

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rawreth

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115090

Headteacher: Mrs C Bright

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Holmes

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th November 2003

Inspection number: 257885

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:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	104
School address:	Church Road Rawreth
Postcode:	Wickford SS11 8SH
Telephone number:	(01268) 733 298
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Collins
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Nicholas' Controlled Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school situated in the small village of Rawreth, near Wickford in Essex. There are 104 pupils, aged four to 11, of which 48 are boys and 56 are girls. Most of the pupils live in private, owner-occupied housing and about half come from outside the immediate area of the school. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, but overall the socio-economic status of the pupils is in line with what would be expected in most schools across the country. There is a low level of pupil mobility. The school also serves a number of traveller families, whose children attend the school. Most children attend pre-school education before entering the Reception class, when their attainment on entry is below average, particularly in relation to personal and social development.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is below the national average. There are 15 pupils on the SEN register, with one having a statement of special educational needs. Three of the pupils on the SEN register receive school action plus support, with needs ranging from moderate learning needs to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The school has a clear Christian ethos, which is well supported by parents. The vast majority of pupils are from a Christian background, and there are very few pupils whose mother tongue is not English, or who are from a different ethnic group. There are close links with the local parish church, and the school also works well with its partner schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Lead inspector	English Science Information and communication technology (ICT) History Geography Physical education
9588	Anthony West	Lay inspector	
20963	Judith Keiner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Religious education Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Nicholas' is a school which provides **satisfactorily** for its pupils, who are happy in a caring environment. It is well regarded by both its pupils and their parents, and gives **satisfactory value for money**. There is good quality leadership from the headteacher, a clear Christian ethos, the inclusion of all pupils and a positive approach from all staff, including teaching assistants. All involved with the school are committed to maximising pupils' potential. A sound quality of teaching and curriculum provision promotes learning and enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily. There are some barriers to achievement, which the staff work very hard to overcome - the small number of pupils means that they are organised in classes of pupils with different ages. There is also some uncertainty over the date of the new school building.

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

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and provides a good role model to other leaders and managers within the school.
- Pupils achieve well in the junior classes.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the junior classes.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and values are good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is also good.
- There are good levels of inclusion for the education of all pupils, including very good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The curriculum is enriched well by extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
- Pupils are very well cared for and there is a good partnership with parents, St. Nicholas' church, the community and partner institutions.
- Standards of attainment at the age of seven are not high enough in mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistent across the school.
- Subject co-ordinators are not fully focused on raising standards of attainment in their subjects.
- The curriculum for pupils under five does not yet fully match national recommendations.

Since the previous inspection, there has been **a satisfactory improvement in the school's effectiveness**. The school responded appropriately to the issues identified then and has made satisfactory progress in each of the areas, with good progress in provision for multi-cultural education. Standards of attainment have been maintained at a satisfactory level, as has the quality of teaching pupils receive, with improvement in the junior classes. Pupils' behaviour and personal development have improved well, as has the partnership with parents and provision for pupils' care, guidance and welfare. Since the last inspection, there has been a change of headteacher, which has resulted in an improvement in the leadership of the school. Pupils' attendance has declined since the previous inspection, although the school does all it can to ensure pupils' attendance in school. Overall, there is a good capacity to build on achievements and improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	B	B	D
mathematics	E	E	D	E
science	E	E*	E	E*

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

Pupils' achieve satisfactorily overall. In relation to the performance of pupils in other schools standards are below average at seven and in line with the average at 11. Compared to their own prior learning, pupils achieve satisfactorily in the infant classes and well in the junior classes. In the Reception class, most pupils achieve satisfactorily to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress, but achieve standards in mathematics and science, which are below the level expected for seven-year-olds. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and achieve standards in English, mathematics and science in line with the level expected. From the evidence of the inspection, the indications are that the current group of Year 6 pupils will achieve more highly than the 2003 cohort. Pupils aged 11 achieve satisfactorily in all other subject areas. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school ethos promotes spiritual development well and the development of the individual child. **Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, as is their behaviour,** both in class and in and around the school. **Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory** and is below average. There is little unauthorised absence, but too many parents take their children on holiday in term time. Punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is sound with good features.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is sound in the Foundation Stage and infant classes, and good in the junior classes. In the Foundation Stage and infant classes teachers plan effectively and provide a satisfactory quality of learning, but there is insufficient enrichment of pupils' learning in the Foundation Stage, and in the infant class there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. In the junior classes, teachers use their subject knowledge well to engage and stimulate pupils in a variety of well planned activities. Teachers involve all pupils and match work satisfactorily to the needs of different abilities in each class. Teaching assistants are deployed well in all classes and teachers consistently involve all pupils and promote equality of opportunity.

The school provides a **broad and well-balanced curriculum** for its pupils, which includes very good provision for pupils with SEN and a good range of activities to support pupils' achievement outside the main curriculum. The organisation of pupils into mixed-age classes requires careful planning to ensure that all pupils receive continuous and progressive development of their knowledge, understanding and skills in curriculum areas. **Pupils are very well cared for** in a supportive, caring environment. **There is also a good partnership with parents, the community and partner institutions.** Both of these factors encourage pupils to develop individually and as part of the school community and to achieve their best.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school is sound, with good leadership from the headteacher. She has a clear vision for the direction of the school, and is effectively supported by senior staff and the governing body, who are very supportive and fulfil their role and legal responsibilities satisfactorily. Subject co-ordinators are effective in supporting other staff and in developing their subject areas, particularly in core subjects, but their work in raising standards in subjects could be strengthened.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very positive. They are particularly pleased with the leadership and management of the school, the way their children are taught and the expectations the staff have of hard work from the pupils. They think that their children are treated fairly, and that they like school. Parents feel that children behave well, make good progress and are encouraged to become mature. **Pupils** also have positive views about the school. They know that they are expected to work hard

and also that they can get help when they are stuck. Almost all pupils know that there is an adult to go to if they are worried or hurt.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards by age seven in mathematics and science.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning across the school to match the best.
- Strengthen the work of subject co-ordinators in raising standards of attainment.
- Ensure that the curriculum for pupils under five fully matches national recommendations.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards of attainment are in line with national averages at 11, but below what is expected in some subjects at the age of seven. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, achieving well in the junior classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout in the junior classes in relation to their prior learning.
- Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science and ICT by the age of 11.
- Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their application of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school and achieve well.
- Standards of attainment in mathematics and science are not high enough by the age of seven.

Commentary

Starting school

1. When children start school in the Reception class, assessment data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding are wide ranging. For the last few years the overall picture has been one of below average attainment on entry to the school, particularly in the area of personal and social development. Last year most of the Foundation Stage children reached the goals they were expected to achieve by the end of the year. Inspection evidence shows that the current group of Reception children, through the satisfactory provision they are receiving, and the sound progress they are making, are on track to reach the levels expected for their age.

