

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Henstridge, Templecombe

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123760

Headteacher: Mrs J Pitman

Lead inspector: Mr M Carter

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th October 2003

Inspection number: 257887

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	55

School address:	Ash Walk Henstridge Templecombe Somerset BA8 0QD
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Postcode:

Telephone number:	(01963) 362 308
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
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Name of chair of governors:	Rev P Hallett
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Date of previous inspection:	15 th March 1999
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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the village of Henstridge and surrounding areas. It is much smaller than most with 55 pupils, all of White UK heritage. There are fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection. The school has not been popular amongst some local families and a high proportion of homes have no children. Many of the pupils come from rented accommodation, but there is a growing number from owner-occupied housing and a positive trend in the number of new entrants. Currently, the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (23.6 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. Local socio-economic indicators are not representative of the pupils' backgrounds, which are generally below average, with very few from professional families. There is an above average proportion (30.9 per cent) of pupils identified as having special educational needs, although none has a statement. No pupils have English as an additional language and there are no ethnic sub-groups. The children enter the reception year in the September before they are five on a part-time basis. In 2001 and 2002, their attainment on entry was assessed as being significantly below the local authority's and the national averages in all aspects. The school has initiated a number of facilities for the community and gained grant support as a community learning centre.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20714	Mr M Carter	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, music and religious education
8986	Mr P Andrew	Lay inspector	
26232	Mr C Grove	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education and special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	7 - 10
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10 - 14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14 - 15
COMMUNITY PROVISION	15 – 16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	17 - 26
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school's **effectiveness is good overall** and it is improving quickly under the very good leadership of the headteacher. Pupils' **standards have improved to be satisfactory** and, since most enter the school with low attainment, **they achieve well**. **Teaching and learning are good** and the curriculum has been improved substantially. Relationships with parents are good and the school is popular with its pupils. There are many ways in which the school is working more with the community. **Management is satisfactory but governance is weak** because of over-reliance on the headteacher. The school has a good ethos and, although it has high costs for each child, it represents **satisfactory value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good leadership of the headteacher.
- Significant improvements made in the standards that pupils achieve.
- A good quality of education is provided because of good teaching, a good curriculum and good provision for personal development.
- The school pleases its parents and pupils well and promotes a strongly favourable climate for learning, resulting in very good attendance, good attitudes and good behaviour.
- Information from the good range of checks on learning is not used enough to provide challenging tasks for the most capable pupils.
- Governors rely too heavily on the headteacher.
- Too little provision is made for the development of pupils' cultural understanding and for learning outdoors by the reception children.
- Recording of what pupils have been taught in the long term lacks rigour.

The school was last inspected in March 1999. Since then, standards have improved significantly. The results of the national tests have risen faster than the national trend and the school has become more effective, with most pupils achieving well. The climate for learning is very positive and pupils are keen to learn and succeed. Most issues identified in the last inspection have been effectively tackled, improving standards in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and writing. There is a good range of checks made on the pupils' learning and sound guidance for the curriculum, although the long-term curriculum records could still be improved. Planning for development is now good and very effective in raising standards. The role played by co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT is also helping this improvement, but is this less so in other subjects. The outdoor learning area for reception children has improved little.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Standards on entry to reception are below average, but most pupils meet the expected Early Learning Goals, except in personal, social and emotional development, before they enter Year 1. **Standards at Year 2 are satisfactory** in English, mathematics and science. They have risen since the last inspection and the pupils achieve well, being well prepared to progress through the school. The 2003 Year 2 results in the national tests show that standards in reading are strongest and that there are few pupils with high attainment in writing and mathematics. However, due to small

numbers of pupils in each year group, test results vary considerably and detailed analysis is unreliable from year-to-year, although the overall trend is positive. For Year 6 pupils, national test results also fluctuate, but the overall trend is very positive and better than the national picture. The results of the 2003 tests showed fewer pupils with high attainment, but **Year 6 standards are currently average** in English, mathematics, science and ICT. In mathematics, science and ICT, standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. Throughout the school, the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs inhibits higher standards overall, although these pupils make satisfactory progress. The pupils' **attitudes and behaviour are good** and, together with the good ethos, support their learning well. The pupils make good efforts and **achievement overall is good**, supported by **very good attendance** and the good links with parents. The pupils' **spiritual, moral and social development is good** but their cultural development is unsatisfactory because there are too few opportunities for them to appreciate and become aware of a wide variety of cultural traditions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall in each part of the school. Teachers consider the quality of the pupils' learning often and there are a good number of strategies used to help pupils reflect on what they have learnt and how to improve. Consequently, **the pupils' learning is good**. Nevertheless, there are some occasions when the most capable pupils are under-challenged because the details of checks on learning are not used enough to plan more demanding work. Pupils with special educational needs are well known by staff, but the targets in their individual education plans are often too general and so their progress is hard to evaluate. **The curriculum is good** and school experience is enriched well with special event days, visits, visitors and the environment. All the pupils are given equal opportunities and the school is concerned to make all activities available to all. The curriculum has significantly improved since the last inspection, but improvements in records are needed to ensure the long-term entitlement for all pupils. **The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are promoted well**. The climate for learning strongly supports the pupils' academic and personal development. The pupils are happy and like their school. **The links with parents are good** and are becoming effective in supporting children's learning. The school's efforts in engaging the community are also growing and have mutual benefits.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has led to significant improvements, due to clear development planning and a keen sense of how the school should improve. The headteacher is very influential in securing a shared sense of working as a team to make improvements and overcome any previous weak reputation the school had locally. The focus has been on raising standards and providing a helpful climate for learning. **The management of the school is satisfactory**. Professional development is good. While the school has generally good systems to raise standards, the attention paid to some subjects lacks the intensity given to English and mathematics. The school's attention to issues of best value are insufficiently developed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very positive. Parents like the concern given to pupils' individual needs and feel well informed about the school and its work. There is a good number of ways in which parents are welcomed and helped to understand learning processes. Pupils' views are also very positive. They think teachers are fair and they can always talk easily to an adult.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- increase the ways in which assessments are used to provide challenging tasks for pupils;
- improve the governance of the school;
- increase opportunities for pupils' cultural development;

