

INSPECTION REPORT

**St Nicholas' Chantry Church of England Voluntary
Controlled Primary School**

Clevedon

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109231

Headteacher: Mr Peter Treasure-Smith

Lead inspector: Mrs Rowena Onions

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 257880

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 Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	325
School address:	Highdale Avenue Clevedon
Postcode:	BS21 7LT
Telephone number:	01275 873132
Fax number:	01275 873132
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Shona Blease
Date of previous inspection:	5 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Nicholas Chantry Primary School is a school of above average size, with 325 pupils on roll. The school caters for pupils from the age of four to eleven years, with a broadly equal number of boys and girls. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and 95 per cent of pupils are of white British ethnicity. The school is situated in the town of Clevedon. Most pupils live close to the school. A higher than average number of pupils leave or join the school at times other than at the usual times of admission and transfer. The socio-economic context of the school is broadly average, but the percentage of pupils taking free school meals is below the national average banding, at five per cent. The pupils enter the reception classes with a very wide range of attainment, but overall, this is about average. There are 62 pupils (19 per cent) currently identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is close to the national average. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school has pupils with a wide range of special needs. The school has Investor in People status and a Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18354	Mrs Rowena Onions	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music
9999	Mrs Rona Orme	Lay inspector	
23412	Mr Alvin Jeffs	Team inspector	English, special educational needs
32262	Mr Jeff Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education
12394	Mrs Carole May	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, geography, history, religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited

National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's **effectiveness** is **satisfactory** as is the **value for money** it provides. Pupils enter the school with average attainments and leave with above average attainments in English, mathematics and science. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, as is pupils' achievement, but both teaching and achievement are good for pupils in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils of lower attainment achieve well. Parents are confident that the school provides well for their children and pupils like school. The overall leadership and management is satisfactory, but the leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher are good, as is the governance of the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have actively influenced improvements in behaviour in class and a significant and sustained rise in standards in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils are taught well when they are grouped by age or attainment, but teaching and learning are satisfactory in lessons where pupils are of mixed age and attainment.
- Although behaviour in lessons is mostly good, some pupils lack self-discipline outside class.
- The school provides well for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils who are gifted or talented are thoughtfully provided for.
- Marking and target setting are not used well to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Some subjects and areas of the school are not sufficiently well led and managed.
- Additional activities enhance the basic curriculum. This assists pupils to enjoy their learning.

The school has shown **satisfactory improvement** since the last inspection in 1998. Standards by Year 6 have risen in English, mathematics, science, and in religious and physical education. The school has addressed the issues identified in the last report, but assessment and the role some co-ordinators play remain in need of further improvement. A number of other aspects of the school that were reported to be good in the last inspection report, including pupils' behaviour and the overall leadership and management of the school, are now only satisfactory. Despite this, there is substantial evidence that these aspects are significantly improved since the appointment of the current headteacher. The school's restricted budget has been a significant barrier to the raising of achievement, but the school has worked hard to overcome this.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Current attainment by Year 2 pupils is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the reception classes attain average standards in relation to the national goals for this age child. They achieve in a satisfactory way, as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, including those with higher attainments, achieve well and attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they reach Year 6. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do well throughout the school. By Year 6, pupils attain above average standards in history and in religious and physical education.

Pupils' personal qualities are **satisfactory** overall as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in class, but outside of lessons, the behaviour of some pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.**

The quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory overall. When teachers teach lessons where pupils are grouped by age or attainment, teaching and learning are good. This happens more often in Years 3 to 6 and thus the overall impact of teaching is good in these year groups. Where this is not the case, teachers do not always adjust their teaching to the needs of different groups in the class. Recent changes in the way the reception classes are organised have had an impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and this is now good. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well in most lessons. Teaching assistants play a valuable role when they teach small groups of pupils. Good use has been made of assessment in raising standards in Years 3 to 6. The marking of pupils' work is not, however, contributing in the way that it could and pupils are not always sure how to improve what they do.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Pupils are presented with a varied programme that assists them to enjoy school. The wide variety of out-of-lesson activities provides pupils with good opportunities to learn further. This has a particular impact on standards attained in physical education. The school's restricted budget means that resources are barely satisfactory and the number of teaching assistants is low. This is a barrier to the raising of attainment.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and means that these pupils do well. Procedures for child protection are good as are those for health and safety. The school has a good partnership with parents and good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The current headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors in making substantial ongoing improvements to the education provided. There is clear vision focused on the raising of standards. Their leadership of the school is good. Although some other key staff work effectively, some have not had time and opportunity to improve their own leadership and management skills or to influence teaching, learning and standards in their areas of responsibility.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are supportive of the school. Parents are happy with the education provided. Pupils like school and a large number choose to participate in activities arranged outside lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the consistency and impact of teaching so that pupils achieve as well as they can in all lessons no matter how they are grouped.
- Ensure that pupils behave well in all settings.
- Further develop the quality of assessment, paying particular attention to marking and target setting.
- Develop the effectiveness of key staff so that all subjects and parts of the school are equally well led and managed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve in a satisfactory way. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average as they were at the time of the last inspection. By Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 achieve in a satisfactory way. In Years 3 to 6, they achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by Year 6 pupils have improved significantly since the appointment of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- In lessons where pupils are of mixed age and attainment, they do not all achieve as well as they could.
- Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school.
- Higher attaining pupils, including some who are gifted or talented, achieve well in Years 3 to 6.
- By Year 6, standards in religious education and history are above average. Standards in physical education are above average throughout the school.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with a wide range of attainments, but overall this is broadly average. Observation of current Year 1 pupils, together with scrutiny of teachers' records, shows that, by the end of the reception year, pupils' attainment was average in all aspects of their development. They had achieved in a satisfactory way. The organisation of the reception classes has undergone a significant change in the current term, and children are now making good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (13.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.9 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In 2003 national tests, standards attained by Year 2 pupils were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards were well below those attained in similar schools. Inspection evidence is that the current Year 2 group are doing a little better and are set to attain average standards by the end of the year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (27)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (25.1)	26.8(26.7)
science	29.4 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)