School results in national tests

2. Overall standards in national tests in Years 2 and 6 have varied since the last inspection. The main reason for this variation is the small cohorts of pupils who attend the school. The small numbers of pupils in each year group affects comparisons of the school's performance, both with all schools nationally and with similar schools. In the Year 2 tests, pupils do better in writing than in the last inspection, but not as well in reading or mathematics. In Year 6 the improvement over time has been in line with the national trend. The tables below refer to the test in 2002 because national comparative data for 2003 was not available at the time of the inspection.
3. The table below shows that in 2002 standards in Year 2 were below average in reading, average in writing, but well below average in mathematics. For this year, the indications are that they will be well below average in reading, below average in writing and in line with the average in mathematics.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.4 (13.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	14.8 (17.4)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The table below shows that in 2002 standards in Year 6 tests were above average in English, below average in mathematics, and well below average in science. The indications are that for 2003 attainment in English will be below average, well below average in mathematics and in line with the average in science. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys or girls, or of different groups of pupils, for example, those pupils with SEN, who achieve in line with their ability. What the table does not show is the good progress pupils make against their prior learning and their performance in national tests when they were seven. This was evident in the inspection with pupils making better progress in the junior classes than in the infant classes.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.8)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	26.1 (24.0)	26.7 (26.6)
science	26.1 (24.4)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage

5. At the time of the inspection there were four children of Foundation Stage age in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class, with another group of children due to join the school in January 2004. There is every indication that most children will reach the goals expected for their age by the end of their Reception year because of the sound provision for their learning. Staff provide satisfactorily for children's development in the areas for learning in a mixed age environment, but there are some aspects of the curriculum where provision needs to be developed further, for example, opportunities for children to engage in 'make-believe' environments and imaginative play.

Years 1 and 2

6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because of the satisfactory provision made for their development. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, and those with SEN make good progress because of the very good provision for their needs. Standards are average in reading and writing, but below in mathematics and science. Most Year 2 pupils read fluently with good understanding. Their writing is well formed and usually spelt correctly. Ideas could be developed more with a wider use of vocabulary, and higher attaining pupils could be given more opportunities to write longer pieces of work. In mathematics, there is insufficient challenge for many pupils, including the most able, and not enough provision for mathematical investigations. In science, pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding, but their use of scientific language is weak and there are not enough opportunities to undertake scientific investigations.

Years 3 to 6

7. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make better progress because of good teaching and attain standards in line with the national average in all the core subject areas. SEN pupils again make good progress because of the very good provision they receive to support their needs. In both junior classes all pupils are challenged well and this enables them to make progress appropriate to their needs. In English, pupils read fluently with increasing understanding and use of a wider vocabulary. They write fluently for a range of purposes and audiences and have good opportunities for extended writing. In mathematics, there are higher expectations of pupils' standards of presentation and in science pupils develop a good knowledge and

understanding of their science topics. In mathematics, there are too few opportunities to undertake investigations of everyday problems, and in science pupils could be given more opportunities to record their results using tables, graphs and charts.

Whole school matters

8. Generally pupils make sound use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across other subjects. In literacy there is good use of opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes through history in the upper juniors. In other subject areas, pupils explore links with literacy through the use of specific subject vocabulary, although in science in the infant classes, pupils' use of scientific terminology is weak. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the curriculum but is given greater emphasis in some classes than others. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **satisfactory**, as teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas. During the inspection, examples of pupils' work were seen from several curriculum areas – English, mathematics, science, geography and art and design. More use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning in religious education.
9. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Higher attaining boys and girls achieve equally well, although there is some need for improvement in the attainment of these pupils, particularly in the infant classes. Pupils with SEN achieve well. They receive very good support in class, and a few pupils are given extra support in small, withdrawn groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, values and personal development are strengths of the school. The pupils' relationships with others are very good. Their attendance is unsatisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring ethos of the school permeates all activities, and helps to promote pupils' very good relationships, their good attitudes and personal development.
- The very good role models of the staff and good behaviour management ensure that pupils know the difference between right and wrong and behave well.
- Attendance in school is below the national average, despite the school's best endeavours. Unauthorised absence is better than the national average.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

10. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils are well behaved, polite and courteous and respond well to the caring ethos of the school. Pupils enjoy school and take pride in their work. They are interested and involved in the lessons and out of school activities. Parents are very supportive and happy with the values the school promotes. Staff deal quickly and effectively with any incidents of inappropriate behaviour that occur. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection, and as the table below shows, no pupils have been excluded from school. There have been no instances of racism.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
98	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
3	0	0

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

11. When given opportunities to work independently or in groups, pupils work well co-operatively, sharing and valuing ideas, and concentrating on the task. Pupils with SEN have the same attitudes and values as other pupils.

Relationships

12. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good, and have a positive impact on their learning. They are supportive of each other; older pupils help younger pupils at play and with reading. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided, and enjoy the praise that is often given. Pupils of all ages mix well at playtime and lunchtime, and pupils with SEN take a full and active part in lessons and activities at playtimes.

Personal development

13. **Pupils' personal development is good. It is fostered well by the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** They have a good understanding of right and wrong, and benefit from the very good role models set by the adults in school. Values are promoted well through the school's programme for personal, social and health education. There are opportunities for pupils to enhance their social development, through taking responsibility by being on the School Council. Although a new institution, it is able to influence school affairs and has been invited to attend a school governors' meeting. Pupils have put forward ideas on the development of outside areas, playground markings and have contributed to the school prospectus. In all classes, pupils are keen to act as monitors helping in class and assisting with the running of assemblies. Residential visits for pupils to the Isle of Wight in Years 5 and 6 provide good opportunities for pupils to develop maturity. Pupils are encouraged to be honest, trustworthy and well mannered.

Cultural development

14. The curriculum promotes a good understanding of western and other cultures through all subjects, including music, art and dance. In religious education pupils learn about the major world faiths. There are visitors to school from other countries who have demonstrated culture from around the world and multi-cultural displays in school. Pupils are taken on visits to other places of worship as well as regularly attending the local parish church.

Attendance

15. Attendance at the school is below the national average and is unsatisfactory, although unauthorised absence is less than the national average. The school puts maximum effort into improving pupils' attendance. The main reason why pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory is because of absence through the taking of additional holidays in term time. During 2002 to 2003, almost half of the pupils were absent at some time for this reason. The numbers of

absences is a cause of great concern for the school because of the effect on their progress and achievement.

16. The great majority of pupils arrive punctually for the start of school. Arrangements for registration and record keeping are efficient and fulfil legal requirements.

Authorised absence	
School data	6.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
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 sound, but with good features. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with good teaching and learning in the junior classes. Teaching and learning are enhanced by a broad and balanced curriculum, with good provision of out of school activities to enrich the curriculum and very good provision for pupils with SEN. Very good levels of care and guidance and a good partnership with parents strengthen the ethos and climate for learning in which pupils learn and achieve.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with a good quality of teaching and learning seen in the junior classes. Aspects of learning in the infant classes are in need of improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective use and deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning and achievement.
- The promotion of equality of opportunity and inclusion of all pupils in activities.
- The ability of pupils to work on their own and with others.
- There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- The effectiveness of good planning, teaching methods and application of subject knowledge in the junior classes.
- Pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding, and the amount of work they produce, could be better in the infant classes.
- The use of assessment to match work to the needs of higher attaining pupils could be better in the infant classes.

Commentary

17. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. There are some differences between the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where it is satisfactory, and Years 3 to 6 where it is good. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Both parents and pupils are positive about the teaching staff. Pupils know that they get help when they are stuck and that there are adults to go to when they need support.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1	9	11	1	0	0

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

Common strengths

18. There are some common strengths of teaching that help to underpin the sound quality of pupils' learning. These include high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which enables pupils to work well independently and collaboratively when given the opportunity. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, and teaching assistant are used well in all classes to support the learning of targeted pupils. This good support enables all pupils to benefit from working in small groups with adult help.

Characteristics in good and very good lessons

19. In the best lessons found in the junior classes, teachers plan a good range of activities and use their subject knowledge well to match work accurately to the needs of pupils of different levels of ability. Demonstrations and questioning are used well to make expectations clear to pupils. Pupils are challenged to find out for themselves and go beyond the task set, for example, in a Year 5/6 science lesson, a group of higher attaining pupils took responsibility for their own learning and carried out additional tests on the electrical circuits they were studying. In a Year 3/4 science lesson, higher attaining pupils were again challenged to go further by investigating how to vary the pitch of a sound. Pupils are engaged in their learning and this stimulates them to achieve.

