of the school.

Attendance

11. Pupils are keen to come to school and the school has good procedures for encouraging and keeping a check on attendance levels. As a result the standard of both attendance and punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.6 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.2 |
| National data | 0.5 |

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 provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and receives good enrichment from activities outside lessons. Good care and guidance of pupils and good links with parents, community and other schools also contribute to the good educational provision.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are of overall **good** quality. The great majority of lessons in Years 1 to 6 are **good**; in reception they are **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are supported by assessment of pupils' work which is **satisfactory** overall but **good** in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their subjects well.
- Well-planned lessons help pupils make good progress in knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teachers show high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and good skills of managing them.
- Pupils respond to the teaching with interest, effort, care and good behaviour; their work is well presented.
- There is effective collaboration between teachers and support staff which, in particular, lends good support to pupils experiencing difficulty.
- Sometimes a minority of pupils – the most able – are not fully challenged by the work provided.
- Planning and organisation of reception year activities is not sufficiently stimulating or challenging for the children to progress as quickly as they should.

Commentary

12. Teachers are well qualified and have been well supported by opportunities for further training and updating of their knowledge. As a result they have good knowledge of the subjects which helps them to plan relevant and generally challenging work, to explain clearly and to ask good questions that reinforce and check pupils' learning. Planning is clear about exactly what pupils are to learn and activities are well designed and managed to promote learning in a proper sequence and at a good pace. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills.
13. Pupils' progress is also well promoted by teachers' effective motivation of their interest and enthusiasm and skilled management of their behaviour. Teachers' high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour are successfully backed up with encouragement and reward. Pupils are willing to work, mostly behave well with a minimum of direction and as a result lessons are calm, orderly events where attention is devoted fully to learning. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. A good deal of work is therefore accomplished and it is done with care, as is evident in the neat, accurate work seen in almost all pupils' exercise books. Time in lessons is mainly well used but there is a significant number of occasions when teacher talk dominates too much of a lesson at the expense of time when pupils can be more active learners.
14. Teaching generally caters well for the wide range of pupils' abilities and needs, including SEN. In a pre-inspection questionnaire many pupils commented on the good help they receive from their teachers. Those with SEN are given good extra help, often through the well-planned

contribution of skilled support staff who work with individuals or small groups, sometimes in the classroom and sometimes in a separate room. The assistant special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO) leads well-planned and paced learning for groups withdrawn from classes and contributes significantly to the good learning. ICT is used well to promote the good progress seen. Progress towards learning or behavioural targets is closely monitored. Pupils know clearly what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Pupils with SEN are fully included in all aspects of lessons. These pupils benefit from good planning and the use of resources carefully tailored to their needs. This is less true of the minority of more able pupils in classes. Here, some attempt is generally made to challenge them with their tasks but it is less precise and less successful than that for the less able pupils.

15. The matching of pupils' work to their ability and their previous learning is best done in English and mathematics where there are good processes for assessing pupils' progress. Here, too, teachers have begun to use assessment information to set precise targets for pupils to aim at in their learning. There is some very effective practice here which is illustrated when pupils are able to explain exactly what they have to do to improve their work. However, there is also some inconsistency, for example in teachers' reference to targets during lessons or in their marking of pupils' work. There are also some other areas of inconsistency between teachers, including the use of rewards to encourage pupils. Inconsistencies reflect the insufficiency of the school's checks on teaching and learning.
16. Although in English and mathematics there are good processes for tracking pupils' progress through the school and for setting targets for teachers to aim at, assessment of progress in other subjects is weak. There is a lack of a whole-school, systematic approach to assessing work in these other subjects. This hinders the planning of future work for pupils that builds precisely on their past attainment and it deprives the school of important measures of the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
17. The great majority of lessons in Years 1 to 6 are of good, or occasionally very good, quality. Those in the reception year are satisfactory. Here, activities are less well planned to stimulate children's interest and to challenge their capacity to learn. The children are happy, interested and soundly behaved but the teaching does not fully capitalise on these qualities to promote learning. There has been past support for teaching of this year group through training and the guidance of visiting specialists but the impact of this has been partly lost because of staff changes and absences. The school currently lacks a permanent leader for the work at the Foundation Stage which is hindering development of this part of the school's work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 6 (10%) | 32 (56%) | 20 (34%) | 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.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided is **satisfactory** overall, but has weaknesses at the Foundation Stage. The National Curriculum is taught comprehensively and is suitably planned to ensure pupils progress appropriately through successive steps in learning. There is good enrichment of the curriculum from activities outside formal lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for ICT has improved since the previous inspection, enabling pupils to attain higher standards.
- The curriculum for physical education is broad and varied; dance is particularly well provided for.

- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including residential visits.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory; provision for physical development is hampered by a lack of resources.
- The good number of teachers and support staff and the spacious school buildings give good support to curriculum provision.
- The programmes of work for pupils with special educational needs are good.

Commentary

18. The curriculum for pupils from Years 1 to 6 is well planned with a wide range of learning experiences. The provision for ICT includes a suitable computer suite as well as computers in the classrooms, which are used to support learning across the curriculum. The good provision for dance has been maintained since the previous inspection and learning in physical education is enhanced through good opportunities during after-schools clubs to improve standards in tennis, football and dance. There has been a strong emphasis in recent years on English, mathematics, science and ICT resulting in above average standards in these subjects. However, less time has been allocated to history, geography, music, art and design, and design and technology. In these subjects, the curriculum has not been taught in sufficient depth to allow more able pupils to attain the above average standards of which they are capable.
19. Offering a variety of clubs at different times of the year has extended the range of after-school clubs. The good sporting clubs provide the backbone of the provision but the range appeals to the interests of most pupils and includes computer, first-aid and art clubs. There is good provision for instrumental tuition and the number of pupils benefiting from this has doubled recently. The school choir widens musical opportunities to more pupils, as do the opportunities to take part in substantial musical/dramatic performances for parents. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 take part in residential visits to support work in science, geography and outdoor pursuits. Parents are pleased with the activities provided.
20. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is planned according to the recommended areas of learning but the learning opportunities lack breadth and cross-curricular links. The provision for physical development is poor. The secure outdoor play area is very small and uninteresting and cannot be used to support tasks in all areas of learning. There is a lack of outdoor equipment for children to develop their climbing and balancing skills.
21. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum. Individual education plans target their learning in literacy and numeracy at a challenging level appropriate to their needs. Pupils clearly know their targets for learning and share them with adults. The learning centre and resources are of good quality, are well organised and are used very effectively. Pupils with statements receive their full entitlement and make good progress. The school as yet is unable to offer wheelchair access to areas of the building used for older pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Pupils receive **good** support and guidance. Good account is taken of pupils' needs and views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils feel well looked after and value the way the school takes account of their views.
- Good guidance and support is given to pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessments of progress are used well to set targets for the least able and identify extra help needed.
- Assessment and target setting work less well to maximise the most able pupils' progress.

Commentary

22. Good provision for pupils' welfare gives pupils confidence and trust in the school and its staff, so that they learn and achieve well. Child protection procedures are secure. The policy is effectively implemented with careful regard to the locally regulated practice. Staff are kept up to date, and the links with the local education authority and social services are good. The few pupils in public care are effectively supported. The arrangements for dealing with injuries and accidents are good. The administration of medicines is recorded carefully and correctly. The school's arrangements for risk assessment and for health and safety are regularly checked and the recording shows the careful but necessary attention to detail. The pond, seen as a health and safety risk at the last inspection, no longer exists.
23. The pupils' responses to their questionnaire and inspectors' discussions with pupils show that they feel very well looked after. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for pupils newly arrived in the main school. Pupils in Year 6 follow a smooth, well-planned transition to their chosen secondary schools.
24. Teachers and teaching assistants get to know their pupils well and this enables them to keep a watchful eye on their personal and social development. This is particularly helpful when they have problems educationally or socially. Good support and guidance is provided for pupils with special educational needs. Effective arrangements, including good staff teamwork, are in place for the early identification of these pupils. Good planning sets clear and achievable targets for learning. Target setting is less precise for the most able pupils and less successful in challenging them to achieve their full potential.
25. The school is proud of its recent success in gaining funding for a learning mentor for inclusion who works skilfully with pupils during lesson time and in the lunch break to help pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties to make the best of their learning opportunities.
26. The school involves pupils in the running of the school by seeking their views through the school council and, where appropriate, acting upon them. For example, pupils are proposing changes to provision in the playgrounds at lunchtime. In discussions with inspectors, pupils said how pleased they were to have this input into school affairs. The school is seeking to involve pupils more in their own learning, but as yet it is only in literacy that all pupils have individual targets for learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents express a high level of confidence in the school.
- Parents receive good information about their children's progress and general school matters.
- Parents contribute well to their children's learning at home and at school.
- There are good links with secondary schools and pre-school providers.

Commentary

27. Parents are very supportive of the school and are happy with the education provided for their children. They feel the school is well led, with good teaching that encourages their children to work hard and try their best. Parents appreciate the high level of personal support that staff provide. The inspection findings endorse these views.
28. The school provides parents with good information about their children's progress and about matters of general interest. The prospectus and governors' annual report are both very

informative, as are the weekly newsletters. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and provide generally good detail for parents. Parents also get comprehensive details of the curriculum for the year and homework expectations. Curriculum workshops give good guidance on how parents can help their children at home and many parents do. Pupils are expected to complete their homework and parents appreciate the good learning habits that this engenders. The parent-teacher association raises significant funds that are used to provide additional equipment and resources that benefit the pupils' learning.