3. In the national tests in 2003 in Year 6, standards in English and science were above the national average and standards in mathematics were well above average. Because there are somewhat fewer higher attaining pupils amongst the current year 6 group, current standards in these subjects are above average.
4. In the last two years, the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has led very successful work to improve the impact of teaching on learning and standards. This work has been focused on Years 3 to 6 where, two years ago, standards were below average, showing that pupils were not achieving enough. Management decisions, such as the grouping of pupils by a mix of age and attainment and the careful use of information from testing pupils, have had a direct, very positive influence on standards. Because such attention has not been focused on younger pupils, improvements have not been in evidence. The school is now beginning to look more closely at the teaching of younger pupils with the intention of securing the same improvement.
5. In lessons where pupils are of mixed age and attainment, teachers are not always sufficiently good at ensuring that all pupils have appropriately challenging work. This has a negative effect on achievement and lowers standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. Where pupils are placed in sets that narrow the attainment range of the group, they generally achieve well. This strategy is more often adopted for pupils in Years 3 to 6, but there are instances when younger pupils are grouped in this way, for instance for lessons in information and communication technology (ICT), and the same positive impact on achievement and learning is evident. The strategy is being successfully used in the new organisation of the reception classes.
6. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that these pupils, together with those of lower attainment, make good progress. They achieve well. Most of these pupils leave the school with the basic skills and abilities they will need to successfully complete work in the secondary school.
7. Challenging work, together with weekly special classes, helps ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve well academically in Years 3 to 6. The school is careful to identify pupils with special musical and sporting talent and to help steer them to take up activities both in and out of school that will help them develop further. In swimming, for example, pupils attend activities and clubs that have helped them to raise standards to such an extent that St Nicholas Chantry was the most successful state school competing in some events of the national swimming championships.
8. A high attendance at extra-curricular activities, together with good teaching, means that pupils achieve well in physical education. Older pupils also achieve well in religious education and history. This is largely due to the well-informed, enthusiastic teaching they receive in these subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and their personal qualities are satisfactory overall. In lessons, most pupils behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They develop positive relationships with teaching staff. There is, however, some unsatisfactory behaviour around the school and in the playground. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory as is their attendance and punctuality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of good systems in place for promoting harmonious relationships, self-confidence and good behaviour, pupils' behaviour has improved over the last eighteen months.

- The great majority of pupils behave well in class.
- Occasionally, the behaviour of some pupils outside classrooms is unsatisfactory.
- The good provision for pupils' moral development results in them knowing right from wrong.
- Registers accurately record the number of pupils in school, but they are not kept up to date with reasons for absence as the school's policy requires.

Commentary

9. At the time of the last inspection in 1998, pupils' behaviour and attitudes were all found to be good. School records show, however, that at the time of appointment of the current headteacher there was considerable disruptive behaviour in lessons and around the school. From discussions with parents, staff, governors and pupils it is clear that behaviour has improved a great deal over the past eighteen months. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to improve this situation and behaviour in most lessons is now good. Currently, pupils express positive views about the school and parents are pleased by the way that the school encourages their children to become mature and responsible. Pupils with language, literacy and behaviour difficulties are fully included with other pupils. As a result, they feel equally at home in the classroom or in the small groups where they receive good attention to their learning needs. The school has a clear focus on promoting good behaviour and supporting those individuals who find difficulties in this area. Provision for the early development of personal skills in the reception classes is good and most children meet the national goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. It was evident during the inspection, however, that a small number of the reception class children were beginning to copy some of the less satisfactory behaviour seen in the playground.
10. Much of the improvement in behaviour is due to the good systems in place for rewarding good behaviour and dealing with the unacceptable. There are clear systems for rewarding good behaviour. The procedures for dealing with poor behaviour are known to all staff, parents and pupils. There has been one exclusion in the last year, which was managed appropriately. The school has employed a behaviour support leader who has worked hard to improve the behaviour at playtime and during the lunch hour. Parents and pupils are satisfied that the rare incidents of bullying and oppressive behaviour are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively. In discussion with pupils, it was clear that they know what to do if they have a problem. The school is aware that there is still some unsatisfactory behaviour in and around the school and is working towards further improvement.
11. Pupils do not yet automatically extend good behaviour to all circumstances and some display a lack of self-control in less closely supervised situations. In the dining room, corridors and playground some unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour are evident. Pupils do not always show sufficient respect for non-teaching staff and visitors. On rare occasions, this less satisfactory behaviour is also apparent in class.
12. The school works hard to develop good relationships, and moral and social development are well promoted throughout the school. This encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong, develop their own views and beliefs, and value and respect each other. Teachers promote a good working environment and this contributes to pupils' achievement. Pupils are encouraged to undertake roles of responsibility, with older pupils acting as 'buddies' to younger pupils or running the school council. Spirituality and cultural awareness are satisfactory. The daily act of worship, religious education, history, geography, art and design and especially music contribute to these aspects of personal development.
13. Registers are accurately completed at the beginning of each session so that staff know how many pupils are in school. However, the reasons for absence are not regularly filled in so that there appears to be a large amount of unauthorised absence. Scrutiny of absence notes and holiday forms shows that this is not the case. The school acknowledges that reasons for absence need to be filled in much more frequently.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.1
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background
Chinese
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
310	1	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
9	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall. It is good for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The use of assessment is variable, however, with the lack of consistency in marking and target setting making it unsatisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Newly improved strategies and organisation have ensured that teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6.
- Some aspects of assessment are used well to raise standards in Years 3 to 6; however, this is not yet the case in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils, especially in lessons where they are of mixed age and attainment.
- Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well taught.
- Marking and target setting are not used well enough to ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- When they are working with specific groups of pupils, teaching assistants play a very positive part in the education provided.
- The use of homework is not consistent.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	8 (15%)	25 (46%)	17 (31%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	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.