Inclusion

20. There is a fully inclusive approach in all classes, in which teachers and non-teaching staff fully promote equality of opportunity for all pupils. This means that, in most cases, both higher and lower attaining pupils are given the support they need and are set tasks which fully match their ability and challenge them to improve and make progress. The exception to this is the infant classes where higher attaining pupils are not challenged as much as they could be, particularly in mathematics but also in writing. For pupils with SEN, individual targets on their plans are precise and well developed, and these pupils are included in all activities and provision.

Assessing pupils' progress

21. Assessment procedures are sound and used appropriately by staff to assess pupils' progress and target improvement. Day-to-day assessment is good in English, and effective in other areas, being used to inform planning of activities and build on pupils' prior learning experiences. In English and mathematics a process of giving pupils 'next steps' targets has begun, and these targets are written in the front of pupils' books. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' performance in all subjects, although in ICT the assessment scheme isn't yet fully embedded into teaching and learning. In English and mathematics, pupils are tested each year using the optional tests available. In foundation subjects pupils are assessed against National Curriculum level descriptions after each topic or unit of work. To forecast pupils' future performance, and set them long-term targets, the school has started to use a computer-based system from the local education authority, 'Target Tracker'. An area for development, which the school has identified is to involve pupils more in the assessment of their own work.

Homework

22. Homework is set throughout the school and most pupils do it to the best of their ability. It is effective in promoting the development of reading and mathematics, and is also used in some classes for following up class work. Older pupils undertake research for their topics at home or in the school library.

The curriculum

The school provides a **sound** range of learning experiences, which are broad and well balanced. The curriculum caters well for the needs of all pupils, and all statutory requirements are met. It is enriched by a **good** programme of visits and extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Detailed curriculum plans are in place for all subjects.
- The curriculum caters very well for pupils with SEN and those from Traveller backgrounds.
- The library promotes literacy well.
- There is a good enrichment of curriculum provision through a programme of visits, special school events and extra-curricular activities.
- There are weaknesses in planning in some aspects of the Foundation Stage.
- There is an inconsistent approach to mathematical and scientific investigations.

Commentary

Curriculum organisation and planning

23. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been improved by the introduction of detailed curriculum plans, based on national requirements, for all subjects and areas of learning. However, there are currently too few opportunities for mathematical and scientific investigations. A further improvement since the last inspection in this school, with its predominantly white English intake, is the better preparation of pupils for a multi-cultural society, for example through studies of Indian village life and culture in Years 3 and 4, and studies of other religions' festivals in all years. The Foundation Stage curriculum satisfactorily covers the required areas of learning, but provision is not as rich as it could be because the children's programme is too closely based on the Year 1 plans, and the staff do not sufficiently draw on the national guidance, for example by including enough opportunities for make-believe play, creative activities and observing living creatures. Curriculum planning provides satisfactorily for the needs of pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds. The two year rolling programme which covers the needs of the mixed-age classes requires careful checking in all subjects to ensure that all pupils study, in the right sequence, such topics as electricity and forces in science, and the use of electrical motors in design and technology.

Inclusion

24. There is very good curriculum provision for pupils with SEN, because their individual education plans provide very clear guidance on the pupils' curriculum needs for teachers, who use them well in planning lesson tasks which best help the pupils succeed. There is also very good support for the small number of Traveller pupils through a visiting local education authority advisory teacher and a specially trained teaching assistant. The school has begun to identify gifted and talented pupils and plan suitable challenges for them. There are presently no pupils whose first language is not English.

Enrichment of the curriculum

25. There is a good programme of visits, special school events and extra-curricular activities which enrich pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the curriculum. They include a school journey to the Isle of Wight, visits to a Hindu Temple, an African Drumming Day, and a Fun Sports Day. The extra-curricular activities, including chess, netball, football, French and art clubs, are popular, help pupils' thinking and practical skills and give them good experiences of

competitive sport. Good links with the comprehensive school which most pupils choose provide well for their transfer to secondary education.

Accommodation and resources

26. There is a satisfactory range of accommodation and resources. Since the last inspection, the school has improved ICT resources, with wireless internet connections and laptops available for all classrooms. The library has been improved with better furniture and a good stock of recent fiction and non fiction books, and it plays an important part in promoting literacy across the curriculum. Book stocks in all classrooms have also been improved, and support pupils' awareness of our multi-cultural society well. However, the hall is small, which does place some restrictions on gymnastic and dance activities in physical education. The school also lacks a dedicated first aid room.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provisions for the care, welfare and health and safety for pupils are very good. The guidance and support for pupils and their involvement in the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a safe and secure environment where pupils are cared for very well and where they receive good advice and guidance.
- Pupils with SEN are very well supported.
- Pupils are positively encouraged to express themselves about school.
- Links with pre-school are not fully developed.

Commentary

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety

27. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are very good, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. Although the school does not have a dedicated first aid room, first aid provision is good, with staff qualified to provide assistance in the event of any emergency. Members of staff are well aware of pupils' welfare and medical needs and have regularly been trained in the use of palliative measures. Health and safety procedures fully comply with local authority and statutory requirements and members of school management have a very high level of awareness of this aspect. The local education authority and the governors provide support in this important area.
28. The school has a very good child protection policy and its procedures meet the requirements of the local area committee; the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care.

Support and advice

29. Induction arrangements are satisfactory. However, the links with the local pre-school group do not yet support the introduction of Foundation Stage children as well as they could.
30. Parents confirmed that the links with secondary schools support the transfer of older pupils out of school well.
31. The school has been successful in developing very good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. The relationships between all members of staff and the pupils contribute to the quality of the pupils' experiences and to the tranquil atmosphere seen in the school during the inspection. In their questionnaires not all pupils feel they have the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, or a personal problem. However, members of staff do provide good responses to such requests and, through their good knowledge of pupils as individuals and monitoring of pupils' personal development,

provide well-informed support, advice and guidance. Systems to support pupils' academic development are effective, with the development of 'next steps' targets in English and mathematics in place and used with pupils and their parents.

32. Pupils with SEN are supported very well. Parents and any outside agencies involved in the care of these children are invited to annual reviews and pupils are fully involved in this process. A number of agencies give good support to the school, including amongst others the educational psychologist.

Involving pupils and personal development

33. The school successfully seeks pupils' views through the School Council. Pupils are involved in school projects, including planning for the re-ordering of outside areas and in the design and provision of games in the playground. Pupils are involved in their own academic assessment, they are encouraged to comment on their learning in class and have contributed to the school's prospectus. All ages of pupils are encouraged to support the running of the school and its administration and the older pupils are able to join a residential week on the Isle of Wight. The school's personal, social and health education includes self awareness and confidence building as well as giving the children sound advice and guidance on health, sex education and drugs awareness.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have very positive views of the school and the education it provides. The partnerships between school and home, other schools and the community are good and play a positive role in supporting pupils' learning at school and home.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with what the school provides for their children.
- The school's partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Links with the community enrich learning experiences for pupils and provide good opportunities for their development although there are few links with business and the world of work.
- The quality and informative content of newsletters and general information provided to parents are good.