29. The school has a good relationship with pre-school providers and also works closely with the local secondary school. Children from playgroups can make several visits before starting in reception and a part-time start eases their transition to full-time education. Staff from the secondary school liaise during the year, with some taking occasional lessons in Year 6. Pupils get a longer than usual foretaste of secondary school life, with a one-day visit in Year 5 and three days in Year 6. As a result, they are well prepared for their move to a new school. There are social links also; for example pupils attend productions at the secondary school. The school has links at a sporting level with other primary schools in the area and has hosted a district sports event.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. Leadership of the school by the headteacher and senior staff is **good**. Management is **satisfactory** overall, with some strengths and some weaknesses. Governors give **satisfactory** support to the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's strong leadership has created a good staff team with a strong sense of purpose and a proven commitment to raising standards and creating a positive ethos.
- Financial management is efficient so that the school is well resourced and provides good value for money.
- There is a lack of suitable leadership for the Foundation Stage.
- The use of checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning to identify ways to improve them is not sufficiently rigorous.

Commentary

30. The headteacher provides effective leadership and has developed in the staff a very clear sense of pride in the work of the school. Together with the deputy headteacher and another senior teacher with management responsibility, he has welded the staff into a strong team and morale is high. Staff support each other well, with teaching and non-teaching staff working effectively together in the classroom. Improved behaviour has been a key factor in the increased effectiveness of the school and the headteacher has ensured that this has been managed consistently well across the school.
31. At the time of the previous inspection the governing body was found to be too reliant on the headteacher and too little involved in setting the direction of the school. This situation has improved and governors are now directly involved in setting the agenda for the school, for example taking part, with all the staff, in a planning day for the current year's school improvement plan. Regular training days have been undertaken and, whereas before governors were reactive, now they are more proactive. Governors support senior management soundly in seeing that statutory requirements of the school are met but their awareness of school strengths and weaknesses is not sharp enough for them to be fully effective in holding the school to account.
32. Subject co-ordinators are conscientious and concerned to promote improvement in their subjects. They give good leadership to planning and resourcing of work in their subjects, and

leadership in English, mathematics and ICT has been successful in improving provision and raising standards. However, the management of subjects other than English and mathematics lacks the support of proper procedures for assessing pupils' progress and monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The overall range and precision of such procedures are currently insufficient as a basis for identifying ways the school can improve. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school does not make the best use of its internal resources of expertise to spread the most effective practices across the school or to tackle the less effective ones.

33. The school's management structure currently has no one with designated responsibility for the Foundation Stage. In the absence of a manager, the deputy headteacher maintains a watching brief but her own commitments with her duties in other key stages mean that the role is largely unfulfilled. This has meant that the curriculum in the reception class, which is insufficiently inspiring and challenging, has not developed in line with rising national expectations. This is unsatisfactory.
34. Management procedures for planning and controlling the budget, for appraising staff and providing staff training opportunities, work smoothly and effectively. Teachers and support staff are deployed well and provided with good resources of accommodation and equipment. This is an efficient, well-organised school which provides good value for money.
35. The leadership and management of SEN are good. The school's contacts with external agencies are used well to access resources such as funding for the well-planned inclusion project. The funding and grant income is carefully managed for best value and governors' strategic contribution is good. The assistant SENCO's management of teaching assistants creates effective partnerships with teachers for learning and provision. Training opportunities to improve effectiveness are good and used well.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 695,040 |
| Total expenditure | 697,443 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,015 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 23,132 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 20,729 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. Most lessons observed focused on the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
37. On entry to the reception class, children's attainment is a little above average, although this varies between year groups. The present cohort shows the potential to attain above average standards in many areas of learning by the end of the reception year. However, children's present progress suggests their attainments are likely to be average. They are achieving less than they might because of the narrow curriculum and because the teaching, though satisfactory overall, does not promote the best quality learning or pace of progress of which the children are capable. There has been a decline in the provision since the previous inspection. Induction procedures for children are satisfactory and include visits to feeder playgroups and nurseries. There is no co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage and this is hampering developments. The lack of strong leadership is having a detrimental effect on the quality of provision. Assessment procedures are developing to fulfil the requirements of the Foundation Stage profile.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enter school happily and routines are being established.
- Children's attitudes are good and behaviour is satisfactory.
- Children are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers and their assistants create a welcoming start to the day. Although the children have only had four weeks in school, they are already taking some responsibility for their own actions and successfully learn unsupported for short periods of time.
39. Children relate to each other well, talking in pairs about a task given by the teacher, playing together in larger groups in the home corner and taking turns to speak and listen in a whole-class situation, although some children need more practice with the latter skill. The management of children's behaviour is usually effective, although they sometimes become over-excited when engaged in unsupervised activities and distract others from their learning. Sometimes teachers lack consistency and do not insist that classroom rules are upheld.
40. The teachers and the classroom assistants respect the children and value their contributions. Courtesy is expected from the children. They are set tasks and are appropriately supported with their learning. The children are keen to please. They maintain their concentration well when the tasks are interesting, particularly during literacy and numeracy activities. Children take turns appropriately when waiting to wash their hands. The morning snack-time is a well-ordered occasion where children socialise well. Children are reaching the expectations for their age and their achievements are satisfactory.
41. Children's individual needs are being assessed by careful observations. Those who have special educational needs are supported well on a one-to-one basis. They are fully included in activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are enthusiastic learners and are progressing well with early writing and spelling skills.
- Early reading skills are progressing through sharing books with adults.
- Children speak confidently but do not always listen well.
- Children are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

42. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are very keen to learn new letters and sounds. They join in with writing the letter shape in the air and suggest words that they know which begin with the sound. They often choose to write letters when given a choice of several activities. Children concentrate well when supported by teachers or classroom assistants. They find objects beginning with the letter of the day. More able children are beginning to build simple three-letter words using a range of different letters.
43. Children often listen appropriately because the teachers choose stories which interest them. They are encouraged to talk about the pictures and children readily volunteer their ideas and use a good range of vocabulary. They know about book titles and how to handle books carefully. They willingly talk about books that they have chosen and some children can retell stories in their own words. Children enjoy discussing their books individually with the teacher. However, this activity is very time consuming, taking the teacher's full attention. Other children are left to choose their own activities and behaviour sometimes deteriorates or children repeat activities that they have completed earlier in the day.
44. All children are encouraged to speak in individual, group and class activities. Adults interact well with children on an individual basis, extending their vocabulary and building their confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to contribute their ideas about stories and topics. They speak to adults and other children with confidence, using complete sentences and appropriate vocabulary. However, some children do not always listen well, especially when teachers are talking. They lose interest at the back of the group and do not contribute to the lesson. Others call out and interrupt the teacher or other children, not waiting for their turn to speak.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's number skills are well developed for their age.
- Many children are on target to exceed the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Many children count to 20 and a few beyond this number. In a mathematics lesson children recognised and counted numbers up to eight and then back to zero confidently. Children count objects when looking at books and they are mainly accurate. The computer program, which produces up to five objects for children to count, provides little challenge for many of the children.

46. Children are secure with the names of several two-dimensional shapes and many children name several of their properties, using the correct vocabulary such as 'edges' and 'corners'. Children's knowledge of shape is extended by singing rhymes about shapes, which help them to consolidate their learning. One teacher made the learning more exciting by obscuring part of a shape and asking children to predict which shape was hidden. They responded well to this activity. Good use was made of the digital camera to record children discovering shapes in the school grounds and drawing shapes on the playground. Children showed good skills in continuing a repeated shape pattern started by the teacher.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show an appropriate awareness of health, safety and hygiene.
- Children's skills when using computers are progressing well.
- Children are on target to meet the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

47. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are mature enough to visit the toilet unaccompanied and they are aware of the need to wash their hands afterwards and before eating their morning snack.
48. Children are provided with opportunities to explore at first hand during the weekly walk to a wooded area in the school grounds. They collect autumn leaves enthusiastically, noting their changing colours. They enjoy digging in the soil and are excited when they find the newt again that they discovered on a previous occasion. Children learn about baptism through a mock christening of dolls during a visit by the local vicar. Children learn to look at features of their faces and compare these with other children. However, teachers did not exploit this activity to the full and opportunities were lost in one class for pupils to work in pairs and discover differences for themselves. Many lost interest when this was done as a whole-class activity.
49. Children enjoy working with the computers. They use the mouse with good accuracy for their age to click and drag objects. They can change the brush tool when creating 'face' pictures and the colours to be used on the screen. Children learn skills very quickly using the facilities of the ICT suite and make rapid progress with basic skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's overall development is hampered by the lack of outdoor climbing equipment and a very small, uninteresting outdoor area.
- Standards overall are below expectations because of the limited opportunities provided.