- provide more facilities for reception children to learn outdoors; and
- provide secure records of pupils' experience of the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in all the core subjects are satisfactory by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in reception and Years 3 to 6. In the core subjects over three years, the girls' performance is slightly better than the boys.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well from typically below average attainment in entry.
- Standards have improved well since the last inspection.
- Standards are now average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

Commentary

1. The standards of the current pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 are average. The results of the national tests vary significantly from year-to-year, a factor associated with the small numbers of pupils taking them. However, for both Year 2 and Year 6, the trend in results over time is very positive. For example, since 1998, it was above the national trend for Year 6. In 2002, the results showed that:
 - more Year 6 pupils achieved high standards than average in the core subjects.
 - all the results were above the average of schools having pupils from similar backgrounds.
 - the Year 6 pupils had made above average progress in science.
 - all the Year 2 pupils achieved the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
 - but in English and mathematics there were more Year 6 pupils than average who did not achieve the expected levels.(In 2002, there were eight Year 2 pupils taking the tests and ten Year 6 pupils.)
2. The Year 2 results of the national tests for 2003 were generally not as good as those for 2002 because there were fewer pupils achieving high levels, except in reading, where half the pupils achieved above the expected level. (In 2003 there were 6 Year 2 pupils taking the tests and 10 Year 6 pupils were eligible to take them.)
3. These results are in keeping with the general picture of year-to-year fluctuations with an overall positive trend. Typically, children enter the school with attainment that is below that of the local education authority's and the national averages. They achieve well overall in the Foundation Stage and most reach the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical and physical development, but not in personal and social development. For the other areas of learning, standards could not be judged. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily overall so that, by the end of Year 2, standards are average in all the subjects inspected. Measures of the comparative improvement in the standards of the 2003 Year 6 pupils, from when they were Year 2, are positive, showing that progress had been above average over the four years, and targets have been exceeded. There is also a positive picture from reception to Year 2.
4. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils achieve well overall and most maximise their learning, reaching at least average standards in all the subjects inspected (English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, and religious education.) However, in music, standards are above average from the small amount of evidence seen for the pupils of Years 3 to 6. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in the large majority of subjects at both key stages. In the remaining subjects where judgements were

possible (design and technology, religious education and English at Year 6), standards remain satisfactory since the last inspection.

5. Targets are carefully set in the light of what is known about the pupils. In 2003, those for Year 6 in mathematics were exceeded, but not met in English. Absence during the tests and any new pupils have a disproportionate impact on the school's ability to meet its targets.
6. Standards at Year 2, in speaking and listening, reading and writing are average and improved since the last inspection. There is a similar picture for mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Standards at Year 6 have also improved and are good in speaking and listening, where teachers give good opportunities for pupils to listen and to talk. Standards at Year 6 in reading and writing, mathematics, science and ICT have also improved since the last inspection and are currently average. The rising trend in standards is attributable to the very good leadership; the headteacher has improved teaching and developed an effective team, which is keenly committed to raising standards and valuing each pupil. For example, there is a good emphasis on the teaching of pupils with higher capability and providing challenging learning. Consequently, by Year 6, there are more pupils with above average standards and they achieve well. While in some years the performance of girls is better than the boys, this is not significant overall. The skills learnt in lessons for English, mathematics and ICT are practised in other subjects, although more use could be made of these opportunities.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving satisfactorily throughout the school because work is adequately matched to their needs. Teachers and staff know the pupils and their needs well, although the targets stated in their individual education plans are not specific enough. Nevertheless, the number of pupils with special educational needs is above average and the proportion in any particular year group contributes to the overall variability in standards. Pupils with high capability also achieve satisfactorily and, although provision is stronger in Years 3 to 6, there were some lessons in which more challenge for these pupils was needed. The school's ethos and climate for learning, where every pupil is valued equally, is accepted by parents and the community and helping to raise aspirations generally. The school's efforts in working with parents and the community help to transmit these expectations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good. They behave well and have good attitudes. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development, is good overall, but their cultural development is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Pupils show positive attitudes and behave maturely.
- The school is very successful in stimulating in pupils a desire to learn.
- Reception children start from low attainment on entry and, although they make good progress, several are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, but they are insufficiently aware of their own cultural traditions and the cultural diversity of modern Britain.

Commentary

8. Pupils display positive attitudes, both in lessons and at other times of the school day. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, for example, were very keen to join in miming activities in a drama lesson, and participated well. When these pupils practise and learn the spelling of common words, they take care over their writing and show pride in their achievements. Older pupils also display similarly positive attitudes. Pupils of Years 3 to 6 were eager to take part in a 'Conversation

Time' discussion lesson because they understood the value of the work on social skills which they were undertaking and wanted to exploit the opportunity which their teacher offered. In this, they showed confidence and maturity. Occasions such as these demonstrate that the school is being successful in inculcating in its pupils the desire to participate and a love for learning.

9. Behaviour is equally good. When pupils gathered for a whole school assembly which focused on the sounds of nature, their demeanour was entirely appropriate and they responded well to the sense of occasion, indicating that they have well-developed and reflective imaginations. In their classrooms, too, the pupils behave well. When pupils of Years 1 and 2 returned to school after their swimming lesson, they arrived back during a lesson for reception children, and without any instruction from their teacher, immediately sat down in silence to listen to what was going on. The school is succeeding in setting high expectations for pupils' self-control, and for the development of mature behaviour. There is a good ethos and climate for learning and this is reflected in the pupils' views of the school and their parents' happiness with what it provides.
10. Baseline assessments carried out in the autumn of 2001 and 2002 indicated that the personal, social and emotional skills of children on entry to the school were well below the average of the local education authority and nationally. Reception children make good progress, but are still immature in these aspects. In some situations, they lack confidence and tend to be shy, while in others, some are impulsive and have not learned to respond to an adult's guidance or respect other's activities. However, the good provision helps most children to mature quickly so that by the beginning of Year 1, they have made up for much of their earlier disadvantages.
11. The school has a range of effective provision, which aids pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness and development. School assemblies do much to create spiritual awareness through activities such as 'stilling' (times and tasks to help pupils to be silent and reflective). Work in 'Conversation Time' and 'Circle Time' discussion lessons contributes considerably to the pupils' moral and social development, so that pupils are learning to respect other people and empathise with them. The arrangements for classroom agreements allow for the discussion of aspects of social and moral behaviour and development. Pupils are learning to relate well to others. For example, when pupils work in pairs for reading work, or at a single computer terminal, they know how to co-operate in the set task. However, the school is providing fewer opportunities for pupils to develop cultural and multicultural awareness. In music lessons, for example, there are few planned opportunities for pupils to experience and learn about music from other periods and cultures. Some work in art and design indicates a wider horizon; however, the pupils' general experiences are limited in range and there is too little planned, and too many missed, opportunities to enrich the pupils' cultural and multi-cultural understanding.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