Commentary

Links with parents

34. The very positive views of parents reflect an overall high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision that has been maintained since the last inspection. Inspectors judged that newsletters and general information provided to parents are good and that annual reports are satisfactory. They comply with requirements and demonstrate the good knowledge that teachers have of pupils and inform parents about the work that pupils have completed and their attitudes. Reports also provide parents with targets as to what their children need to do, to progress to the next stage of their learning.
35. The school has good arrangements to discuss any issues with parents, to gain their views and enables parents to meet with teachers or members of management to discuss concerns. The school includes parents' views when formulating the school improvement plans. The school normally manages to resolve any concerns of parents informally. In the event that a parent should wish to make a formal complaint, there is an effective procedure in place.
36. There are satisfactory links with parents of children in The Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator maintains satisfactory links with the feeder nursery and playgroups and

with parents. There is scope for strengthening partnership through improving the sharing of information between feeder settings, parents and the school before the children start.

37. Many parents support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework. Many parents visit school to help on a regular basis.
38. Although there is not a formal parents' association parents have set up a committee that successfully raises funds to provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. Through social events and fund raising they have been able to enhance the school's provision and contribute to the community links the school enjoys.

Links with the community

39. Links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide good enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs and beliefs of others. The links with the local church and the diocese contribute greatly to the spiritual and cultural experience of the pupils. There are however few opportunities for links with business or that enable pupils to learn about the world of work.

Links with other schools

40. Links with other schools are good and the school plays an active part in the local cluster of schools and a small school group. Although links with the pre-school do not support the transfer of children into the Foundation Stage the links with secondary schools are good. These include curriculum links and parents confirm that they support the transfer of pupils at the age of 11 well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are sound overall, with good leadership by the headteacher, and effective support from the governing body, senior staff and subject co-ordinators. The role of subject co-ordinators in raising standards could be stronger.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads the school well and provides a good role model for other leaders and managers in the school.
- There is good strategic planning for school development and monitoring of provision by the headteacher.
- There is very good leadership and management of SEN.
- The role of subject coordinators in raising standards in their areas of responsibility is not yet strong enough.

Commentary

Leadership

41. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and is committed to raising standards in all aspects of its work. She provides a good role model to other leaders and managers in the school. The commitment to raising standards is shared by both staff and governors. This is an inclusive school where all pupils are valued. The leadership of work with SEN pupils is very good and ensures that these pupils' needs are met.
42. The headteacher has formed an effective partnership with the deputy head teacher, who is still developing his role, but who is supportive of her leadership. Together, they have worked

hard to develop an effective team of staff, including teaching assistants, working towards a common goal of maximising the pupils' achievement.

43. Staff with subject responsibilities are developing their roles and are not yet as effective as they might be in raising standards in their subject areas. They do monitor provision, with most being given some time to do so, but raising standards of attainment through monitoring has not been the main focus in all cases. The reasons for this are:
- Several subject co-ordinators are new to their roles.
 - Some subject areas have 'caretaker' staff in place at present, which means that development has taken second place to maintaining current provision.
 - Subject co-ordinators have multiple roles because of the size of the school, so there is a tendency to prioritise and spend more time on core subject areas.
 - It is difficult for co-ordinators to draw up a plan of action when they do not have a sufficiently clear overview of what is happening.
44. There are exceptions to these reasons; for example, where standards became the main focus in science, the school was successful in raising standards in a short period of time. In ICT, a teaching assistant has done good work in supporting the operation of the network and in ensuring that resources meet the demands of the curriculum. Staff are working very hard and are committed to the improvements that are needed.

Management

45. Overall the management of the school is sound. There are satisfactory procedures in place to enable the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There are also sound strategies for evaluating how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve.
46. The experienced secretary provides very effective administrative and financial support. She is very welcoming to staff, pupils and visitors and makes a very significant contribution to the life of the school.
47. The headteacher's leadership is impacting on the management of the school at all levels , and is leading to improvements in standards of pupil attainment and the quality of teaching and learning. Her monitoring of teaching, learning and provision is thorough, linked to thorough planning through the school development plan. Her management of staff performance through the performance management system is good. Arrangements for professional development are sound.
48. The management of the school's finances is sound. Although pupil expenditure is high, this reflects its small size. There are satisfactory procedures to ensure that it applies the principles of best value appropriately. In discussion, the governing body were keen to stress their desire to gain the best value in goods and services from the budget available. They worked hard to reduce the relatively high balance carried over from 2002-2003 by increasing the levels of teaching assistants in classrooms and improving reading resources. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	338,252	Balance from previous year	52,450
Total expenditure	313,265.28	Balance carried forward to the next	24,987
Expenditure per pupil	3,196.58		

49. The school does evaluate its work and some aspects of this evaluation are good. The headteacher's analysis of pupils' performance in statutory tests, for example is very detailed and provides a clear picture of standards and improvement for staff and governors. Her analysis of the school's performance using local authority guidance is also thorough and useful for identifying priorities for the school development plan. Procedures for monitoring other aspects of the school's work, such as developments in foundation subjects are in place but are at an early stage of development.

Governance

50. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its roles satisfactorily. All statutory duties are met. The individual governors reflect the make-up of the local area and bring a variety of different skills and expertise to their role. The chair, for example, has a financial background, and is therefore closely involved in the work of the finance committee and the monitoring of the budget.
51. In discussion with governors it was clear that they have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are involved in planning for improvement and have an appropriate awareness of the initiatives the school is involved in. Some governors visit the school during the school day and go into classes. Their role in challenging what the school does could be further developed.
52. One area of uncertainty for the governing body, which affects their strategic planning for the development of the school, is the uncertainty over the date of the building of a new school and the move to a new site. This has particularly hampered decisions about the deployment of resources and the development of the current site.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**, maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection. Most children currently in the Foundation Stage are likely to reach the nationally expected goals by the end of the school year. Children enter the school in the Autumn or Spring term before they are five years old. They are taught alongside Year 1 pupils in a shared classroom. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision before they start. The co-ordinator and the teaching assistant maintain sound records of the children's progress using the nationally recommended profile format.

At the time of the inspection, there were four Foundation Stage children in a class of 15 pupils. While the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, who is the combined class teacher, currently bases the classroom programme on the National Curriculum requirements for Year 1 pupils, related plans for the Foundation Stage children are based on the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year and provide satisfactorily for their learning. Some activities are specified only for the group, such as some mathematical and language games. This enables the children to achieve satisfactorily overall, particularly because the co-ordinator and the teaching assistant who works with her know the children and their needs very well. However, because the planning does not draw closely enough on the national guidelines for the Foundation Stage, provision for some aspects is relatively limited. For example, there is only limited time and opportunity for the children to enjoy sand and water play, dressing up and a good range of make-believe environments and games initiated by the staff. The children spend a long time sitting in shared learning discussions with the Year 1 pupils which are not always directed at their needs and understanding. The inside accommodation is satisfactory. More could be done to make it a more enriching and stimulating environment for children under five, for example, by providing more opportunities for the children to observe living creatures and plant growth, and more pretend environments which draw on musical and ICT-based elements. During the week of the inspection, construction work was in progress on a new enclosed outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children, which will offer sound provision for outdoor learning. Children had had continuous secure access to an outside play area previously until two weeks before the inspection took place.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident in speaking and paying attention in the larger class group.
- Children form good relationships with each other and with adults.

Commentary

53. Through a good quality of teaching, children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development because of the confidence they build up in responding to the good example of calm, caring and interested attitudes which their teacher and teaching assistant show them. They are well on course to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the school year. They take part in many discussions with the older Year 1 pupils and this helps them develop more mature attitudes than would be usual with children of this age group who have been in school for less than a term. In a discussion about how to keep safe, many described places like the edge of a pond where they know they have to be careful. They sustain attention through long discussions, even when they are contributing little, and they know and respond well to the established routines of the class. A child from a Traveller family is very well integrated into the group and valued by her classmates.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in sharing and beginning to read books.
- Children listen carefully and ask sensible questions.
- Most children hold pencils correctly and enjoy beginning to write.
- Some literacy sessions do not match the children's needs well enough.