Commentary

50. Children handle scissors safely and their cutting skills are good. They use glue spreaders properly and paste their cut out shapes accurately.
51. The outdoor area cannot be used easily as an outdoor learning space because it is very small and has to cater for two classes. The outside space is bare and does not stimulate children's

interest. During inclement weather there is no covered area so that children can move in and out freely. The teachers do not include outdoor activities sufficiently in their planning. The classes take turns each afternoon to use wheeled toys outside but this activity lacks a purpose for the children. They are not able to have regular access to the outside to support activities in all areas of learning. Classes are included in the timetable for the use of the main school hall along with the rest of the school. However, this facility is not sufficient for the physical development of these young children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are unlikely to meet the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

52. It was possible to observe only a little of the provision for this area of learning during the inspection. However, scrutiny of samples of work completed by the previous reception classes shows that their art was mainly teacher directed and lacked originality. The role-play areas in the classes are uninspiring and do not provide a good resource to fire children's imagination. No examples of teachers encouraging or supporting creative role-play were seen. Although it was not possible to observe much music, singing is in line with expectations for the ages of the children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and their standards are above the national average in reading, in speaking and listening and in writing by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching in Years 4 and 6.
- Literacy is well taught across a range of subjects.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well across the school and pupils are confident speakers.
- Pupils are keen to learn and work hard.
- The leadership and management of English are good.

Commentary

53. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests at ages seven and eleven have been generally above average in recent years and they have compared favourably with those of similar schools.
54. Pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school. Phonic skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils have the necessary tools to build unfamiliar words. These skills are built upon in Years 3 to 6 and the older pupils use more advanced skills, such as scanning text, well. The phonic skills help pupils with their spelling, which is to a good standard by the age of eleven. During guided reading sessions, most pupils in Year 2 read confidently, with increasing fluency and with obvious enjoyment. By the time pupils are in their final years, they confidently read extracts from texts aloud to the class with good use of expression.

55. The content of pupils' writing is sometimes very good for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Work is accurately punctuated, interesting descriptions are included and phraseology is being well developed. Pupils write interestingly across a range of subjects, in a variety of formats and with varied audiences in mind. Handwriting is properly formed, joined and work is presented well. This is because pupils practise these skills from an early age and teachers model handwriting well. However, a few younger pupils have unhelpful pencil grips and left-handed pupils do not always angle their work to help with writing.
56. Teachers plan well. There is a good structure to all lessons and a good pace to most lessons. The National Literacy Strategy forms the basis of lessons and this is modified to provide a challenge for most pupils' learning, particularly average and less able pupils. However, occasionally the work is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of the most able pupils in classes and these pupils do not always achieve all of which they are capable. The topics chosen are interesting and well presented so that pupils are motivated to learn. The setting of personal targets for pupils' progress, which they understand well, also succeeds in promoting good attitudes toward, and engagement in, their work. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, settle quickly to tasks and generally complete the work set for them within given timescales. Texts used in lessons are carefully chosen to enhance pupils' reading skills and the less able pupils are well supported so that they can participate fully. They also receive good support for learning in their withdrawal sessions. Teachers plan well for guided reading. Good use is made of time during these sessions; the activities are structured well so that pupils experience a good range of reading skills.
57. Throughout the school, teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Although pupils enter school with a good range of vocabulary for their age, this is skilfully extended by the introduction of new words and teachers' high expectations in the use of spoken language in a variety of contexts. Consequently, pupils speak confidently, use interesting vocabulary and project their voices so that they can be heard clearly when speaking to the class.
58. The subject is well led by a literacy team representing Years 2, 4 and 6. This aids continuity across the school. The team consists of very good practitioners and they manage the subject effectively. This has enabled improvements to be made in the standards attained by pupils following a dip after the last inspection. The strengths and weaknesses of the subject are recognised. There is good use of assessment data to provide additional support for learning, where necessary, and to set targets for all pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects. In their practice with reading skills, older pupils are given opportunities to extend their knowledge in other subjects such as history and geography because there is a good choice of non-fiction books available to them. Examples of good pieces of writing were seen in pupils' science books, displays of personal, social and health education work, history and geography. Good use is made of brief, paired discussions by pupils across the curriculum. In subjects such as mathematics, teachers extend pupils' subject vocabulary range and insist on the correct use. Listening skills are developed by teachers' consistent expectations of when pupils are required to listen and their insistence that pupils focus well when the teacher is talking.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and overall standards are above average.
- Teaching is of good quality.
- Pupils apply themselves well showing sustained concentration and positive attitudes.
- Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy well in their planning and practice.
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' attainments is used effectively to identify strength and weakness in pupils' attainments and to modify provision and planning.
- The use of ability sets in Years 3 to 6 has improved the match of tasks to ability for pupils.
- Target setting and marking that helps pupils to know what they need to learn is coming into place in the infants but is not consistently used in the juniors.