12. Attendance figures above relate to 2001/2. However, the picture for 2002/3 has improved further and is well above the national average of 94 per cent. These figures reflect the children's eagerness to come to school as confirmed by their answers to the questionnaire, in which they all stated that they like the school. The school works closely with the parents, emphasizing the importance of attendance and prompt arrival in the mornings. This is a strength of the school and is a significant improvement since the previous report.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	48	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good because the curriculum is good and so is teaching. The school provides a very good climate for learning, helping many pupils who would otherwise be unlikely to do so, to become interested and successful.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and helps the pupils to learn well in the large majority of lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and effectively helps the pupils to learn and achieve well.
- Teachers help provide a very good climate for learning by:
 - valuing each pupil and their responses;
 - encouraging pupils to make efforts and succeed;
 - making lessons interesting and engaging pupils;
 - using resources and the environment to enrich learning;
 - encouraging pupils to be aware of their own learning and needs; and
 - fostering good relationships, being fair to each pupil and maintaining discipline well.
- There are good systems for checking on and recording what the pupils learn.
- The information from these checks is not used enough to plan work that is at the right levels for pupils of different capability. Some lessons do not challenge the most capable pupils enough.

Commentary

13. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and has become more effective in raising standards and in providing a strong climate to promote learning and the pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is good overall for each age group. Teachers are generally adept at meeting the different needs of pupils of different ages in their class. However, in nearly a third of lessons, the work set for the oldest and most capable pupils was not challenging enough. For example, in a science lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher did not challenge the most capable Year 2 pupils enough to control the way in which their test of materials and their waterproofing qualities was made fair and accurate. This weakness in teaching seldom affects lessons in English or mathematics, where expectations are high for pupils of all capabilities and teachers often have good or very good subject knowledge. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory, with strengths in the individual quality of support given to individual pupils.

14. In over three-quarters of the lessons, teachers provide a good learning climate, and help the pupils to become aware of their learning and how it can improve. Teachers talk helpfully with the pupils about their work and encourage them to make further improvements. The pupils' views are sought in discussing further targets and marking is at least satisfactory, encouraging pupils and sometimes suggesting improvements. Teachers check up on the pupils' learning and make records of their achievements through observations and a number of tests and tasks. However, for subjects other than English and mathematics, the information gained is not used enough to help teachers plan the pupils' future work for groups of different capability. In English and mathematics, this is done well. Homework provides good support for the pupils' learning and parents are provided with several ways of learning how to make it more effective at home. Teachers' planning is of good quality and provides for the requirements of the National Curriculum, and to ensure that all the pupils are taught the whole curriculum. However, the long-term records of what each group has been taught are not clear enough to ensure unnecessary repetition or omission through their time at the school.
15. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans and are frequently supported in their learning by classroom assistants. The details of the learning steps in the plans are often not sufficiently specific, and teachers and teaching assistants do not regularly match work appropriately to the needs of these pupils in meeting the targets. However, they are personally very well known to staff, who provide good quality individual help; overall, the teaching and learning of these pupils is satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2 (9%)	15 (68%)	5 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The Curriculum

The range of learning opportunities provided is good, as are opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and the resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum.
- There is an emphasis on providing an inclusive curriculum.
- There has been much effective curriculum development and innovation in recent times.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- The targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not sufficiently specific.
- The youngest pupils are effectively prepared for work in Year 1 and the oldest pupils for secondary education.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is good.
- Children in the Foundation Stage lack a suitably equipped outdoor play area.

Commentary

16. The school's curriculum is devised to be broad, balanced and inclusive. It has improved since the last inspection when some subjects had insufficient guidance. Effective use is made of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and the school's action planning for the development of English and mathematics is good. To support the teaching of literacy and numeracy to mixed-age classes, the school makes good use of the planning guidance produced by the local education authority. The curriculum for ICT is also good in that there is balanced coverage of all aspects of the subject, including control technology. In subjects such

as design and technology and music, the school has adapted nationally available syllabuses to meet its particular situation and needs. Nevertheless, recording of the curriculum in the long-term is not rigorous enough to guarantee that the full National Curriculum is taught to every child in the light of any future changes to pupil and class groupings.

17. A particular strength of the school's curriculum is the number of well devised innovations which have taken place over the last year in response to the analysis of pupils' needs. For example, to provide pupils with more opportunities for structured speaking and listening work, 'Conversation Time' has been developed. In addition, pupils regularly write 'Learning Diaries' to enable them to reflect on the techniques and strategies for learning which the school is teaching. Higher-attaining pupils have opportunities to coach others through reading and writing with another pupil. 'Choose to Learn Time' is part of the school's reward system and encourages pupils to explore an interest for themselves. The school's personal, social and health education programme accords well with its emphasis on providing pupils with opportunities to reflect on learning and wider social issues. This programme also provides for opportunities for sex education and drugs awareness.
18. The school makes satisfactory overall provision for pupils with special educational needs through setting work which is generally suitable for them. Pupils, whose particular needs have been identified, have individual education plans, although the targets in these plans are often not specific enough to enable teachers to plan work appropriately for these pupils.
19. The Foundation Stage prepares the youngest children in the school very effectively for their national curriculum work in Year 1. The school has good links with the local secondary school. In readiness for the next stage of education, Year 5 pupils spend three days at the secondary school each year, and Year 6 pupils have a two-day induction programme.
20. Visits and visitors provide enrichment to the curriculum, some of which is provided in collaboration with the group of local schools. This includes a residential visit for older pupils, supporting their social and personal development. A good number of clubs and activities is offered to supplement the school curriculum, some of which are available after school and others during lunchtime. A range of sporting interests is catered for, from football to netball and short tennis. The art club affords pupils opportunities for paint and clay work. Other possibilities include textiles, chess and gardening clubs.
21. There is a good number of well qualified teachers for the number of pupils, enabling pupils of Years 3 to 6 to be taught in two groups for a good portion of each week. The number of support assistants is satisfactory. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, and its resources are good. However, for the children in the Foundation Stage, there is no proper outdoor play area equipped with appropriate large apparatus and facilities for all areas of learning. This issue was also noted in the last inspection report and has not been effectively improved.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are well known to staff, who successfully promote trusting relationships.
- The pupils' views are very positive and they feel valued.
- Pupils' views are sought and acted upon.
- Induction procedures are very effective and parents feel the children settle in to school well.