Commentary

54. The children's progress by the second half of their first term shows that almost all of them are on track to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the school year. They talk exuberantly and with obvious enjoyment about what they are doing. In discussions, they speak clearly, make suggestions, for example, of words which begin with "b". Most wait their turn when eager to comment on their own experiences. They are confident with visitors and on visits, chatting and asking questions unselfconsciously. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Sound planning for daily literacy learning includes games and discussions which focus on letters and sounds and enable the children to build up their knowledge of letters and sounds. Some literacy lessons shared with Year 1 pupils are more appropriate to the older pupils, and the Foundation Stage children do not fully follow the discussion. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has set up a good range of books for the children to share, and they enjoy the special time when they all look at books. At this early stage of their time in school, they know how to handle books and pretend to read aloud. Some correctly identify words or letters in the text. They recognise their names when written on a label or a page. They are beginning to form letters accurately, holding pencils correctly. They copy over words and sentences their teacher has written down. They enjoy pretend writing in the make believe office corner, for example, writing a thank-you letter for a visitor.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Games and group discussions help the children develop number skills.
- There are too few opportunities for sand and water play to develop mathematical understanding.

Commentary

55. Children's number skills develop satisfactorily through the regular opportunities the staff organise for them with apparatus such as interlocking plastic bricks and sets of model objects. Most are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the time they start Year 1. They enjoy discussing their number observations, for example, comparing how many more bricks there are in one stick of bricks compared with another. They enjoy counting with the Year 1 pupils when they share their numeracy lesson. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has organised a suitable range of mathematical apparatus, shapes and toys, such as cash registers and coins, which the children can explore when they play. Although there are sand and water facilities, there are not enough organised activities every day, such as pouring and filling games designed to help the children build their understanding of shape, space and measuring.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to learn through visits.
- There are good opportunities to learn about other cultures.
- Children do not have enough opportunities to observe living creatures.
- There is scope for better use of ICT.

Commentary

56. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, resulting in satisfactory achievement, with most children likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the school year. Since the last inspection, provision has been improved by greater opportunities for the children to learn through ICT, a good range of visits, and projects linked to other countries. For example, the children have learnt about life in another country through following what happens to the class teddy bear "Barnaby" when he is sent on a journey to Ireland. They use the school grounds and visits, for example, to nearby Hyde Hall, to explore natural and man-made materials, flowers and plants. There are too few opportunities for children to have 'hands-on' and practical experiences in their classroom. The children are beginning to learn about the beliefs and values of people from other cultures, for example by using good photo posters which show how Hindu children and their families celebrate Diwali. Children enjoy opportunities to use ICT, for example, to type their names and place objects in a cupboard in a screen game, but the range of software, including CD-ROMs, such as "talking" books and programmable equipment suitable for their age group, is not broad enough to offer the right range of free choice activities to develop their skills. The children are also confused by the adult keyboard provided, because many of them do not yet know the capital letter equivalents of all the letters in their names.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

57. Because of the very limited opportunities at the time of the inspection for outdoor learning and organised physical activity lessons, it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision, standards, achievement and teaching and learning. Observations of the children in their classroom and the playground indicates that standards are as expected. Staff provide suitable opportunities for the children to develop the skills of using tools and equipment through play with toys such as model cranes, construction kits and materials such as plasticine and clay. They would benefit from more opportunities to develop the skills of pouring, filling and sifting through sand and water play. They move confidently about the classroom and the playground.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities to learn from the work of artists.
- Children make things in a variety of media.
- Opportunities for make-believe play, music and dance are too limited.

Commentary

58. Children achieve satisfactorily and are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the school year. The opportunities they have to look closely at the work of artists boosts their achievement in making images. For example, children who had looked at examples of L S Lowry's work made vigorous and dynamic drawings, using charcoal and wax crayons, of themselves and other children in the playground. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for them to make images and models in clay, collage, paint, crayon and textiles. During the inspection, children used paints confidently to make pictures of objects they could think of beginning with "b", such as boxes, bees and butterflies. They had made simple glove puppets by first making paper outlines and then working on felt versions, using simple stitches to join two pieces of felt, with adult help. Staff provide only a limited number of make-believe and dressing-up environments, but the children enjoy using the pretend office environment of the "garden centre" with its toy phones and cash register. They would benefit from a wider range of well planned make-believe environments and linked fantasy play activities led by adults. While there are weekly opportunities for music through the whole class programme and the children sing in school assemblies, there are few musical activities specifically for this age group, such as listening to tapes, experimenting with sound making and instruments, singing games and dancing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is well developed in all classes through the Early Reading Research (ERR) initiative, and focused guided reading sessions.
- There is a well-stocked library.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning and to help pupils work towards agreed targets.
- There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to write for a range of different purposes and audiences in the junior classes.
- In the infant classes, pupils' development of their ideas, and use of vocabulary, need improvement. There are limited opportunities for them to write longer pieces of work.

Commentary

59. Standards in English are in line with the average for pupils at both seven and 11. Pupils make better progress in the junior classes because the quality of teaching and learning is good over time and they achieve well. Standards are similar to those seen at the previous inspection and have improved satisfactorily over time. There are variations from year-to-year because of the small size of the year groups and this is reflected in the national data and comparisons with similar schools. A consistent trend in the data is the good progress pupils make in the junior classes from their performance at seven. Pupils with SEN make good progress because of the very good support they receive. No significant differences were seen during the inspection between the attainment of boys and girls. A major factor in the drive to raise standards is the ERR initiative, which is used in all classes to focus on reading, phonics, vocabulary and spelling.
60. At the ages of both seven and 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with the average. In both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils speak and listen appropriately for their age. In Year 2, for example, most pupils talk confidently, in a whole-class session, about the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. They listen well and use vocabulary effectively to illustrate their responses.

Teachers carefully build pupils' speaking and writing vocabularies and plan opportunities for them to use new and interesting terminology. They are also encouraged to discuss and share ideas with each other, especially in the junior classes. In the Year 5/6 class, for example, pupils discussed with each other their ideas organising biographical information on the life of Mother Teresa.

61. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 are good readers and some exceed the expected levels. Pupils read accurately, fluently and with good understanding. In the ERR sessions observed during the inspection clear evidence was seen of the impact of ERR on pupils' approach to reading. In the Year 1/2 class, pupils read 'Four Little Fishes' with intonation on rhyming words and predicted which rhyming words would finish a line. In Year 3/4, pupils read poetry fluently and articulate their ideas about the main themes of the poem well. In Year 5/6, pupils read play scripts, showing good levels of empathy for the main characters, and increasing their understanding and use of vocabulary. Teachers structure these sessions well and manage pupils' learning effectively through good organisation and planning.
62. Staff have worked hard to maintain, and improve, standards in writing. These are in line with the average in Years 2 and 6. There is an underlying trend of good progress and improving standards in the junior classes, where teaching is good. Important factors maintaining, and improving standards are:
- Consistent approaches to the development of pupils' handwriting, vocabulary and spelling.
 - Opportunities for pupils to write across a range of genres, particularly in Years 3 – 6.
 - Opportunities for extended writing.
 - Good opportunities for writing through history in the upper junior class.

In the infant classes, although standards are in line with the average, with most pupils achieving the expected standard, standards of writing could be improved by:

- Enabling pupils to develop their ideas more and use a wider range of vocabulary.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work.

63. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in the junior classes seen through the analysis of pupils' work. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning and achievement between Years 3 and 6. A good feature of teaching in all classes is the use of deployment of teaching assistants, who work effectively to support the learning of targeted pupils. Good teaching in the junior classes is characterised by good marking and day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and planning for a range of writing and challenge for higher ability pupils, as in the Year 3/4 class. In the Year 5/6 class there is evidence of planning for a broad range of writing for different purposes and audiences. Teaching clearly models to pupils what is expected of them. Pupils have positive attitudes and show good levels of interest and concentration in completing their tasks. They work well independently, collaborating effectively with others when working in pairs and small groups.
64. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject coordinator took up post in September 2003 and is still developing her role. Appropriate assessment is in place to analyse their performance, forecast future performance and set next steps. Some monitoring has taken place, including observation of teaching and learning. The moderation of writing does take place but needs further development if it is to lead directly to the raising of standards. There is a well stocked library, which is used well by pupils and contributes positively to their achievement, particularly in reading.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is **satisfactory** overall, with good features in the upper junior class. A range of opportunities are taken to write for different audiences and purposes through history, for example, factual writing from notes and descriptive accounts. In other subject areas, pupils explore links with literacy through the use

of subject terms, although in science in the infant classes, pupils' use of scientific terminology is weak.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving in Years 3 to 6.
- Older pupils make very good progress.
- Planning for the mixed age classes has improved.
- Good assessment is used to set targets for the next steps in learning.
- Not enough is expected of many pupils in the infant classes and standards are not high enough.
- Subject vocabulary is not developed in a structured way.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate and use mathematics in everyday situations.

Commentary

66. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are below average and in line with the average in Year 6. Although standards at seven are slightly lower than those reported in the previous inspection report, overall this is a similar picture to that seen in the previous inspection for pupils at 11. An improved percentage of pupils are likely to achieve the higher Level 5 in the current Year 6. Standards in the national tests vary from one year to another due to the small number of pupils in each year group. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well in tests in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 2. Very few pupils achieve the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 or the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in number, shape and measures but their recall of number facts and their ability to record their work is well below the expected level. Progress is good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 5 and 6 where there is more challenge for the higher attaining pupils and more emphasis on problem solving. Mental recall and calculation is still slow. Boys and girls make similar progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and achieve as well as their classmates.
67. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve planning for the mixed age classes and to track pupils' progress. Good systems are now in place which are starting to improve standards. Target setting has been introduced and all pupils have appropriate targets to take their learning forward to the next stage. Marking is good and comments tell pupils what has been achieved and also usefully indicate the level of support given. However, there is little evidence of corrections being made. Although systems have been put into place to improve mental mathematics, these have had little impact and the school is looking at alternative ways to raise standards in this area, including new ICT software.
68. In Years 1 and 2 there is a lack of challenge for many pupils, including the most able, who indicate at the end of lessons that they find the task easy. Lessons generally lack pace and enjoyment. Work samples show that insufficient emphasis is given to recording work accurately and presenting work well. Too many unsuitable worksheets are used and there is no insistence on using rulers to draw shapes and graphs. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are expected to present their work well and they do. Work of all year groups provides very few examples of investigations or of mathematics being used to solve everyday problems.
69. Lessons were observed in all classes, two were satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good and very good in Years 3 - 6. In the best lessons questioning was used very well to check pupils' understanding, develop thinking and challenge higher attaining pupils. Teachers insisted that pupils used the correct mathematical vocabulary in their answers. Lessons are enjoyable

and move at a good pace. Explanations are clear so that pupils know what is expected of them in the time available. In the very good lesson learning was effectively shared at the end of the lesson and older pupils were able to teach the younger members of the class how to perform a more difficult task. In all lessons work is planned to build on previous learning and classroom assistants are used well. Teachers make good use of the resources available.

70. The recent adoption of a new planning format to support small schools with mixed age classes is proving beneficial. There is insufficient emphasis on developing a mathematical vocabulary and words relating to mathematical topics are not in evidence in classroom displays. A commercial scheme is used effectively as a source of examples for older pupils when covering some topics. The co-ordinator who is fairly new to the post organised a successful Maths Week at the end of last term with an emphasis on enjoyment. She regularly monitors planning, pupils' work and teaching. An audit of resources highlighted some areas of need but also has raised awareness of what equipment is available and how best it can be used to enhance learning. She is beginning to play a part in subject improvement as a result of leadership development training.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. **Satisfactory** use is made of mathematics across the curriculum but is given greater emphasis in some classes than others. Pupils weigh ingredients for cooking and measure liquids. Accurate measurements are sometimes used in art and design and design and technology. In science and geography pupils create graphs to display the information they collect. Computers are not yet used to extend higher attaining pupils and improve their rate of mental recall.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in the junior classes and achieve well.
- Teachers in the junior classes have good subject knowledge, which is used and applied well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The area is effectively led and managed by the subject co-ordinator; effective monitoring has led to improvement in pupils' attainment.
- Standards of attainment in the infant classes are below those expected, particularly pupils' use of scientific terms.
- The development of investigative science is inconsistent across classes, particularly in the infant classes.
- The systematic recording of results in investigative science is under-developed.

Commentary

72. Standards of attainment in science are below the level expected for pupils at seven, and in line with the average for pupils at 11. They have been maintained at a satisfactory level since the previous inspection, which represents sound progress. Standards for pupils at 11 have improved to address weaknesses in the attainment of pupils identified as a result of their performance in national tests in the 2002 tests. Six out of the seven pupils in the year group attained the expected level (Level 4) although no pupils gained the higher level (Level 5). In the 2003 tests, the indications are that there has been an improvement, with over nine out of ten pupils attaining the expected level and one in three attaining the higher level. Inspection findings confirm this improvement, with most of the current Year 6 pupils working at the expected level, and several working towards the higher level. The 2003 teacher assessment results for seven-year-olds indicate that 92 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level

(Level 2), but with no pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3). The analysis of pupils' work and lesson observations, for the current Year 2 pupils, shows that standards of attainment are below average at seven with weaknesses in the pupils' use of scientific terms and vocabulary. All pupils, including those with SEN, make sound progress over time.

73. Pupils in Year 2 understand the conditions needed for plants to survive, and the effects of these conditions on plants. However, in using language to describe the properties of materials their application of terms is general and lacks accuracy. In the junior classes, pupils make good progress in Year 3 and Year 4, when they show understanding of pitch and how it is affected. Pupils confidently make predictions about what will happen in their investigations and reach simple conclusions. Higher ability pupils are able to change their predictions based on testing and understand how to change the pitch of a sound. This good progress continues with older pupils, and by Year 6 standards are in line with the average expected. Most pupils understand how and why sound travels through the air and use scientific knowledge to explain their conclusions. Most understand the operation of a simple electrical circuit and use symbols correctly in their diagrams.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with pupils being taught well in the junior classes, which enhances their progress. Effective and careful planning ensures that pupils' learning experiences are progressive and that they cover topics with the right levels of challenge. The approach to investigative science could be more consistent, especially in the infant classes, with all pupils being given more opportunities to record the results of investigations with graphs and charts. Planning in lessons is effective and matches work to the needs of all abilities of pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they apply effectively by giving confident and accurate demonstrations of activities and tasks. Where this works well, for example in Year 5/6, some pupils went beyond the set task, taking responsibility for their own learning and carrying out additional tests. Where teaching is good it is characterised by a broad range of teaching and learning strategies, which engage pupils in their learning. They show positive attitudes to learning, and work well on their own and in pairs and small groups with other pupils.
75. Teachers make sound use of links with literacy, numeracy and ICT to enhance learning in science. In the junior classes, pupils make appropriate use of scientific terms in their work. In ICT, pupils research topics using the computer, although more use could be made of data handling programs in investigative work. Pupils use their numeracy skills when measuring amounts of liquid, but these links could be improved by giving pupils more opportunities to use graphs and charts to record the results of their investigations.
76. The subject is effectively led and managed. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision of the development of the subject, focused on ensuring that pupils receive a balanced set of learning experiences in order to enable them to achieve. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning, and of pupils' standards, ensures that relevant subject development priorities are identified and acted upon.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The scheme of work is thorough and meets requirements well, an improvement since the previous inspection.
- There is a good ratio of computers to pupils.
- Resources are used well, especially by older pupils.
- Assessment of pupils' progress is not yet embedded into teaching and learning.
- The use of ICT in different subjects is satisfactory, but could be improved, for example, in history and religious education.