Commentary

60. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests at ages seven and eleven have been average or above in the last two years and in both years they were better than those for similar schools.
61. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good range of skills and knowledge across all the areas specified by the National Curriculum. Their understanding of number facts and the use of them to solve problems using addition and subtraction is particularly strong. This is because of the good teaching that challenges most pupils through 'quick maths' and, with the use of whiteboards, teachers vary the level of problems so that all groups of pupils have the success that is essential for good levels of learning. Pupils show in their workbooks their good understanding of shape and measure. The teachers' teamwork in improving levels of presentation in these books has helped to improve standards. It allows pupils to be proud of their effort and show their achievement.
62. This good standard of routine in mental methods and presentation is carried through into the juniors so that they continue to develop good working and thinking habits. Teachers are consistent in their high expectations, little time is wasted and learning is good. The school's recent initiative on speaking and listening is consolidated well when pupils explain their mental methods for calculations and problem solving. In this way pupils develop a good mathematical vocabulary that helps them to build clear concepts and understanding. They build on their previous learning to apply numerical methods to solve problems involving ratio, line graphs, shape and area. The highest attainers solve algebraic problems with unknowns such as the external angles of triangles. Pupils' understanding of metric measure is good.
63. The quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching seen. Teachers' knowledge is good. In the best lessons all groups of pupils are challenged, including the very able, with extension tasks for pupils to transfer to. Lower attaining pupils are always challenged in their thinking and work well, but in less successful lessons the more able mark time. They are not consistently stretched by the tasks set, as discussions with pupils confirmed. This is sometimes the case in over-long whole-class discussion where questioning is sometimes unchallenging and pupils' opportunity to 'bounce ideas off each other' is lacking. The good practice seen in English where pupils have clear individual learning targets that involve them in personal goals for improvement is not yet consistently established in mathematics.
64. The quality of the teaching and the curriculum, and the standards achieved, have improved significantly since the previous inspection. This reflects well on the good leadership and management of the enthusiastic co-ordinators who have clear, well thought out plans to develop the subject further. Further checks on teaching and learning could help to extend to all lessons the very good practice in questioning and discussion seen in very good lessons that inspire pupils of all abilities.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy builds a wide base of skills and understanding that is used well in some tasks in science and geography where pupils make measurements or arrange and interpret data. There are missed opportunities to link learning in mathematics and ICT in ways beneficial to progress in both subjects.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and the oldest pupils' results in national tests are above average.
- Teaching and learning are of good quality.
- Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about the work.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and checks on teaching and learning are not adequate.

Commentary

66. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests at age eleven were above average in 2003 and were better than those for similar schools. The work of pupils aged seven justifies the teachers' own formal assessments that overall standards are above average.
67. Pupils develop good knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. They respond well to teachers' high expectations of the knowledge they can acquire and of their ability to use the proper scientific terms to represent that knowledge. Understanding is also well developed as older pupils showed when asked to explain the various ways plants reproduce or what causes condensation on the inside of a car windscreen on cold mornings. Skills of investigation are sound. Asked to evaluate an imaginary investigation, the oldest pupils are able to provide a good critique showing a sure understanding of the principles of a fair test. They respond thoughtfully when asked to design an investigation of their own.
68. Teaching is well planned to cover the curriculum systematically and to stimulate the interest pupils show. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour are evident in the careful, accurate writing, diagrams and drawings they do. Good guidance on recording work allows pupils good opportunity in their writing to practise their writing skills while rehearsing their scientific understanding. Good use is also made of their ICT skills when they research scientific information from databases or via the Internet but there are missed opportunities to use ICT skills to tabulate, present graphically or analyse data from their investigations. Planning provides well for less able pupils and those with special educational needs and these pupils receive extra help. Planning is not consistently successful in devising ways to challenge fully the most able pupils and these pupils sometimes achieve less than they should.
69. The subject co-ordinators give keen leadership to the work. They support teachers well with planning and provide guidance and resources that lead to a consistency of approach. However, they have no proper system for assessing pupils' progress in science throughout the school and checks on teaching and learning are insufficient. Consequently, the school lacks a precise awareness of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning on which to base future work or planning for improved practices.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards exceed the levels expected nationally for pupils' ages.
- Teaching and learning are of good quality.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
- The provision is well led.
- Lack of systematic assessment of pupils' progress across the school is a weakness.