14. A good deal of thought and effort has gone into improving the quality of teaching and learning. Over the last two years, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have identified and implemented a number of successful strategies to do this. The main focus of these activities has been in Years 3 to 6, where there was considerable underachievement amongst the pupils. The results of end-of-year testing and termly assessments have been used well to organise pupils into groups, to target extra help to both lower and higher attaining pupils and to help ensure that teachers have realistically high expectations. Teaching and learning are now good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has already identified the need to move the focus of school improvement work to Years 1 and 2, where assessment information is not as effectively used.
15. Throughout the school, a focus has been placed on the improvement of the way teachers use questions to promote thinking and learning and there are many lessons where good questioning is a key element of the success of the lesson. Similarly, an element of the most successful teaching is the way at the beginning of the lesson teachers are clear with pupils about what they expect them to learn and then return to this at the end of the lesson to check the learning that has taken place. This too, has been a focus for improvement.
16. In the current term, significant changes have been made in the organisation of the reception classes. The children are often taught in small groups and this enables staff to focus more tightly their planning and support. Although not yet fully established, this organisation is already having a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
17. In the rest of the school, teachers are not, however, always sufficiently clear in their planning or in their delivery about what it is that they want pupils of different ages and attainments to learn in a lesson. This has a particular impact when there is a wide range of attainment in a class, a situation that is more common in Years 1 and 2 than in the rest of the school. Thus, the overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Teachers identify different activities for groups of pupils, but the differences in difficulty of these are often in the way a task is to be presented on paper. For example, a similar scientific concept will be written about by one set of pupils and drawn by a lower attaining group. This means that some, particularly older or higher attaining pupils, do not gain subject specific skills and knowledge at as high a level as they could. The small number of less than satisfactory lessons are generally caused by a failure to identify the exact learning that the teacher expects of different pupils in the class.
18. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well. There is particularly good work carried out by teaching assistants specialising in language and early literacy skills. This is characterised by careful attention to individual targets, good planning that links to pupils' individual plans and the good use of language in explaining tasks. The special educational needs co-ordinator supports the teaching of these pupils well, both by assisting teachers to plan for their needs in class and by providing good small-group teaching.
19. Work is conscientiously marked, but only on occasion does the marking show pupils where they have succeeded with the learning identified for the activity or how they could improve their work. Pupils report that they do not feel that marking helps them as much as it could and they say that sometimes this is because they cannot read the teacher's writing. There are, however, some examples of good practice in some classes that could be used as a model for other teachers. In

some classes, pupils are set targets to help them and their parents know how they could target their efforts towards improvement. This positive practice is not yet in place in all classes. This, together with some unsatisfactory assessment practice in science and the restricted use of data in English and mathematics, means that the use of assessment is unsatisfactory overall.

20. Teaching assistants teach groups of pupils well. They work effectively with pupils of higher or lower attainment and with groups within the class. The skills of these assistants are not, however, always used as well as they could be when a whole class is gathered together by the teacher. Assistants are asked only rarely to contribute directly to teaching or assessment during these sessions.
21. Almost all lessons are conducted in a well-disciplined way. This helps pupils to concentrate and learn. Pupils have good relationships with teachers that make them want to do as they are asked. They are also confident to 'have a go' at activities that are difficult and are not afraid to answer in class even when they are not sure that their answer is correct. At present, school discipline is very much focused on this teacher-pupil relationship and does not always spread to unfamiliar adults.
22. Parents in the pre-inspection meeting and questionnaire voiced a concern about the inconsistency of homework. Practice is inconsistent. In some year groups, homework is regularly given and marked. Older pupils, however, say that they are not sure what homework they will receive or when they will receive it. The inspection team agrees that homework is not playing the part it could in all pupils' learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. It covers all the required subjects and aspects and is made more interesting in a number of ways.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good work is being carried out to challenge and develop higher attaining pupils.
- Some additions to the basic curriculum support learning well.
- A good extra-curricular programme gives pupils good opportunities to learn outside lesson time.
- A new curriculum and approach to teaching is raising standards in the reception classes.
- The number of teaching assistant staffing is low.
- Aspects of accommodation have been improved of late, although there remain some inadequacies.

Commentary

23. As a result of clear leadership, the school has a very positive approach to inclusion. This is apparent in the way that those pupils with special educational needs, in particular in literacy, language and behaviour, are taught and supported. The work provided for pupils experiencing learning difficulties is good, providing pupils with a quiet area with relevant and enjoyable activities. An inclusive attitude is also clear in teachers' attitudes within classes where efforts are made to give pupils a fair opportunity to participate and shine. This is occasionally made less effective by the weaknesses in teaching mixed age lessons reported above.
24. The curriculum meets the National Curriculum requirements and those for the locally agreed syllabus for RE. There is an appropriate policy with regard to sex education and drug misuse. The headteacher has begun a programme of review and development of subjects and, as a result, some schemes of work have been changed or updated.

25. Some curriculum work is imaginative. The 'Quest' programme that seeks to provide challenge to higher attaining pupils is of a high quality, well planned and well linked to language, literacy and numeracy levels of this group. Similarly, the work with less confident pupils linked to the Pyramid Trust has been both imaginative and effective. Good use is made of visitors in subjects such as science and music to interest and motivate pupils. Focus weeks, such as 'arts week' further extend provision and are valued by pupils who talk about them with enthusiasm.
26. The curriculum is further enriched by the good programme of activities available outside of school hours. There is good provision for sporting and cultural activities. After-school clubs take place every day and during the holidays. Pupils clearly enjoy the opportunity to participate in cricket club, line dancing, performances, residential weeks and many swimming activities. The range is good and many pupils benefit from what is provided.
27. A new innovative approach to the way the curriculum is organised for the youngest children in the school is paying dividends in increased progress. This is more fully reported in paragraphs 42-51 of this report.
28. The development of teaching assistants' skills in teaching literacy and language and in supporting behaviour contributes well to work with selected groups of pupils. The number of teaching assistants is low, however, being well below that in many other schools. This places limitations on the amount of small group and individual work available to pupils.
29. Aspects of accommodation identified as in need of improvement in the last inspection report have largely been improved. There is now a good outside learning area for the use of the reception classes and an ICT suite large enough for the teaching of a whole class. The hall still places significant limitations on the teaching of gymnastics. Dining facilities are poor and do not assist the teaching of social behaviour at lunchtime. Resources are just adequate for the delivery of the full curriculum, but financial constraints have meant an inability to develop them in a way that will further contribute to pupil progress.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety well. It provides them with good support, advice and guidance and values their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Care given to pupils is good.
- The school works hard to guide pupils in their personal development.
- The school council provides an effective way for seeking pupils' views and involving them in the life of the school.
- The school has not yet introduced individual targets for pupils to guide their learning.
- Lunchtime and playtime arrangements for the youngest children in the reception classes are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