Commentary

77. It was not possible to observe any direct teaching of ICT during the inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, subject documentation, observation of pupils at work on the computers, and a discussion with the headteacher and teaching assistant in their roles as 'caretaker' subject leaders. Pupils' standards of attainment in ICT are in line with the average at seven and 11. All pupils, including those with SEN, make sound progress in developing their ICT skills and capabilities. This represents satisfactory progress since the previous inspection, when pupils' progress and provision for ICT were judged to be satisfactory throughout the school. Satisfactory improvement has also taken place in improving provision, including resources for control technology, with good improvement in the pupil-computer ratio.
78. Pupils in Year 2 have word processed simple sentences, and have used grids to make a list of resources they needed to make a puppet in their design and technology work. They have also used a paint program to create an image of a house, experimenting with different colours and program tools. In data handling they present findings as a simple graph and they have also used 'My World' screens to combine text with graphic and solve simple problems for example, matching the names of parts of a flower correctly on a diagram of a flower. Higher attaining pupils could be given greater challenge in what is expected of them.
79. Analysis of pupils' work shows that, in the junior classes standards of attainment are in line with what is expected for pupils at 11. They are confident users of ICT and log on, save and print work independently and use search engines to find information. They have researched information on the internet for a class newspaper, and have contributed to a class database on 'Ourselves.' From surveys of their class friends they have produced spreadsheets and pie charts They have used both word processing and desk top publishing packages to present their work, particularly in English, and show an appropriate awareness of audience.
80. Analysis of pupils' work shows that the scheme of work is being implemented as planned, with a lot of emphasis in the first term on basic skills to develop pupils' capability. Assessment of pupils' progress is not yet embedded into teaching and learning, but there are plans in place to use local education authority guidance for this purpose. The curriculum is organised effectively around the completion of 'focused' tasks, which pupils undertake in pairs on the classroom computers. Larger group work involves good use of wireless laptop computers. Teachers demonstrate these tasks and show secure subject knowledge when doing so. Pupils work well at the computers, either independently or in pairs, particularly in the junior classes. They show good responsibility for their learning and use the programs confidently to complete their tasks.
81. Since the previous inspection, there has been a sound improvement in provision. All teachers have gone through the professional development programme to improve their subject knowledge and confidence in using ICT. Laptop computers supplement the computers in each classroom and this has enabled the school to develop a ratio of computers to pupils (1:8) broadly better than the national average. These factors have contributed positively to improvements in pupils' progress and achievement.
82. At present, there is not a member of staff with overall responsibility for ICT. A newly qualified teacher is earmarked to take responsibility in the next academic year. The headteacher and a teaching assistant are acting as 'caretakers' in the role, with effective management of ICT resulting. The headteacher has provided strategic leadership and liaised with the LEA small school adviser on the purchase of wireless laptop computers. The teaching assistant has undertaken network training to help staff, and has also undertaken some curriculum management, ensuring that the software available matched the requirements of the scheme of work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **satisfactory**, as teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas. Having the computers in the classrooms enables teachers to give pupils regular opportunities to practise their skills and capability. During the inspection, examples of pupils' work were seen from several curriculum areas – English, mathematics, science, geography and art and design. For example, in the infant classes, pupils used a paint program to produce paintings in the style of Picasso, and programs in mathematics, science and geography to increase their subject knowledge and understanding. In the junior classes, pupils undertook research on the internet for a class newspaper in English and for their topic on India. More use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning in religious education.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities in some classes for pupils to discuss how they can care for and respect other people and animals, and reflect on how they can deal with emotions such as anger.
- There are good opportunities for older pupils to think about the meaning of bible texts and put them into their own words.
- There is too much emphasis, in some work, on making images and models at the expense of developing deeper religious understanding.
- Some marking focuses too much on presentation skills and does too little to develop pupils' understanding of the religious content.

Commentary

84. Standards and pupils' achievement are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6. During the inspection, two RE lessons were observed. Other evidence was drawn from pupils' work, teachers' planning records, observations of assemblies, and discussions with staff and pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school follows the local authority agreed syllabus closely. All pupils, including those with SEN make satisfactory progress.
85. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the standards seen then, and improved the coverage given to faiths other than Christianity. Good cross-curricular links were seen between geography studies of life in Indian villages and RE studies of Hinduism in the Year 3/4 class, in an RE lesson where the teacher followed up the pupils' visit to a Hindu temple with a classroom demonstration of the puja ceremony. This enabled the pupils to talk positively about the ways in which the ceremony uses all the senses. Less successful teaching for older pupils was observed in a lesson on the origins of the Jewish Chanukah festival. Too much time was spent on copying and decorating a drawing of the Menorah in the ancient Temple, in order to prepare for a related design and technology project, leaving no time to explore what Chanukah means to Jewish people today.
86. Surveys of pupils' workbooks showed pupils have some good opportunities to deepen their understanding through writing. Younger pupils write about festivals, special days and how they care for others and for animals. Older pupils rewrite Psalms in their own words. However, too many workbook tasks for older pupils consist of colouring illustrations and diagrams. Some teachers' marking encourages pupils to think further about their ideas, for

example, how to behave when they are feeling angry, but in some classes, the teachers only comment on pupils' presentation and literacy skills, so that they miss opportunities to help develop their understanding of the deeper meaning of bible stories such as David and Goliath.

87. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, has improved resources, provision for visits to and links with faith groups, such as local Baptists and Hindus. She has checked teaching and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Assessment procedures are sound. Teachers now draw on a good range of the sacred objects different faith groups use. There is a need to develop the use of ICT to support the subject, for example by making e-mail contact with more distant churches and other faith groups and visiting their web sites.

Geography and History

Commentary

88. On the basis of very limited evidence seen during the inspection provision in geography and history is **satisfactory**. Owing to the timetable and the organisation of topics, it was not possible to observe any teaching directly during the inspection. The judgement is based on an analysis of pupils' work and brief conversation with the co-ordinators for each subject, so it is not possible to give a clear judgement on standards of attainment or teaching and learning.
89. Analysis of pupils' work shows that, in **history**, pupils in the Year 5/6 class have an appropriate understanding of features of Ancient Greek life, including Athens and Sparta, Greek gods and myths, and the Olympic Games. In their planning of the work, teachers make good links with literacy to develop opportunities to undertake different types of writing. There is also evidence of the assessment of pupils' work using National Curriculum level descriptions. The subject co-ordinator has been in post since September 2003 and is still developing her role as subject leader.
90. In **geography**, pupils in the Year 1/2 class have undertaken work on the travels of Barnaby Bear and have also done plotting of routes on sketch maps, using left/right to show directions. In the Year 3/4, a detailed study was undertaken of life in an Indian village, with clear links made through teaching, to several other subject areas. Work was planned, following a visit to an Indian temple, to develop pupils' understanding of Indian life. As a result, pupils showed clear evidence of different features of life in a village in India, comparing their own lives in the United Kingdom, and developed skills of locating places using an atlas. The subject co-ordinator role will be filled by a newly qualified teacher next year, and the current co-ordinator is temporarily looking after the area. The curriculum is planned over a two-year cycle to ensure requirements are met, as well as the continuity and progression of pupils' learning. There is also evidence of the assessment of pupils' work using National Curriculum level descriptions.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a very limited amount of teaching was seen in art and design, design and technology and music. It is therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about standards, teaching and learning in these subjects. In addition to observing teaching, inspectors looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning, and talked to co-ordinators about their work.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of sketchbooks to develop pupils' work.
- The use of artists' work from different cultures.
- Progression is sometimes limited by the art curriculum being determined by the requirements of other subjects.