Commentary

70. Evidence from across the range of year groups shows that almost all pupils demonstrate good competency for their ages in a good range of skills within the subject. They progress well in understanding how to access and employ a range of computer programs for different purposes. The oldest pupils confidently exploit their understanding of how to select program tools and options and apply them to incorporate text, graphics and sounds to construct attractive and informative presentations. They know how they can expand the material at their disposal by searching the Internet and they use this facility to acquire information they need, for example while studying topics in science or humanities.
71. Teaching and learning are of good quality. Teachers know the subject well and plan appropriate tasks to which pupils respond with a high level of interest and enthusiasm. This is evident in the way many attend the valuable after-school computer club which is over-subscribed so that a rota of membership is necessary. Good use is made of the well-resourced computer suite. The regular lessons here often make valuable links with many of the subjects of the curriculum as, for example, when pupils wordprocess their writing or explore databases for information in several subjects, or use paint programs to support work in art. Activity in the computer suite is sometimes supplemented by the work of individuals or small groups at computers in the classrooms but this equipment provides less potential and this is not a strong feature of the work as a whole. Although, overall, there are sound links between ICT and other subjects, opportunities are missed for the use of ICT to support work in mathematics and science, particularly in data handling.
72. The subject co-ordinators provide good, enthusiastic leadership of the subject, supporting staff well with guidance and resources. Although useful portfolios illustrating the work covered in each class are kept, management of the subject is hindered by insufficient assessment of pupils' progress to guide future teaching and to contribute to checks on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Only two lessons were observed in each subject and consequently no overall judgements about teaching and learning are made. As the inspection took place early in the school year there was little previous written work available and no judgement is therefore made about pupils' achievement. However, evidence from pupils' work, curriculum planning and talking to pupils shows that provision for geography and history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show a sound level of knowledge and most show enthusiasm for the subjects.
- Limited time has been allocated to the subjects in recent years.
- There is insufficient challenge in the teaching to allow more able pupils to attain the above average standards that they are capable of.

Commentary

73. Pupils have acquired appropriate knowledge of their local environment by the end of Year 2 and recognise the British Isles and some major cities. Their interest in the wider world is extended by the study of countries such as Italy. By Year 6, pupils recognise the position of many countries in the world and they talk knowledgeably about life in countries such as India. Similarly, in history, younger pupils know about famous people from the past and have an interest in Victorian life, stimulated by viewing historical artefacts during an educational visit. Year 6 pupils show enthusiasm for learning about life in Britain since World War Two and compare the differences between life in the 1950s and the present day. Most pupils are keen to learn. Year 6 pupils use computers to aid their historical research and listen attentively to voices from the past belonging to famous people such as Martin Luther King and Elvis Presley. However, during a geography lesson, a few Year 5 pupils with challenging behaviour did not settle well to tasks and distracted others from their learning.
74. Geography and history have had less time allocated to them in recent years because the school has been focusing its attention on developing literacy and numeracy skills. This has resulted in a lack of depth to the taught curriculum and provision in history which is not as strong as reported at the previous inspection. Although the requirements of the National Curriculum are met, teachers have focused their attention on knowledge-based activities and there has been less comparative work and in-depth discussion to allow pupils to reach and express their own views about the topics covered. Most of the planning and recorded work by pupils shows that there is a similar level of difficulty in the work set. Although more able pupils often record more in their books, their depth of understanding is no more than for other pupils. However, in one Year 6 lesson, the teacher did challenge more able pupils to consider the impact of aspects of 1950s innovations on the lives of the people. The assessment procedures are not thorough or consistent through the school. Therefore, teachers do not have a good basis on which to plan the challenge of activities for pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. In art and design, three lessons were seen and examples of past work were examined. Four lessons were seen in music and five in physical education. In design and technology no lessons were seen and as the inspection took place early in the school year very few examples of past work were available; no overall judgement about provision is therefore made in this subject.

Art and design

Lessons in art and design were seen in Years 1, 2 and 6. From this evidence and from examination of past work pupils have completed, the provision for art is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching seen was good and led to a creative and enthusiastic response from pupils.
- There is too little use of the work of known artists to inspire pupils.

Commentary

76. Collections and displays of pupils' past work in the subject point to satisfactory standards. However, in the three well-taught lessons seen work was of a good standard and pupils achieved well. Stimulating and creative tasks led to positive pupil attitudes and good learning. In Year 1 the teacher skilfully used a painting by Picasso to discuss with pupils the qualities of facial expression. Pupils were able then to sketch a self-portrait using a mirror. These were of good quality. Year 2 pupils' sketching of fruits and sections through them demonstrated their good visual perception and skills. Their selection and use of materials to interpret these were imaginative. Because the teacher gave them good opportunity to describe and compare they

took pleasure and pride in their individual creations. In Year 6 the teacher also challenged all pupils in making and decorating hats. A wide range of materials enabled pupils to exercise good aesthetic discrimination in designing and making the hats. The good practice of sharing their creative ideas in explaining how their hats exemplified purpose consolidated pupils' speaking and listening skills.

77. The subject has not been a priority in school improvement or staff development in recent years. This is reflected in provision that lacks the strength reported at the previous inspection and some inconsistency in the standards achieved between classes. Overall, a satisfactory curriculum is in place but little work was seen using artists' styles to generate and widen pupils' knowledge of techniques and effects.
78. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator uses allocated management time to monitor pupils' work to ensure that skills and experience build on previous learning well as they move through the school. There is no assessment of attainment to help pupils to know what they should do to improve further.

Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the lessons seen was good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and try hard.
- There is a lack of systematic assessment of pupils' progress.