Commentary

22. The school looks after the pupils very well and ensures their physical and emotional well-being in a supportive and Christian environment. This is a strength and this provision has improved since the previous inspection. Child protection procedures are fully in place and all routine health and safety checks are completed to a sound schedule, including the annual risk assessments.
23. The monitoring of children's personal development is mainly informal but, nevertheless, it is effective, due to the small number of pupils and the close working relationship with the staff. Comments are included in the annual reports to parents.
24. There is strong support for children of all ages reflected in the answers to the children's questionnaire, in which 100 per cent agreed there was an adult to go to if worried and 100 per cent agreed that the teachers listened to their ideas. This is well illustrated by the classroom seating arrangements for Years 5 and 6, where the children suggested a more formal arrangement using only the tables and chairs; this has led to an improvement in achievement. The induction arrangements for the reception children are very good and result from the close partnership with the playgroup located on the school site.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The partnership with parents has become more effective in helping learning.
- Parents now offer good support to the school, partly through an effective school association.
- The links with the community are much improved and developing as a community learning centre.

Commentary

25. The school has a good and effective partnership with parents and the community. The inspection team found that there has been a major improvement over the last school year and parents now have a very favourable view of the school, demonstrated by the positive answers to the parent's questionnaire, by the comments made at the meeting for parents and by discussions with parents. These partnerships are a strength of the school.
26. The school provides a good quantity of information for parents, which is helpful and of good quality. Regular meetings are held with parents of children with individual education plans and all parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems. The school seeks parents' views often. The school brochure and the governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements. Consultation meetings are held in the autumn and spring terms to discuss children's progress. However, despite the efforts by the school to arrange the meetings at the most convenient times, only about 40 per cent of parents attend. The annual school reports to parents are satisfactory, but comparative levels of achievement and more detailed targets for the next school year could be improved. Parents are very well informed by letters of school activities, and aspects of the curriculum to be taught in the term ahead. The school actively encourages parents to come in to help, but there is a limited response. The school has a detailed homework programme, which has been explained to parents, but some parents give the children insufficient help at home.
27. There is a forward looking association for parents and others that supports the school, running activities for pupils and adults, and raising worthwhile funds to supplement the school's facilities. There are strong links with the community. End of term services are held in the

parish church and the members of the Mothers' Union have made 'Storysacks' for the reception class and come into school to give talks and to hear pupils read. The 'Community Learning Centre' project has resulted in the starting of the 'Explorers' playgroup that is a very good facility for the village community and works closely with school to prepare children for formal schooling. Other helpful features include involvement with the community, for example, 'Better Parenting' classes.

28. The school has strong links with the local sports college, which has resulted in coaching for a wide range of sports. The college has also sponsored the school's swimming lessons. The transfer arrangements for Year 6 pupils are very good, both in relation to the children and the co-ordination between the staff of the school and the college. The school works closely with a group of local schools, for example, sharing an ICT technician and organizing a residential trip.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good; management is satisfactory; and governance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the direction of the school, and has high aspirations for its development.
- Governors have not been sufficiently effective in helping to shape the direction of the school.
- There is a strong commitment to an inclusive school ethos.
- The overall management of staff is good, including effective use of performance management to bring about improvements to teaching.
- Best value principles are not being sufficiently applied to management practice.

Commentary

29. The good quality of education that the school is providing is a direct result of the very good leadership of the headteacher. The school improvement plan shows effective strategic planning. Although it contains considerable detail, it retains a very good clarity of thought and is clearly focused on improving teaching and raising standards, using key issues from the previous inspection report, as well as a number of new foci. Together, these represent a clear vision and sense of direction for the school. The headteacher has also created an effective teaching team, who are focused on developing a positive and inclusive ethos for the school. Since her appointment, she has created a sense of confidence in both parents and governors.
30. However, the governance of the school is unsatisfactory. Governors are clearly personally committed to the school, but there are a number of unsatisfactory features. The governing body is not aware sufficiently of the present strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are not certain that the school is spending all its money effectively, and are not clear what they need to do to evaluate progress. They rely heavily on the headteacher to set the direction of the school, and are not sufficiently providing themselves with opportunities to form independent views about its progress. Importantly, governors have done little to address the decline which has occurred in the school roll in recent times.
31. The management of the school is satisfactory overall. The school has a clear annual review cycle. It effectively involves the headteacher, staff, governors and the local education authority, and draws together various sources of information on school performance, including national data on pupils' attainment, the appraisal of teaching and support staff, and arrangements for checking on pupils' standards. The outcomes are used for discussion in the teaching team about making improvements and to form priorities for school development. The performance management strategy for teaching staff is being used well to address recognised weaknesses in teaching or curriculum. Last year's focus on improving pupils' standards of behaviour and

attitudes to school has also been used as an opportunity to provide professional development for staff about catering for pupils' needs and improving the climate for learning.

