

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hindley, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106475

Headteacher: Reverend Carol A Close

Lead inspector: Lynne Read

Dates of inspection: 1 – 3 December 2003

Inspection number: 257942

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	247
School address:	Kildare Street Hindley Wigan
Postcode:	WN2 3HY
Telephone number:	01942 258647
Fax number:	01942 777756
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Davidson
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's CE Primary is a popular school close to the centre of Hindley. Social and economic circumstances are below average overall and children entering the Reception class have a range of learning experiences that are below those typical for the age group. With 247 pupils on roll, it is roughly the average size for a primary school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (21.5 per cent) is around the average. Some pupils have specific or moderate learning, sensory or behavioural difficulties. Just over three per cent of the school population has a statement of special educational needs and this is well above the national average. Almost 11.5 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement to free school meals which is below average. Most pupils are of a white, British background. A few have Caribbean or mixed heritage and all but one speak English as their first language. There is a high incidence of pupils entering or leaving St Peter's part way through their education in some year groups. It is the policy of the governors to welcome pupils who have experienced difficulties in their prior education. The school has the Activemark, Artsmark, Healthy schools and Eco School awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19343	Mrs M Howel	Lay inspector	
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4223	Mr L Hampson	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Foundation stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Peter's is a good school and has many very good features. Teaching is good and much is very good. As a result, pupils make **good progress** in lessons and **achieve well. Leadership and management are good** and the headteacher drives the school forward **very effectively**. Pupils with special educational needs are **very well** supported. The school **provides good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and areas for development are:

- Achievement is good.
- Good leadership and management are reflected in the constant strive for improvement.
- Good teaching throughout school is responsible for good learning.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal development, resulting in very good attitudes to learning, very good relationships and good behaviour.
- The curriculum is broad and caters well for pupils of different abilities and needs.
- *Consistent procedures for checking pupils' learning are not yet established in all subjects.
- The subject managers for English and mathematics are not fully involved in the procedures for setting targets for learning in their subjects.
- Pupils are very well cared for and feel safe.
- Links with parents are strong and support learning well.

**This area had been identified by the school as needing improvement prior to the inspection.*

Improvements

There have been very good improvements since the last inspection, especially in teaching, leadership and management, planning for the curriculum, the provision for information and communication technology, the accommodation and resources. There are very good improvements in standards by Year 2 and good improvements in achievement throughout school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Standards/achievement. There are two main factors that affect the school's test results. Firstly, there is a high number of pupils who leave or enter school part way through their education. Secondly, in some year groups, there are above-average percentages of pupils with special educational needs. Of those pupils who took the 2003 tests, only 80 per cent had been at the school since Year 2 and a significant number had arrived in Years 5 and 6. These pupils did not have the full benefit of the school's provision and many had experienced a disrupted education; leading especially to gaps in prior learning for reading and writing. Consequently, the results above do not accurately reflect the school's work or pupils' achievements. The detailed tracking records, together with inspection evidence, show good achievement for pupils who receive all of their education at the school in reading, mathematics and science. Recent focused action has led to improved learning in mathematics where attainment has risen. Improvements in standards for writing are now becoming evident due to the development work started last year. Of the present

Year 6 group, nearly one third of the pupils have special educational needs and, overall, standards in English and mathematics are judged as average. Standards in Years 5, 4 and 3 are above average in reading and mathematics and average for writing but rising rapidly. There have been very good improvements to attainment in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. Standards now match the national average and, when compared to similar schools, are well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Pupils who have special educational needs are effectively supported and consequently achieve well. The individual tracking system shows that pupils from different ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language make equal progress to that of the majority. Children in the Reception class achieve well.

Attitudes. In line with the strong Christian ethos, **the school promotes spiritual, social, moral and cultural development very well. The resulting good standards of pupils' behaviour and their very positive attitudes underpin the good learning seen. Relationships are very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good.

Teaching. **The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good.** Teachers deliver stimulating lessons and use information and communication technology (ICT) facilities very effectively. Teaching assistants are well trained and they make a valuable contribution to learning. Systems for checking learning in the Reception class and for English and mathematics are established and are good. Similar procedures are being implemented in science and ICT and in two other subjects. There are no consistent methods of assessing pupils' attainment in art and design, music, design and technology and physical education.

Curriculum. There is a good, broad curriculum that caters well for pupils of all ability groups. Resources are good and very good for ICT. The accommodation is vastly improved and is satisfactory; there are plans to extend the two remaining small classrooms.