Commentary

79. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. In the lessons seen in Years 1 to 4, pupils met national expectations for attainment in relation to their ages. They make appropriate progress in the practical musical skills of singing and performing with instruments showing, for example, a satisfactory awareness of pitch and rhythm. Most pupils join in the singing and most sing in tune. When singing well-rehearsed hymns in school assemblies or hymn practices, singing is sensitive and expressive as pupils remember to adjust the volume and tone of their singing to the different moods and meanings of different songs. No evidence was available during the inspection of pupils' skills of composition or the quality of their appreciation and understanding of music played to them.
80. In the lessons seen, teaching was of good quality. It was well planned with appropriate and challenging tasks and pupils were well managed so that they were keen and showed good concentration and perseverance as they tackled difficult exercises in rhythm. All of these positive qualities were seen in abundance in a very good lesson in Year 4 when pupils maintained concentration and perseverance impressively in response to a very challenging task of reproducing the rhythm of a seven-beats-in-a-bar jazz number by Dave Brubeck.
81. The school recognises that changing national priorities within the curriculum, and school staff changes, have reduced the quality of its music provision since the previous inspection. An effort is being made to reinvigorate music in the school. This has included acquisition of a thorough scheme of work and resources which give strong support to teachers' planning and resourcing of lessons. This was seen to be in effective use during the inspection. A recent staff appointment has also brought additional musical expertise to the school. Valuable enrichment of the music curriculum is given by extra-curricular opportunities, including opportunities for instrumental tuition on recorder, flute or guitar and participation in substantial musical performances for parents or in association with other schools in the county.

82. There is no systematic assessment of pupils' progress (other than for optional instrumental tuition) to show how effective teaching and learning are or to inform planning of future provision.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and the standards of the oldest pupils exceed the standard expected nationally, maintaining the position at the previous inspection.
- Dance is a strong feature of the curriculum and standards are good.
- Teaching is well planned to support the progressive learning of skills.
- Extra-curricular activities support pupils' learning very well.
- Systematic arrangements for the assessment of pupils' progress are not in place.

Commentary

83. Lessons in dance and gymnastics were observed during the inspection. In a dance lesson seen, Year 4 pupils skilfully mirrored each other's movements to the music for 'Macavity' from the musical 'Cats'. They interpreted the mood and music with good ability. This is extended by older pupils in the lively, well-attended dance club when they learn a complete routine with individual flair and good expression. It was not possible to see any games, athletics or swimming. By the end of Year 6, assessment records show that most pupils' attainment in swimming meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Observation of extra-curricular activities shows that pupils' abilities are above the standards expected in both games and dance. A significant minority achieve high standards. Boys and girls in Year 6 demonstrate good skills in control of the ball and in positional and teamwork skills. The subject co-ordinator, who organises district school athletics, ensures that pupils have good opportunities to practise and develop these skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they have good support and good access to the curriculum. Good residential provision at the Fairthornes Centre ensures that pupils have experience in adventurous and outdoor pursuits.
84. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, and very good in dance, where musical and dramatic stimuli are used very well in the teaching. High expectations of pupils, together with challenging activities, foster good learning and ensure pupils' sustained concentration and enthusiasm. Good attitudes and behaviour lead to a good pace to the learning. The good demonstration by teachers of skills, and good opportunities for pupils to observe and evaluate others' performances, enables pupils to learn from each other and consolidate their progress. Teachers are very aware of the importance of health and safety and ensure that activities proceed safely and that pupils are well aware of the effect of exercise on the body and the importance of the warm-up and cool-down elements of lessons.
85. Leadership of the subject is good. Beneficial opportunities exist for the co-ordinator to observe teaching and monitor planning and this helps teachers to improve lessons and pupils' performance. There is a well-planned curriculum to ensure progressive steps are taken in the learning of skills. However, there are no records of achievement that inform pupils what they need to do to improve or what skills have been acquired. Good organisation of the extensive extra-curricular activities and the commitment of staff and parent helpers contribute very effectively to the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only two class lessons were seen in personal, social and health education. However, a further session on developing social skills for a small group of pupils with behavioural difficulties was also seen. These events, together with discussions with staff and pupils, show that provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching encourages pupils to think carefully about personal dilemmas and social responsibilities.
- Pupils who need it are given very good extra help to develop social skills.

Commentary

86. Teachers are skilled at using examples and posing questions that promote lively discussion and debate amongst pupils. This gives good help to pupils in reflecting on rights and wrongs, in understanding others' points of view and in thinking deeply about difficult choices they may have to confront and the consequences of their decisions. Teaching of social skills to pupils who find compliance with classroom rules and routines difficult shows commendable sensitivity, patience and persistence. These pupils are given plenty of encouragement and help to develop the self-discipline they find so difficult.

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 | 3 |
| 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 | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| 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).