Financial information

32. Financial management is satisfactory. The table below indicates that the school is spending within its means. The carry forward figure is high and is growing, but the school has plans to increase its expenditure on improvements to the buildings and premises, as well as to the curriculum and staff development. Nevertheless, some improvements suggested in the last report have not yet been made, for example, improving the provision for reception children outdoors.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	258,845
Total expenditure	204,933
Expenditure per pupil	4,099

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,656
Balance carried forward to the next year	53,912

33. Best value principles are not well enough embedded in the management practices of the school. Although the recent acquisition of an interactive whiteboard, through the local education authority, ensured best value, the four principles are not being regularly applied to other aspects of the management of the school.
34. The very effective leadership of the headteacher, and the school's approaches to strategic planning and the performance management of the staff, together represent significant aids to raising pupils' achievement. Governors now need to do more to have a positive influence in shaping the future direction of the school, including the financial prediction of the school's possible future numbers.

COMMUNITY PROVISION

The effectiveness of the school's community provision is satisfactory and growing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new playgroup, based on the site, is a significant provision for families in the area.
- Collaboration with the Mothers' Union has been of mutually practical support.
- A developing learning garden has used local expertise and provided a resource.
- Classes for parents support families well.

Commentary

35. A grant of £6,000 has been gained by the school to enable it to develop as a Community Learning Centre and thus to enhance its position in the community. The school has embraced this opportunity well.
36. A major part of the project has been to open a playgroup in the school grounds; the previous playgroup had closed some two years ago. This playgroup has been set up using a building in the school grounds with a properly approved management structure and approved as a playgroup by the relevant authorities; it provides the community with a much-needed resource for children below school age. The planned long-term effect will be to increase the school roll and to raise attainment on entry to the reception class. The playgroup has good facilities, trained staff and a close working relationship with the school.

37. The school is developing additional aspects of its work in the community, for example, the Better Parenting Classes. The use of the school hall by the community is being developed, for example, by the Brownies and the village singers.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**, with several good features.

Pupils enter the reception year in the September before they are five. They are taught on a part-time basis to start with and attached to a class with pupils of Years 1 and 2. They are frequently taught as a group, either by the class teacher or a classroom assistant, in the main classroom or one of the several other places available. The curriculum is well planned to meet their needs and those of the nationally agreed Early Years Curriculum. Teaching is good overall in the areas of learning observed and there is a good secure learning climate in which the children can develop. Learning resources are satisfactory and there is outdoor space available for the children to play and learn, but it is under-developed to provide for all the areas of learning. Staff regularly record the children's achievements and these are being collected together, for each child, providing a profile of their development, although overall checks-ups have yet to be completed. During the inspection, there were not opportunities to review the children's achievements in all the areas of learning. However, since most enter the school with below average attainment and well over half reach the Early Learning Goals before Year 1, achievement is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing skills.
- Staff provide many varied opportunities for the children to learn in different ways.
- Staff provide a good, secure climate in which the children can develop.
- There are good induction procedures, allowing children to quickly feel at home.
- Older pupils in the class generally support new reception children.
- Planning is good.
- Opportunities for role-play have limitations.

Commentary

38. Many children enter the school with low levels of confidence and skill in forming relationships and being independent. This was reflected in the assessments carried out soon after entry for reception pupils in 2001 and 2002. In some activities, the children lack confidence, particularly when they are taught alongside older pupils. In others, they are impulsive and are still adjusting to an adult's guidance and to working co-operatively with each other. For example, when riding on a wheeled vehicle designed for two, one boy persistently pushed others off with no reason or explanation. Although early in the year, some children are beginning to show pride in their achievements and to share experiences, but most are inhibited by weak oral skills. Good relationships are promoted well by the teacher and classroom assistant and there is a conducive climate for learning. Teaching is good and gives the children many opportunities to talk and to listen to others. Opportunities for role-play are less clearly planned to meet the needs of this age group and the provision outdoors has limitations for the children's development. There are good links with the playgroup, which is on the same site, and these are helping pupils to be more ready for school. By the time that pupils enter Year 1, over half achieve well and are close to the expected Early Learning Goals, although standards are still below average overall.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good progress.
- Standards are average for the age of the children and the time of the year.
- Children enter the school with below average skills.
- Staff help the children to learn well and gain skills quickly.

Commentary

39. The children have already learned to enjoy stories and understand how to listen, and sometimes like to make relevant observations. This is because the teacher reads stories well and gains the pupils' interest through the good example of story telling. Staff often ask pupils questions that require a thoughtful answer eg *"Why do you think there was a rainbow in the story?"* The teacher has a lively engaging manner that helps the children to maintain interest and make good progress, even if there are interruptions in the room. While several lack confidence and some have difficulties in articulating words, speaking skills are on course to meet the expected Early Learning Goals. In some lessons, when the children join the pupils of Years 1 and 2, they show less confidence.
40. Most pupils can hold a pencil and make marks on paper well. They know what letters are and how together they form words. They recognise and can repeat the initial sounds of words and have some knowledge of which letters they represent. Several can say the sounds that a number of letters make and can copy them with reasonable accuracy. However, they still make several mistakes, for example, one child wrote backwards, while another wanted to make large circular scribbles. The children with most capability can write their own name and identify the differences between letters and numbers. Teaching of these skills is good and the pupils are on course to meet the expected Early Learning Goals.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have a good knowledge of each pupil, supporting good relationships.
- Activities are planned for these children separately from Years 1 and 2.
- Some whole-class activities are unsuitable for reception children.
- Good use is made of the effective classroom support.
- Pupils are making sound progress and most will meet the Early Learning Goals.

Commentary

41. Typically, children enter the school with below average attainment. For parts of some lessons, they join the pupils of Years 1 and 2 and, while these activities are helpful sometimes, others are too advanced. For example, when joining the whole class for counting in tens, several of the reception children tried to join in by counting on in ones. A good resource of a large number of soft toy dogs with different features and numbers attached was used in a lesson to help the children identify different numbers and to count to ten. While most children can say the numbers to ten, few could easily select the correct numeral and one was not clear about the difference between numerals and letters. Nevertheless, most of the children are able to count out objects with reasonable accuracy to ten. Higher-attaining children are taught with pupils of Year 1 on appropriate occasions.