30. The school has good health and safety, and child protection policies and procedures. These are well implemented and ensure the well-being of all who work in the school. All staff know pupils well. They act quickly if a pupil is unhappy or is experiencing difficulties in managing their behaviour. Good attention is given to the health and safety of pupils. This is improved since the time of the last inspection. The school is in receipt of a Healthy Schools Award to applaud the work in this aspect. A number of improvements are evident since the appointment of the current headteacher. Behaviour and bullying issues are frequently discussed in class and, where required, teachers adapt their programme to meet immediate needs, such as replacing a planned personal, social and health education lesson with a discussion leading from a playground incident. The appointment of the lunchtime behaviour manager has made a

significant contribution to personal development and behaviour management, and her work is warmly appreciated by pupils. Pupils who come under her care are helped to set targets for their own behaviour and are given ways of managing their feelings.

31. The school council is well established in the life of the school. Through their involvement, pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 can explain the democratic process of representing their classmates. Members of the council talk confidently about the suggestions they have made to the school and which have been acted upon.
32. The lack of a whole school approach to target setting identified in paragraph 16 means that pupils are not yet receiving adequate educational guidance.
33. Reception class children join older pupils in the very busy and boisterous playground and noisy dinner hall. This is unnecessary and is beginning to have a negative effect on the behaviour of some of the children.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good partnerships with parents, other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works effectively to maintain a positive partnership with parents.
- The quality of information provided for parents is good.
- The good links with other schools help to enrich the opportunities and experiences offered to pupils.
- The school works well in partnership with the community.

Commentary

34. The school provides good quality information to parents. In the pre-inspection meeting and questionnaire, a small number of parents expressed the view that the school does not inform them well about their children's progress or seek their views. The inspection does not support these opinions. Written reports provide good information about the progress pupils make, being well written and accurate. Parents are given two formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress and well-being during the year. Teachers are available for less formal discussions on request. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly informed of meetings and reviews. Many attend and their children benefit from this involvement. The school makes every effort to let parents know when there is a change in their child's needs and staff are always available for discussion.
35. The range, quality and frequency of general information for parents are also good. The school actively encourages parents to take part in the life of the school and many parents accept the invitation, particularly in the reception classes. The 'Friends Association' provides valuable support for the work of the school not least by raising considerable funds to support new developments such as the ICT suite. The school works hard to find out parents' views by the use of questionnaires, and requests in the fortnightly newsletter. The headteacher is available to talk to parents and pupils every day before and after school, and is clearly approachable and keen to listen.
36. The good links with the local secondary school enhance the curricular and personal opportunities for pupils. Year 5 pupils benefit from an activity day at the secondary school, and good use is made of the secondary school's specialist language status to provide international days at St Nicholas. Good involvement with other primary schools enables pupils to take part in a wide range of sports events and music festivals. Pupils have, for example, the chance to

perform in the Colston Hall, Bristol, because the school participates in the North Somerset Schools Christmas Festival.

37. The school benefits from good links with the community, for example through contact with the local church. A close link with a local business is particularly beneficial. This business has, in conjunction with the school, trained staff to listen to pupils read. The weekly support provided by a large number of these staff has impact both on standards and on the status of reading in the pupils' eyes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, is providing good leadership and management. The quality of leadership and management in other key aspects of the school varies, but is satisfactory overall. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's good leadership and management have had significant impact on standards and achievement, particularly amongst pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The school's self-evaluation has ensured that appropriate priorities for improvement are identified in the school improvement plan.
- The leadership and management of some key staff and subject co-ordinators lack consistency and impact.
- The headteacher effectively monitors the school's performance but key staff and subject co-ordinators need more opportunities to monitor and evaluate.
- Finances are well managed and used, so the school makes the most of the money it has.
- The governing body is effective and well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Commentary

38. Leadership and management were judged very good in the last inspection report. When the present headteacher took up his post two years ago, however, evidence shows that there were significant leadership and management issues that needed to be addressed, particularly in relation to standards and behaviour. The headteacher has been successful in addressing these issues and he is providing the school with good, and on occasions very good, direction in most aspects of leadership and management. The headteacher's good leadership and management are highlighted by the improved behaviour of pupils in class, the strong focus on developing assessment procedures, improved standards in Year 6, and closer links between governors and the school. Under the headteacher's leadership, the school has become increasingly inclusive, for example through the development of the provision for higher attaining pupils including the gifted and talented. The senior management team and the governing body have a day-to-day involvement in the work relating to pupils with special educational needs. Funds identified for these pupils are used appropriately and the school has shown considerable imagination in developing the role of teaching assistants supporting language, literacy and behaviour.
39. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher and the local education authority, effectively monitors the school's performance. He monitors the quality of teaching and offers good analysis and advice to teachers. Planned opportunities are used to seek the views of pupils and parents about the school's performance. The school improvement plan is of good quality and sets out priorities for development that are clearly related to needs. Past actions and improvements have been very successfully directed towards teaching, learning, and standards

in Years 3 to 6 where there was significant underachievement. There now needs to be more emphasis on evaluating and improving the education provided for the younger pupils.