Commentary

91. It is evident from classroom displays, planning documents, pupils' sketchbooks and discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils that there is a sound range of work in different media, progressively developed from studies of artists, observation and the use of sketchbooks. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils look at the work of L S Lowry before developing exuberant charcoal and wax pastel drawings of themselves and their classmates in the playground. They develop well observed drawings of plants they have seen on their visit to a nearby stately home garden. Year 3 and 4 pupils draw on their studies of traditional Indian Rangoli and Paisley patterns to develop their own versions in their sketchbooks, on larger scale posters and block prints. Year 5 and 6 pupils use their studies of Ancient Greek geometrical and architectural patterns to develop carefully structured mosaic patterns and string prints, using their sketchbooks to try out ideas. They use Greek myths as a starting point for imaginative paintings of key characters such as the Great Bull of Crete, using colour washes and outline drawings. However, they sometimes copy drawings from books rather than developing their own.
92. Since the last inspection, provision has been satisfactorily improved. There is now a subject co-ordinator who has played a sound role in maintaining and developing work in the subject. She has encouraged teachers to include art from a wider range of non-Western traditions, such as Australian Aboriginal paintings, and build closer links with subject studies. She has checked that pupils are making the expected rate of progress, through surveying classroom displays, but has not yet checked the quality of classroom teaching and learning. She has ensured that teachers have clear curriculum plans which enable them to cover national requirements and make links with other curriculum subjects. However, because curriculum planning is led by the expectation that the art curriculum will be developed from links with other curriculum subjects, this limits the scope for developing more systematic progress in art knowledge and skills, such as observational drawing, and understanding of colour and shading techniques. For example, pupils in most years had recently completed very similar clay diva lamps linked to work on the Diwali festival. The classroom ICT facilities are not yet being used to enable pupils to develop electronic image making and access artists' work from galleries across the world. There is a satisfactory assessment system based on national expectations for the subject. An extra-curricular art club has been established by an artist-in-residence, which has included some imaginative projects, such as pupils designing postage stamps featuring portraits of ordinary people.

Design and technology

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

Commentary

93. Brief observations of lessons in Year 1 and 2, of pupils' work, their workbooks and teachers' planning show that pupils complete a varied range of design-and-make projects, including work with food, paper, card, textiles, mouldable materials and construction kits. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were making simple felt glove puppets they had previously designed using paper patterns. Additional volunteer help enabled the teacher to ensure that she and the teaching assistants were able to support small groups of pupils well in stitching their puppets together and adding eyes and other features. They were beginning

to work with their teacher on writing picture-story accounts of what they had done and how well their designs had turned out.

94. Since the last inspection, sound improvements in provision have been made. There are now curriculum plans which cover national requirements and identify links with other subjects. There is not yet enough use of ICT as part of the design process, for example by including electronic control systems in model vehicles, or for the pupils to record their work. All classrooms now have good tool sets. Pupils now write comments on how well their work has developed in their books. However, teachers are not yet assessing pupils' work against National Curriculum levels, and the co-ordinator has yet to check the quality of teaching and learning.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

95. In music only two lessons were observed. One group lesson for Years 1 and 2 taken by the co-ordinator and a class lesson in Year 3 and 4. Teaching was good in both lessons. Standards are as expected for the age of the pupils. The school has done much to improve the provision for music since the last inspection and employs an additional member of staff with musical expertise on a weekly basis. Pairs of classes are taught together in this lesson and benefit from her specialist knowledge and piano accompaniment. All classes have an additional follow up lesson with their own teacher. In this way the school ensures that all elements of the curriculum are covered. In the group lesson for the younger children the large numbers for the small hall were managed well. Pupils sang well and one class taught an action song to the others. At the end of the lesson, the performance had improved and a range of percussion instruments were played to accompany the song. Pupils showed that they were developing a musical vocabulary. They are confident to contribute ideas to evaluate and improve their performance. Older children listen to and respond sensitively to a piece of music. They identify some of the instruments being played and several had a good feeling for the mood of the music, as well as talking about the pictures they saw in their mind. The same class had composed Indian music to link with a previous topic which they performed in a celebration assembly. Pupils' musical skills are assessed on a regular basis and their progress is monitored.
96. The music curriculum is enriched by instrumental lessons for piano and guitar and also a recorder club for Years 3 - 6. Concerts and links with local schools also contributes to pupils musical experiences. Resources are satisfactory but staff who lack musical expertise would benefit from additional commercial resources to support their class lessons.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Planning is thorough and develops pupils' skills systematically.
- Resources are well used by the teachers.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that further develops pupils' skills.
- The school hall places restrictions on the provision of gym and dance, because of the lack of space.

Commentary

97. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe all aspects of physical education being taught directly. Three lessons were observed, a dance lesson in the infant classes and two games lessons in the junior classes. It is clear from these observations, and discussion with the subject co-ordinator that, despite the restrictions placed on gym and dance activities by the cramped space of the school hall, the achievement of all pupils, including those with SEN, is sound across the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment levels are in line with the average expected at 11. This is a similar picture to that seen at the time of the previous inspection. Records show that standards in swimming are good and that all pupils swim at least 25 metres by the time they are 11.
98. Most pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 use limited space well in a dance lesson, keeping out of each other's way and moving safely around the hall at different speeds. They hold moves together well, and match their actions to the beat and mood of the music. They are beginning to put sequences of movements together as they learn a simple Diwali dance. By the end of Year 6, pupils have appropriate co-ordination skills, which they put to good use in their games lesson for hockey practice. They work well in collaboration with other pupils in paired and small group activities, receiving and sending a ball with increasing accuracy and precision as the lesson progresses.
99. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Lessons are planned carefully with a well-balanced sequence of activities to practice and develop skills, and opportunities to warm up and cool down. Teachers give accurate demonstrations of key activities and clear instructions so that pupils know what is expected of them. They apply their subject knowledge well to enable all pupils to be included and to achieve and make progress. Praise is used well to reinforce good effort and practice. As a result a good working atmosphere is created that helps to develop pupils' confidence, and enjoyment of the activities. Most pupils work well on their own and collaborate well in pairs or group activities. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. Teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, good management of pupils, demonstrations of correct techniques, checking that all the pupils understand what they have to do, and good use of resources, as seen in hockey lessons in both junior classes.
100. Leadership and management of the subject are good to overcome the restrictions and difficulties placed on provision by the small size of the school hall. Good extra-curricular provision, and an emphasis on outdoor activities wherever possible further develops pupils' skills and adds to their experiences. Thorough curriculum planning, and links with partner schools and the community, ensures that pupils experience a full range of activities and games across the whole school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

It was not possible to see any lessons in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision.

Commentary

101. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. There is a sound programme of personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education, and drugs education, which is well linked to the assembly themes and classroom circle discussions, but it does not yet provide enough education for citizenship. The School Council provides pupils with a clear voice to air their views about the school, and to develop their sense of responsibility and belonging to the school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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	3
Attendance	5
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
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 (1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).