42. The school has a good number of additional rooms in which the reception children are taught separately from Years 1 and 2. However, they are also taught separately within their main classroom by the class teacher or the classroom support assistant. The balance of activities chosen by the children and those directed by an adult is suitable for their age and most are provided to promote learning that is specifically planned. For example, when playing in the sand, the children found coins which they could relate to numbers. Staff make observations of the children at work and use these to help maintain on-going records in the 'Pupil Profiles'. However, this information is not used enough to help provide activities for individual and small groups of pupils needing more experience of particular stages of learning about numbers. The pupils are very well supported in their personal development and given much encouragement, which helps them to be fully engaged in their activities. Teaching is satisfactory.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved across the school since the last inspection and so has their writing at Year 2.
- Pupils' standards of reading remain average.
- Teaching is satisfactory with several good features.
- The leadership and management provided by the co-ordinator are good.
- Teachers are using opportunities to develop the skills of language and literacy across the curriculum.
- The National Literacy Strategy is used well and effectively adapted to the age ranges taught.

Commentary

43. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, pupils' results were below the national average. Since the last inspection, the school's results in English have been inconsistent from year to year, varying from about average to below. This variation is usually the case with small numbers of pupils. However, the results have often been above the average for similar schools and the overall trend since 1999 is positive. Over the same period, there has been a tendency for girls to perform slightly better than boys at the end of Year 6.
44. Results in the 2002 national tests for reading at the end of Year 2 were below the national average, but above the average for similar schools. In 2003, results improved, with half the pupils reading at a high level. In writing, the Year 2 results for 2002 were average nationally and above average for similar schools. In reading and writing, results have been inconsistent from year to year since the previous inspection, and have varied from about average to below average, but with a positive trend. Girls have tended to do slightly better than boys in both reading and writing at the end of Year 2.
45. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and their learning difficulties are well known to staff. Satisfactory provision is made for them to gain skills and there is a good climate in which their contributions are valued and built on, especially in discussions, when they are sometimes supported and prompted by classroom support assistants. The precise nature of their needs is not reflected accurately in the targets in their individual education plans, although teachers amend class tasks to match their general needs well. Overall, these pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress throughout.
46. Teachers often plan harder work for the pupils with high capability. The individual support for pupils, whilst they carry out the set tasks, is challenging and enables them to achieve above average standards. The number of such pupils in each year group is small and varies, but occasionally a very small number of the oldest pupils could work at a higher level. A few younger, more capable pupils frequently work at more challenging tasks with older pupils.

47. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 make effective use of the opportunities provided in “Conversation Time” and other lessons to develop their speaking and listening skills, and also to learn about the relationships between spoken and written English. Year 2 pupils concentrate and respond well in drama work. They articulate well and give considered answers to their teacher, both in drama and also when answering questions and volunteering ideas in class.
48. Year 6 pupils make good use of the opportunities to read to each other in English lessons. When pupils, particularly the more capable ones, read to the whole class, they make good use of expression to indicate their understanding, and show insight into the meaning of their reading. Pupils in Year 2 are reading proficiently, according to their levels of attainment. Those with higher attainment can correct themselves, and sound out words they do not know. However, others are hesitant. Pupils regularly take their reading books home with them, but have variable opportunities to practise their reading.
49. At Year 6, pupils are achieving good standards overall in terms of their handwriting, spelling and punctuation, and satisfactory standards in the content of their written work. They are making good progress in their writing. For example, in writing in a similar style to that of their current reading book by Michael Morpurgo, pupils show very good concentration and deliberately produce shorter sentences. They choose to use powerful words in descriptions and achieve a sound degree of correctness. Year 2 pupils are achieving good standards of cursive handwriting, showing care over letter formation, and are making good use of the school’s approach to learning the spelling of words. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, are effectively recording a variety of sorts of written work, including their personal achievements.
50. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with a number of good features. Teachers are good at creating an effective learning atmosphere, and organise lessons well. They promote good relationships with their pupils, and set high expectations, enabling them to conduct good discussion and question and answer work. Teaching of speaking and listening is good. One teacher provided a particularly effective model of how to read aloud at a lively pace in a confident and expressive way. In the best examples of marking, the teacher had made detailed suggestions for improvements, but in others, more could be done to help pupils to improve their work. The records of pupils’ writing provide a full and accurate assessment of their standards.
51. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of pupils’ current standards and knows how they can be raised further, as shown in the English action plan, which very effectively addresses all aspects of the improvement of the subject. The approach is to help pupils to become more aware of strategies and techniques which they can regularly use to improve all their skills. Standards are improving as a result of the quality of leadership, which is emphasising the use of the National Literacy Strategy and its amendment for classes of mixed age.
52. When the school was last inspected, standards were judged to be about the national average at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 2, standards were below average in speaking and listening, and writing, but about average for reading. The need to raise standards in writing for Year 2 pupils was a key issue. Improvements are evident in the present inspection. At Year 6, standards of listening and speaking are now above the national average, and at Year 2, standards of listening and speaking, and of writing, are now in line with the national average. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory, with particular strengths in developing pupils’ oral English and helping gain an awareness of their own learning. Teachers promote the use of ICT well, both for pupils to use directly and in supporting direct teaching. When the school was last inspected, there was no English co-ordinator. The leadership and management of the subject are now good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Teachers use opportunities such as 'Circle Time' and discussion lessons to provide for more extensive oral work. Similarly, they use the writing opportunities afforded in subjects such as design and technology. At the stage of evaluating the products, which they have designed and made, pupils practise their developing literacy skills in a real context. Writing and reading skills are also practised in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvements in standards since the last inspection.
- The trend in national test results is better than the national trend.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is effectively used.
- A good system of check-ups helps track the progress of each pupil.
- Test outcomes are not always used enough to plan challenging work for the most capable pupils.