40. The impact that key staff and subject co-ordinators have on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching varies considerably. The marked impact of focused leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher on standards in Years 3 to 6 is yet to be matched by similar improvements in Years 1 and 2. The impact subject co-ordinators have on standards, teaching and learning lacks consistency. Opportunities for key staff and subject co-ordinators to analyse standards and monitor teaching are limited by lack of available funding to provide them with time away from their class in which to undertake such activities. Where subjects have had the benefit of being the focus for school improvement, for example mathematics, physical education and ICT, the leadership and management of the subject are good. Where this is not the case, for example in the humanities, the impact of leadership and management is only satisfactory overall. The headteacher is aware of subject co-ordinators' strengths and weaknesses, and good plans, in part through effective performance management, are in place to enable them all to reach at least a good level of performance.
41. The size of the school's budget means that it is able to spend a far smaller than average amount of money per pupil per year. This low expenditure is evident, for instance, in the small number of teaching assistants, the barely adequate resourcing and the inability to give co-ordinators time to fulfil their role. It represents a significant barrier to the raising of standards that the school has to work hard to overcome. The headteacher and governing body have used very good financial management methods to achieve a balanced budget that makes the best use of the available financial resources and grants. An underspend caused by an unexpected increase in pupil numbers and the reorganisation of provision for the youngest pupils now leaves the school in a somewhat better financial position. Governors have already earmarked this additional money to support the development of the role of the subject co-ordinator in checking and improving work in their subjects. The principles of best value are applied well and contribute to the improved cost effectiveness of the school.
42. The governing body meets all its statutory responsibilities well through careful delegation and oversight. The governing body collectively knows the school's strengths and where it needs to develop successfully using the insights of individual members. Whilst providing good support for the headteacher's and senior staffs' key objective to improve standards, the governing body has the confidence to question and challenge professional matters such as staff deployment or the impact of improvement plans. The governing body plays an effective part in shaping the direction that the school takes and it has a significant influence on the strategic development of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	569,888	Balance from previous year	7,508
Total expenditure	554,289	Balance carried forward to the next	15,598
Expenditure per pupil	1,689		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception year) is now **good**.

43. Children enter the reception classes with a very wide range of abilities but, overall, their attainment is broadly average. Evidence from assessments of pupils as they left the reception classes and observation of these pupils, only relatively new to Year 1, show that over the last year the children made secure progress and achieved in a satisfactory way, attaining the national goals set at the end of the year. There has been good improvement in the provision since the last inspection. There is, for example, a new secure and well-resourced outdoor play area and this is used well as an integral part of the reception class space when planning lessons and activities.
44. Leadership and management are good overall. A well thought out, innovative curriculum that reflects good early education practice is now in place. Teaching and learning are good. Children are organised into small groups and a good mix of direct teaching, linked directed activity and self-initiated activities are planned. Children are given good opportunities to explore and discover as well as to undertake more 'formal' work. Teachers, teaching assistants and parents work together as a well-orchestrated team. Good use is made of the space and resources available. The small number of teaching assistants available to support the teachers means that the full positive impact of the organisation is currently dependant on the support of parents.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children settle into school very quickly and know both class and school routines well.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between the children themselves are good.
- Some children are beginning to copy some of the less acceptable behaviour of the older pupils at playtime and lunchtime.

Commentary

45. Standards and achievement in this area of learning are satisfactory and most children attain the early learning goals by the end of their first year in school. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall and there are many good features that are becoming more evident as the new classroom organisation is established. The teachers and their assistants ensure that children quickly learn the correct way to behave. Adults encourage the development of social skills in a variety of ways. Children are constantly encouraged to take turns and share. Children with special educational needs are well integrated and receive good support. All are encouraged to join in, try new things and to persevere with a task.
46. Children are routinely given the opportunity to select what they want to do and reflect upon how well they have achieved. They are shown how to work together co-operatively on a task and given opportunities to work independently. On occasion, however, when children say they cannot do something, such as write their name, staff do it for them instead of encouraging them to 'have a go'. There are no opportunities for children to help to plan and organise snack time because they take their snack out into the main playground. This practice is detrimental to the development of social skills because some children copy some of the boisterous behaviour of the older pupils. A similar situation occurs in the dining room where there is sometimes unsatisfactory behaviour.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff place high priority on speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- More high-quality picture books are needed both for book corners and in 'Big Book' form for use with large groups.

Commentary

47. Standards of communication, language and literacy were average at the end of the reception year in July 2003. Teaching and learning are now good. The current children are already achieving well in developing their speaking and listening because the new way of teaching is allowing staff and parents to work with smaller groups. Children are given opportunities to share news and contribute to question and answer sessions when working as a whole class with the teacher and when being taught in small groups.
48. The current Year 1 pupils' knowledge of linking letters and sounds, and the standards they achieve in writing, are average. These pupils made satisfactory progress over their reception year. The new organisation and the emphasis placed on early reading and writing skills by the class teachers, however, are already causing faster progress and this indicates that standards are in line to be higher for the current reception age children. The development of reading and writing skills is given a high priority. Many lessons include the reinforcement of initial sounds and the reading of simple words. Children learn letters and sounds through playing board games and when using the computer. They are given the opportunity to watch adults demonstrate writing, and opportunities are provided for children to practise writing when playing. Children routinely take books home to practise reading. The selection of picture books to look at and share in class and the range of 'Big Books' for teaching are, however, too small.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

- The new organisation supports the teaching and learning of mathematical skills very well.
- Support staff and parents are used well to support children in their learning and help them make good progress.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good because all adults give the teaching and learning of mathematics a high priority. They work with children in small groups using well-designed games and activities that help children to learn in a practical way. They question the children whilst they are engaged in a variety of activities and are good at getting them to count and recognise numbers, shapes and size. This good teaching is leading to good achievement by the children and they are in line to achieve above average standards by the end of the year. This is an improvement on the standards achieved by previous reception children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

50. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about this wide-ranging area of learning because too few aspects of it were observed. From the evidence gained both in the reception classrooms and from the work of the previous reception classes, standards attained in the last year were average. The new organisation, however, offers scope for children to develop and practise their skills more frequently and, as a result, standards are set to improve.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The newly created outdoor play area is a valuable asset to teaching and learning.

Commentary

51. In July 2003, reception children reached average standards and had achieved in a satisfactory way. There is, however, a newly created outdoor area that the staff are using well to provide a range of activities every day to help children develop both small and large movement skills. A range of very interesting activities is provided. When using wheeled toys, most children show good co-ordination skills and awareness of space. Fine muscle control is being developed well, both inside and out, through use of chinks, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, paint, small toys and construction kits. Teachers also use the school hall and large playground for more formal lessons. On occasion, the effectiveness of these lessons is reduced when children wait too long for a turn at an activity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills are taught well when children are working directly with an adult.
- Opportunities are provided for children to practise the skills that they are taught during their play.

Commentary

52. Standards were average in July 2003. Good teaching is now enabling children to develop their creative skills well and they are progressing well in their creative development. Their imagination is developed well during role-play in formal lessons led by the class teacher, and there are several areas for imaginative play. Children are taught skills in a wide range of art activities and are given sufficient time to revisit them and practise on their own. There are good opportunities for pupils to experiment with making models from junk, cutting, sticking and experimenting with a variety of materials and tools. Opportunities to sing and play percussion instruments are provided regularly and the instruments displayed so children can experiment with them. As a result of the increased opportunity to practise the skills taught and from the work produced already this term, standards are on course to be above average by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are above average.
- Attention to handwriting and spelling is variable from class to class. This means that pupils are not always encouraged to produce work at their highest standard.
- Pupils of higher and lower attainment, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and achieve well.
- Although there is good reinforcement of language and literacy skills in other subjects in some classes, practice is inconsistent.
- There are some inconsistencies in the way pupils are taught in different classes.
- Assessment is not always used sufficiently in helping pupils to make progress.

Commentary

53. Provision has improved since the time of the last inspection, when it had some weaknesses. By Year 6, good teaching is helping pupils to achieve well in the full range of English skills. Pupils conduct a discussion well and are articulate in expressing their ideas. Reading has also developed well by this stage. Pupils read with expression, take on character parts in play scripts and enjoy reading longer books. They have a good understanding of how to use a library and non-fiction books when researching. The most recent standards achieved in national assessments at age eleven were well above average and this represented very good improvement on previous years. The standard of written work on a day-to-day basis is somewhat lower, but still above average. Presentation varies widely with pupils' handwriting and spelling skills sometimes marring the overall quality of their work
54. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve in a satisfactory way in reading and writing. Standards are on course to be average by the end of the year. Standards attained by Year 2 pupils have remained largely unchanged since the time of the last inspection. Following a dip in results in the 2003 national tests, the school has paid greater attention to both reading and writing in Years 1 and 2, more attention has been given to pupils with special educational needs and more consistent approaches to teaching have been adopted. There is evidence that this is already beginning to have some effect. Pupils are now on course to meet average standards. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils can all speak in grammatically accurate sentences, using vocabulary that is appropriate and often vivid. They enjoy reading and use a range of skills that assist them in enjoying books and using the library. They write independently for a number of purposes but their handwriting varies from rudimentary print to uniform and tidy joined handwriting.
55. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school achieve well in English. Through careful teaching in class and through well thought out extra support, pupils are given the skills and confidence to make good progress. They improve their ability to talk with confidence, increasing the range of their vocabulary and their enjoyment of reading and writing. In Years 3 to 6, higher attaining pupils also receive good quality extra teaching and the benefits of this were seen in the significantly raised number of pupils attaining higher levels in the 2003 national tests.
56. There are some inconsistencies between the teaching in different classes in the school. Not all teachers are planning sufficiently for what different groups of pupils will learn during a lesson. This means that some opportunities are missed to challenge and extend pupils' literacy skills. Expectations of how pupils will present their work differ and some teachers do not hold high enough expectations concerning standards of spelling and handwriting, especially when pupils

are working in different subjects. Although the school has adopted the strategies for teaching and learning identified in the National Literacy Strategy, there are inconsistencies in the way these are used.

57. Some good use is made of strategies to assess pupils' work. A termly assessment is made of pupils' writing and this is used to check their progress. Good use has been made of this information in Years 3 to 6, both in grouping pupils and in targeting extra support. This has had a direct effect on raising standards. The school is only just extending this practice to younger pupils. Although a start has been made in setting targets to assist pupils to improve their work, this is currently limited to pupils in Years 3 and 4. Marking is used well by some individual teachers to help pupils target their efforts to improve, but this practice is not to be seen in many classes. The overall leadership and management of English are satisfactory. Good strategies have been put into place to improve practice in Years 3 to 6, and similar strategies are beginning to be implemented in Years 1 and 2. The subject co-ordinator, however, has not had time to observe the teaching of others and thus opportunities to spread good practice and improve some weaknesses have been missed.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The use and development of English in other subject lessons is patchy. Some teachers take every opportunity to emphasise, use and extend English in research activities within religious education, history and geography. There is also some reinforcement of subject specific vocabulary in subjects such as physical education and mathematics. Some opportunities, however, are missed. This means that vocabulary development is not as strong as it could be and not all pupils are given sufficient opportunity to produce longer pieces of writing. Pupils have the opportunity to use computers to present their work, but the unplanned nature of the link between English and ICT means that opportunities are missed to use ICT in other ways in English lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to achieve well. By the end of Year 6, they attain above average standards.
- In lessons where pupils are mixed by age or attainment, they do not always make sufficient progress.
- Questioning is used effectively in numeracy to extend pupils' learning.
- In lessons where pupils are grouped by age and levels of attainment, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
- Marking, target setting and assessment procedures are not used sufficiently well to help pupils understand how good their work is and how it could be improved.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are good.

Commentary

59. The quality and impact of teaching in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and pupils achieve in a satisfactory way, attaining average standards. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6 and as a consequence, pupils achieve well. Since the time of the last inspection, standards in Year 2 have risen in line with the rise seen nationally. There was a dip in results in the 2003 national assessments due in some part to the number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Standards of work seen during the inspection were average amongst the current Year 2 group. Standards in Year 6 are now greatly improved compared to those attained by pupils at the time of the last inspection. This improvement has taken place over the last two

years. Whilst results in national assessments in 2003 were very good in Year 6, the standards of work seen and the level of understanding expressed by pupils in discussions during the inspection, confirm the judgement that current standards are good.