Commentary

54. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6, and significantly better than those at the last inspection, when they were below average. The results of the national tests are often based on less than ten pupils and consequently are an unreliable indicator of the school's performance. However, the improvement in results has been good and much faster than the national trend. The results for Year 6 in 2003 were a little lower than for 2002, when they were above the average for similar schools and average overall. The pupils achieve well because they make good efforts, learn well, and often achieve better than pupils in similar schools. They often achieve better than pupils in schools that had similar results when the pupils were Year 2. Taken over the last five years, there is very little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are correctly identified, although this is seldom for their mathematics learning. Tasks are set that are easier and they are often supported well by the teacher or classroom assistant. Computer programs are sometimes used to help these pupils learn and practise skills. Overall, satisfactory progress is made.
56. The results of the national tests for Year 2 are also based on small numbers of pupils and have varied considerably, although there is a very positive overall trend. Standards are now average and have improved since the last inspection. The results of the 2002 national tests indicated average standards that were above those for similar schools. The results of the 2003 tests are a little lower because no pupils achieved a high standard, although most achieved well within the expected range. Achievement is satisfactory because most pupils make sound progress and learn more than pupils in similar schools.
57. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a sound understanding of the value that numerals have in different positions in numbers. They can multiply and divide numbers by 10 or 100 and work with three decimal places. In a lesson about co-ordinates, the oldest pupils quickly understood how to locate co-ordinates on a graph with four quadrants. The most capable pupils learnt how to overcome difficulties when writing co-ordinates for positions that were negative on both 'x' and 'y' axes. Pupils of Year 5 were introduced to co-ordinates in the first quadrant only. The work in pupils' books also shows that pupils of higher capability are given work that challenges them and they achieve well.
58. Pupils of Years 1 and 2 often work together, but the work set for older or more capable pupils is harder. For example, the most capable Year 2 pupils are already working at the expected standard for the end of the year. They devise their own ways to solve problems, such as 30p -

11p – 7p = 12p. They can count money in 5 and 10 pence effectively, and in whole class discussions they answer questions well, but some of these are too easy for them. In their past work, less capable Year 2 pupils indicate they can effectively work out problems such as 22 – 4 and most can order numbers up to 100. The pupils are progressing soundly in their knowledge and understanding of numbers and other aspects of the subject, and this is partly because they are well known by the teacher. The most capable pupils frequently work on the more challenging tasks set for older pupils in the same class. However, the proportion achieving above average standards is low.

59. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, where the teachers have very good knowledge of the subject, having been 'leading mathematics teachers' previously. Throughout the school, teachers promote the correct use of terminology and explain it well if there are any doubts. The questions teachers ask are usually challenging, promoting a good level of discussion. There are occasionally missed opportunities to challenge the most capable pupils with harder questions in whole-class sessions involving mental calculation. However, planning is clear about what the pupils are to learn and the different levels of tasks planned for pupils of different age or capability. Staff involve all pupils fully and those with special educational needs learn well. Together with the good relationships engendered, the pupils become fully engaged in lessons and gain good attitudes to the subject, knowing about their own strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, there are missed opportunities for staff to note individual pupils' stages in learning skills in whole-class mental calculation sessions. The marking of pupils' work is often helpful and contributes to a strong learning climate. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily in supporting the pupils' learning and well in Years 3 to 6, where appropriate supporting programs and the use of an interactive whiteboard enrich the pupils' learning and clarify their understanding.
60. The subject is co-ordinated well and there is a clear action plan for future improvements. There is a good system to review each child's progress involving the pupils' views, to identify any weaknesses and to set targets for improvement. Targets are also noted in the annual report to parents. The action plan is based on the overall outcomes from these systems. However, more use could be made of the checks on the pupils' progress in gaining skills and understanding. Nevertheless, work done on previous action plans has been effective in raising standards consistently.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Mathematics is occasionally used to support pupils' learning in other subjects, such as science and geography, but this is seldom as a planned part of the mathematics curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** and has improved since the last inspection, when there was no clear scheme of work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvement in standards and provision.
- Lessons are made interesting and often practical.
- Very few Year 2 pupils achieve high standards because the most capable are not challenged enough, but nearly all the pupils achieve the expected level.
- The emphasis on experimental work lacks rigour, especially for more capable pupils.

Commentary

62. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now average in Years 2 and 6. The national test results for Year 6 pupils vary from year-to-year, due to small numbers, but the trend over five years is better than the national one. The 2002 test results show that standards

for Year 6 pupils were above average and well above the average for similar schools. They fell back in 2003, but the work of the current Year 6 pupils indicates average standards, with some pupils having an above average understanding. Results of the teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils were below average in 2002, but average for pupils in similar schools. However, there were no pupils with high attainment. In 2003, there was still no high attainment, but all the pupils achieved the expected level. The work of the current Year 2 pupils suggests that most are on course to achieve the expected standards, but few above them. Achievement is satisfactory.

63. The work of Year 6 shows that the most capable pupils make good generalisations from the conclusions of their experiments. They make deductions, for example, about how the results of tests about evaporation may be different in different weather conditions. They make sensible predictions and use their mathematical knowledge to record data well. They are on course to achieve above average standards. Generally, pupils show pride in their work and present it neatly. However, the work of the least capable Year 6 pupils, while neat, is based on the same tasks, with much that is incomplete and suggests a lack of sufficient support. In a lesson for Years 3 and 4, the pupils learnt well the notion of dissolving, and were quickly able to use the correct terminology and explain that some substances dissolve in water while others remain as a sediment. The more capable pupils were asked more challenging questions and the least capable were supported in their work. Overall, achievement is satisfactory and most pupils show a strong interest, behave well, use their past sequential learning and strive to answer questions. They are keen to learn and have appropriate practical skills.
64. In a lesson for Years 1 and 2, the pupils made sensible predictions about what materials may be waterproof. For example, one said, *"See the tiny holes – the rain's gonna get through!"* However, even capable Year 2 pupils thought a scientific test is fair if *"each person in the group has a go."* Such misconceptions indicate that these pupils are not sufficiently challenged about scientific methods. However, they were able to make choices, for example, about how the test would be carried out.
65. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers are good at introducing the correct terminology and giving the pupils opportunities to use it in writing and answering questions. This is especially so for pupils with special educational needs, whose targets are well known by staff, helping them to make good progress. However, the more capable pupils, especially those in Year 2, are not sufficiently challenged about how to maintain rigour in experiments. Although there are good systems to check on the pupils' learning, the information is not used enough to plan work at different levels for pupils of different capability. Homework is used effectively, for example, in the lesson about dissolving substances, the pupils were asked to carry out further trials at home and the pupils were keen to do this, using the good guidance provided. The relationships that staff foster and the way in which the pupils' behaviour is managed, are good and help to enable the pupils' good interest in learning.
66. The subject has a scheme of work and teaching follows the medium-term planning well, indicating a clear sequence. The learning is recorded for each child. However, the ways in which the skills of investigation are taught are less clear. A portfolio of pupils' work is helpful in showing good examples, although it does not contain dates and the age groups of some pupils. There is good teamwork between the teachers in planning, sharing expertise and reviewing pupils' work and test outcomes. The subject is enriched through homework, special topic days and the development of a garden area, for which there is an action plan for its use as a place in which pupils may learn more about living things. Overall, co-ordination is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Year 2 and good at Year 6.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Teachers are providing pupils with some opportunities to use their ICT skills in other parts of the curriculum, but more could be done.
- Further thought needs to be given to the roles of both partners, and their use of time, when pupils work in pairs at a single computer terminal.
- The deployment of support staff needs greater consideration.