60. The teaching of pupils in mixed age groups in Years 1 and 2 does not always sufficiently challenge pupils to make good progress. Teaching is not always sufficiently focused on what learning the teacher wishes to take place. Some poor management of time and resources means that opportunities are missed to support pupils where they show a lack of understanding, or to promote further thinking and learning amongst pupils who already understand.
61. Questioning is used effectively during numeracy sessions to extend pupils' learning. This is particularly the case in lessons for older pupils. It is used effectively to encourage pupils to think mathematically and to explain the strategies they use to answer or solve problems. Teachers use visual images and practical demonstrations well to develop pupils' understanding.
62. In Years 3 to 6, where pupils are grouped both by age and attainment, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Teaching styles are imaginative with pupils' understanding well supported by good use of resources and practical demonstrations. Teachers provide time for pupils to reflect and recognise their mistakes whilst also providing them with strategies for improvement. At the end of lessons, time is used effectively to review what pupils have learned and to highlight what they need to learn next.
63. Although pupils' books are looked at by teachers and work marked right or wrong, opportunities to inform them about their learning and what they need to learn next are missed. Target setting procedures are being introduced for all age groups and they now need to be used consistently to establish high expectations for all pupils and staff. Assessment procedures that track pupil progress need to be used more effectively to identify pupil underachievement and to make staff aware of the pupils' needs.
64. Leadership and management are good. The mathematics co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has been instrumental in bringing about the improvements that have led to raised standards in Years 3 to 6. There are good plans for further improvement including a strong focus on developing the assessment skills of all the staff to make them better informed about pupil achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The breadth of the curriculum ensures that pupils have a satisfactory all-round knowledge in mathematics that they are able to use to support work in subjects like science, music, history and design and technology. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use knowledge of shape and measurement to design a classroom and in Years 3 to 6, data handling skills are used in science. As pupils gain greater benefit from using the recently established ICT suite, this is increasing their enthusiasm for mathematics as well as promoting achievement in aspects such as the handling of data.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and attain above average standards by Year 6.
- Assessment in science is unsatisfactory.
- The division of pupils into age and attainment groups helps the teachers to more accurately match work to pupils' needs.

- Pupils are given good opportunities to undertake practical work in science.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to use ICT skills in science lessons.

Commentary

66. Standards in science have improved since the year of the last inspection when results in the national tests were well below average. Initially, the rate of this improvement was in line with the improvement seen nationally. In the last two years, the improvement at the end of Year 6 has been much more rapid and this means that Year 6 pupils now attain above average standards. Pupils have good knowledge of the required aspects of science and are able to question, investigate and report findings well. Their achievement is good. Pupils in Year 1 also achieve well, as do lower attaining Year 2 pupils. Potentially higher attaining pupils in Year 2 do not achieve as well as they could. Overall achievement in Years 1 and 2, therefore, is only satisfactory.
67. As in other subjects, although there are examples of good marking that tells pupils very clearly what is good about their work and how they can improve it, this is not consistent throughout the school and, therefore, does not have the impact that it should.
68. Although teachers have sufficient knowledge of the level at which their pupils are operating to plan work that meets the needs of the majority of their class, there is no systematic assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in science. This means that teachers are not always sufficiently aware of the level of pupils' scientific understanding. This has a particular impact when there is a wide range of levels of attainment represented in a class. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are split into different groups, by a combination of age and attainment and teachers are able to more easily and successfully plan work that assists pupils to learn well. Younger pupils are taught in mixed age groups. In lessons for these pupils, teachers plan different work for older and higher attaining pupils but the increased difficulty of this is often in the English aspects of the tasks rather than being at a higher scientific level. Thus, these pupils do not learn or achieve as well as they could. It is for this reason that teaching is more successful in Years 3 to 6, being good overall. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory.
69. The school places due importance on pupils being able to investigate in science. Work is often of a practical nature and pupils are actively taught how to plan an investigation, how to work methodically and how to talk and write about their work. This helps them to think scientifically and to understand and remember the scientific facts they are taught.
70. Pupils have suitable opportunities to apply what they have learned in mathematics and English lessons to their work in science. On occasion, work in ICT has a scientific link, but teachers are not yet planning ways in which ICT skills can help pupils to learn in science.
71. Subject leadership is good and the effects of this are seen in improved standards. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the way science could be further improved. She has already identified assessment as an area for improvement but, as the focus for school improvement has been English and mathematics, there has not been opportunity to develop this further. Opportunities to manage the subject, for example through regular monitoring, have been similarly limited and overall management of the subject, therefore, is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in ICT is improving as a result of good improvement in resources and teachers' knowledge of ICT.
- Teaching is good and pupils are achieving well.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum needs to be better developed.

Commentary

72. Pupils are currently achieving well in ICT. Standards are rising as pupils have more access to better equipment and more informed teaching. The standard of work seen during the inspection was often good but the overall standards, taking into account attainment in all aspects of work including the use of ICT across the curriculum, are satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection. There are, however, significant improvements in the overall provision.
73. The school's ICT suite has only very recently been updated. The suite now provides pupils with access to good quality, up-to-date computers. The school's leadership and management have shown a good level of enterprise in establishing the suite for the pupils and the Friends Association has made a significant financial contribution. The updating of the suite has also recently released computers for pupils to use in the classroom. Technical support provided by a member of staff from the local comprehensive school is valuable in maximising the use of computers by minimising technical problems.
74. Teachers have had the benefit of training in ICT. This has improved their skills and the overall quality of teaching and learning. The standard of teaching seen during the inspection was good, with some examples of very good teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge, they set high expectations, and they are quick in sorting out pupils' problems so that no time is lost. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. They are enthusiastic and answer questions sensibly. During pupil discussions, Year 6 pupils were positive about the subject.
75. The leadership and management are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. There is clarity of vision and the priorities in the ICT action plan, which include staff training on monitoring and control, developing interactive teaching and better assessment procedures, are entirely appropriate. The lead shown in creating a school website and establishing an ICT club are both positive developments.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. This is an area for further development. Pupils use word processing skills in their writing. They use some data handling skills in science and the Internet for information in history and geography. The use of ICT across the curriculum is not yet planned or consistent and in some subjects, opportunities to make cross-curricular links are missed.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected individually and is reported in full below. Inspectors also sampled work in history and geography.

77. Inspectors saw one geography lesson. In history, the work done during the 'Victorian afternoon' in Years 3 and 4 was observed. Samples of work were looked at across the school and inspectors spoke to pupils about their work. Standards in geography by the end of Year 2 and

Year 6 are average. This judgement is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Evidence in pupils' books shows that they cover the required curriculum in geography. Work is planned from a nationally recommended scheme and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Resources are adequate. For the younger pupils, the curriculum is enhanced by studies of the locality around the school and, for the oldest pupils, by the annual residential visit to the Isle of Wight.

78. Standards in history are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be average in both year groups. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and in Years 3 to 6, their achievement is good. Teachers' planning and pupils' work demonstrate that pupils learn important historical skills as they are encouraged to ask questions and make deductions. They investigate different periods of history and look for similarities and differences and they learn how to tell fact from opinion when looking at sources of evidence. They are encouraged to use the library to look things up, and the recently connected Internet provides pupils with additional information. Through their written work, pupils practise and use their literacy skills well. The Victorian afternoon observed gave pupils the opportunity to 'live' as a Victorian child and experience the rigours of a Victorian classroom for themselves. This helped to develop pupils' understanding of the period and to empathise with children long ago. The oldest pupils have made a comprehensive study of events in World War Two and show a good understanding of the effects of rationing, the plight of evacuees and the terror and humiliation of life as a Jew in Germany. Work is generally well planned, but teachers place too little emphasis on providing work for pupils of differing ages and abilities in the same class and this stops overall achievement from being better.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at Year 6 are above average.
- Teachers plan lessons well and make good links with other subjects.
- Different work is not always provided for pupils when they are mixed by age.
- Literacy skills are used in a variety of ways to support the development of the subject.
- Teaching helps pupils to learn *from*, as well *about*, religion.
- Pupils' work is carefully marked but does not always indicate how pupils can improve.

Commentary

79. Standards in Year 2 are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected and pupils achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with local expectations throughout the school. Younger pupils have a good understanding of the main festivals and beliefs of Christianity and some other major world faiths. They identify with the beliefs of others through the Hindu festival of Divali. By Year 6, pupils build a good knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings and practices of various major religions, and reflect on what religious experiences might mean to those who believe. Pupils are, for example, able to bring together their understanding of the Jewish religion and empathise with the experiences of Jews in the Second World War.
80. Teaching is good overall. Teachers use lessons well to bring together history, geography and religion. They have high expectations. They ask searching questions such as 'Love is?' in Years 3 and 4, and 'God is?' in Years 5 and 6. Pupils try hard and wrestle to understand these abstract concepts. There are also opportunities for pupils to reflect on the moral issues that might be raised, for example through a study of world poverty. This has led to pupils raising money for Action Aid.

81. Pupils' work shows that teachers make sure that pupils know and understand what they are to learn in a lesson. Too little attention, however, is paid to providing work for pupils of different ages and levels of attainment.
82. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in appropriate ways, for example comparing religious practices, writing reports, making a contents page for class books and writing 'in role' as if they were part of the crowd at the Crucifixion. Presentation of pupils' work is neat and thoughtful. Marking usually tells pupils how their work could be improved. The co-ordinator has recently taken on the role and has had little time to make any impact upon the subject. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected individually and is reported in full below. Additionally, work was sampled in art and design and music. Design and technology was not inspected.

83. Two art and design lessons were seen, one in a Years 3/4 class and one in a Years 5/6 class. Work on display and in collections of past work was also scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils. Art and design in Years 5/6 is taken by a specialist teacher who successfully promotes the development of skills, for example techniques for drawing from life and the skills involved in using the work of other artists to influence pupils' own work. In these year groups, pupils make good progress. Elsewhere in the school, although pupils have the opportunity to experience a wide range of different types of activity, pupils' skills and knowledge are not systematically built up and their progress and achievement are only satisfactory. 'Arts week' is held once each year and this makes a significant contribution to the art and design curriculum. Last year's week was particularly valuable in extending pupils' experience of different cultural traditions.
84. The only teaching of music inspected was a singing lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4. This lesson was very well taught and pupils showed themselves capable of singing at a good standard. Music is particularly valued in the school and here too older pupils benefit from the knowledge and expertise of a specialist teacher. Discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils showed that the performance element of the subject is successfully promoted. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the concerts they have given to parents and, with other schools, to a wider community. Parents, too, comment favourably about these occasions. There is a choir and there are recorder clubs, as well as peripatetic music tuition to enhance the provision further.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Good extra-curricular sports activities are available to pupils.
- Limited teaching space in the school hall restricts some aspects of provision.

Commentary

85. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards in games are above average and in swimming they are well above average. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The highest attaining pupils represented the school in the national swimming finals and completed their events as the best state school. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in

games. When pupils have the opportunity to swim, they achieve well. Standards in gymnastics are only satisfactory, pupils' progress and achievement being restricted by the size of the school hall.

86. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 1 and 2, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop physical skills such as throwing, catching, running and jumping. Teachers assist pupils in Years 3 to 6 to achieve well through teaching them sequencing skills, techniques and ideas and giving opportunities for them to apply the skills so that they do so with accuracy and good control. Health and safety precautions are suitably reinforced at the start of lessons and in the school hall during lessons. Lessons are well planned and the needs of all pupils are addressed. Teachers use good strategies to coach and demonstrate key skills and use questioning well to extend pupils' learning.
87. There is a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities for both girls and boys. The sports clubs are well supported by teaching staff whilst specialist coaches and staff from the local community college make a valuable contribution. The number of pupils who attend these clubs is high and this provision has a significant impact on overall attainment and achievement.
88. Teaching space in the school hall is limited and restricts some of the provision in physical education and particularly that for older pupils in gymnastics and dance. Good use is made of the limited teaching area available but pupils' skills, techniques and ideas are restricted by having to curb their performance to accommodate the space.
89. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Improvements have been made to the curriculum, and teacher knowledge, expertise and confidence have been increased by the inclusion of the school in a local initiative aimed towards this. The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses and has plans in place for further improvement. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

90. Only three lessons or parts of lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision. Work in personal, social and health education and citizenship is inconsistent. This has been identified by the school and the subject is currently a focus for development. Some lessons seen in personal, social and health education were of a high quality and promoted learning very well. The lack of consistent practice, however, means that in other lessons opportunities are missed to systematically develop the maturity and insights of pupils. Although the school council provides opportunities for pupils to share in the decision-making process, older pupils do not yet have enough experiences of social and consultative activities. This contributes to a lack of maturity in social and recreational settings noticed during the inspection.

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	3
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	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
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	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).