Commentary

67. Pupils are reaching national expectations in ICT. Year 6 pupils have had experience of a range of ICT applications. The school tracks pupils developing experience through the use of log-books maintained by each pupil and checked by teachers. Pupils have used text, sound and graphics, as well as e-mail and the Internet, involving the use of search engines. In addition, they have experience of handling data and of using control technology. Achievements vary according to previous attainment, but all children are making at least satisfactory progress, and higher-attaining pupils are achieving well. Pupils in Year 2 are similarly completing log-books, demonstrating their experience of an appropriate range of ICT applications for their age.
68. A major factor in the standards and progress of older pupils is the good quality of the teaching. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, for example, were given a logically organised explanation about how to access a particular website on the children's author Michael Morpurgo, and move it into the Favourites section on their own computers. They then adapted this material in various ways to present information about the author, one of whose books they are currently studying in their English lessons.
69. Good use is being made of the school's interactive whiteboard facility, which provides opportunities for high levels of participation by pupils, and hence is developing a sense of involvement on their part and thus good learning. In practical ICT lessons, pupils often need to work in pairs at computer terminals, and one partner is not always as actively involved in learning as the other. Lesson planning needs to take greater account of this factor, and also of the most effective use of time to ensure continuing good levels of achievement by pupils. Teaching assistants sometimes support pupils when they are working at the bank of computers, but their role is not sufficiently clear, and therefore the extent of the help they can provide is limited.
70. The co-ordinator has had a positive impact on standards and on teaching, and has a good overview of the subject. The log-books are effectively giving pupils confidence in the extent of their learning and, in addition, the co-ordinator is now assessing and recording pupils' capability. The co-ordinator maintains a portfolio, which provides good evidence of the range of applications to which pupils have been introduced at different ages. The curriculum has been well planned over a two-year cycle to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Improvement planning is effectively designed to build on the present state of development of the subject.
71. When the school was last inspected, pupils' standards in ICT and the role of the subject co-ordinator were key issues. Improvements are now evident. Pupils' standards at both ages have been raised, and are now meeting national expectations. Teaching is now good at Year 6. The school lacked a subject co-ordinator for ICT and now the leadership and management provided by the present co-ordinator are good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Effective links are being made between ICT and the teaching of other subjects, for example, English. Examples of material relevant to English teaching are used in presenting ICT work,

and pupils make use of computers to practise English skills. But greater use of ICT in more areas of the curriculum could be made.

HUMANITIES

Very little was seen of history and geography and there was not enough evidence to make judgements. However, both are planned to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and there is evidence that the pupils are taught these subjects with appropriate time and resources available.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**. Only one lesson was observed, but pupils' work was analysed and curriculum planning reviewed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning satisfies the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- The pupils' knowledge indicates clear sequential teaching.
- The subject is allocated an appropriate amount of time, but there is little work in the pupils' books.
- A strength in provision is the strong moral emphasis drawn from religions studied.

Commentary

73. From the evidence seen, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In a very good lesson about the Ten Commandments, the pupils of Years 3 to 6 were able to relate various of the commandments to everyday situations and to debate the moral dilemmas they may provoke. There was an especially strong discussion about what is right and wrong, and the pupils made good moral decisions, based on a sound knowledge and strong moral awareness. The pupils' efforts and concern reflect good achievement because of the high level of discussion.
74. Teaching in the lesson seen was very good and overall it is good. The work in pupils' books is limited in quantity, with some unfinished work. However, it indicates a reasonable range of topics taught, e.g. Christian and Hindu stories have been effectively used to illustrate key features of these religions. There is a sound set of resources about a number of religions. Teaching techniques are used well to help pupils to reflect on their feelings and beliefs, and to provide opportunities for spirituality. Aspects such as reflection, personal awareness and morality are emphasised, using elements of the agreed syllabus to learn both about and from different religions. Co-ordination is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work in design and technology was sampled through lesson observations.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to learn through the cycle of designing, making and evaluating products.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise discussion and writing skills are well taken when older pupils evaluate their products.
- The criteria for good quality work need to be clearer when younger pupils design and make products using scissors and glue.

Commentary

75. Pupils' standards reach national expectations at Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Year 6 design, make and evaluate a sandal in the style of Ancient Egypt. Their products are of satisfactory quality. When pupils write a step-by-step guide to the process of making their sandal, and an evaluation of the quality of the product that they have made, they record their thinking well. Their handwriting is well controlled, and the content of their work is properly organised, and reaches satisfactory standards. Year 2 pupils design and make a Noah's Ark card which includes a moving animal. The quality of their products is more variable, but is satisfactory overall. Pupils display great enthusiasm and are proud of their products. When design and technology was last inspected, standards were judged to be satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This remains the case and the pupils achieve well overall since they enter the school with generally low levels of skill and they make good efforts.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Year 6 and satisfactory at Year 2. The teacher of older junior pupils put a very good emphasis on pupils developing effective understanding of terms and ideas used in design and technology, such as template, diagram, step-by-step guide and paper drill. Pupils then showed good skills in discussing their work with one another and with their teacher. The teacher of Year 2 pupils showed them an illustrative model of the sort of card which they could make. But before children used scissors and glue to make their product, they were not given clear enough criteria for good work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