Care and guidance are very good. Pupils form trusting relationships with adults and say that they feel safe. Pupils who have special educational needs have the support and equipment that they need to access all lessons and activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT are good. Since her appointment, the headteacher has made very good improvements and she has the confidence of parents, pupils and governors. She leads an effective team of senior managers who are continually looking for ways to improve. Subject leaders have a good overview of teaching and learning. The effectiveness of procedures to monitor performance is seen in the recent, good improvements in mathematics and writing. However, the expertise of the subject managers is not fully used in the process of setting targets for pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Governors have a secure overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They contribute a good range of experience and practical help and are fully committed to the aims and ethos of the school. **Governance is good.**

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The results of questionnaires, discussions and meetings show that parents and pupils have **very good and positive** views of the school. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. Parents appreciate the very high standard of care.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- implement systems for checking pupils' learning in all subjects to provide a uniform approach and more detailed information to aid teachers' planning;
- increase the involvement of the managers for English and mathematics in the tracking and target setting processes so that their expertise may be used to the full.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children in the Reception class **achieve well**. Standards seen during the inspection in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are **above average** in most, but not all, year groups. Attainment levels vary depending on the numbers of pupils in the class who have arrived part way through their education or who have special educational needs. In writing, attainment is average overall and is good in some aspects. Attainment in all the other subjects of the National Curriculum **matches expectations** and there are strengths in history and geography.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science and attainment in ICT throughout the school have improved well since the last inspection.
- Achievement in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science is good throughout school.
- Achievement in writing is improving well. It is never less than satisfactory and in grammar, punctuation and spelling, it is good.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- Boys and girls, pupils from different ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and those capable of higher attainment achieve equally well.

Commentary

1. When children enter the Reception class, their experiences of learning are below those typical for the age group. They achieve well, especially in personal development, language and literacy, mathematical understanding and in the knowledge and understanding of the world. A significant number are attaining just above expectations by the time they move into Year 1. Achievement in creative and physical development is satisfactory and children attain the goals set for them. Learning in the Reception class prepares children well for work in Years 1 to 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.8 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.6 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.7 (15.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. When compared to schools nationally, the 2003 results for pupils at Year 2 were average and when compared to similar schools, they were well above average for reading and mathematics and above average for writing. This is a good improvement since the inspection of 1998. An above-average number of pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading (31 per cent) and almost 29 per cent did so in mathematics. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that, in Years 1 and 2, pupils are achieving well in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Pupils do well because they have good teaching, they are keen to learn and work hard. In writing, achievement is satisfactory overall and is improving rapidly because of the school's focused action this year. Extra sessions have been included in the timetable to enrich provision and to tackle problems that pupils encounter. The work seen shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils' spelling is largely accurate, handwriting is well formed

and pupils are beginning to include detail in their well-punctuated sentences. The higher attaining groups in Year 1 know how, and where, to use capital letters and full stops. Attainment in reading is judged as above average. Pupils are good at working out new text using their knowledge of letter sounds and they are confident in recognising the most commonly used words. They also effectively use their skills of comprehension and of grammar to work out unfamiliar words as they read. This was well illustrated in a Years 1 and 2 lesson where pupils decided which words might fit the gap in the sentence and which were nonsense. In mathematics, attainment is above average. Pupils are confident in calculating mentally and have a secure understanding of shape, measures and in making graphs and charts.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.3 (25.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.6 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good in reading, mathematics and science. Achievement in writing has improved as a result of the recent work done. Overall, in this subject achievement is satisfactory and good in the aspects of grammar, punctuation and spelling. The results shown above do not accurately reflect the achievement patterns seen throughout school. This is because only 79 per cent of the pupils taking the 2003 tests had received all of their junior education at St Peter's. Many pupils entering the school have had a disrupted education; gaps are more prevalent in reading and writing than in mathematics. Attainment in this subject has improved due to the focused action taken by the staff and similar improvements are now becoming evident in writing as the impact of the development work comes to fruition. When compared to schools nationally and to those with similar grades at Year 2, attainment in English and science was average. In mathematics, it was above average and well above for schools with similar grades. Taking the full cohort into account, the school's results for Year 6 did not reach all of the targets set in English and mathematics. Using the tracking records, however, it can be seen that the percentage targets were met by the pupils who had been at the school since the end of Year 2. This is a fairer evaluation of the school's performance.
4. Attainment levels are around average for the present Year 6 group of pupils in English, mathematics and science. Predicted results are lower than usual because there is high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group. Although they are progressing well, a significant number are not expected to reach the average level. In Years 3, 4 and 5 standards generally are above-average. Higher achieving pupils are well challenged and work at above-average levels.
5. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well throughout school. They have individual learning goals that are set and reviewed at regular intervals. Their parents are kept informed of progress made and advised on how to help at home. The broad curriculum allows pupils to develop their creative, physical or practical skills so that all have the opportunity to find their own talents.
6. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is very well improved and now matches expectations. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have particularly benefited from the school's improved provision and are exceeding expectations in some aspects of the subject. Pupils use their ICT skills for recording, checking, organising and presenting their work. With great confidence, they use the interactive whiteboards in whole-class sessions and often use the Internet for research. In all other subjects, attainment matches expectations. In history

there are particular strengths in enquiry and in evaluating the reliability of evidence. In geography, pupils' field work skills are well developed and they use a good range of sources when gathering evidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school is very successful in promoting personal development. Pupils' attitudes are very good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships that promote learning effectively and support the good behaviour.
- The pupils are confident, and play an active part in the life of the school.
- The spiritual development of the pupils is promoted very well through assemblies and the curriculum.
- Pupils clearly distinguish right from wrong and behave well.
- There is a very strong feeling of community within the school.

Commentary

7. There are very good relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils. There is a great sense of pride in the school and pupils take very good care of the building and the resources. The promotional video made by pupils reflects this pride; it shows a variety of activities and includes interviews with staff members and views of playtime and lunchtime. The teachers act as very good role models and are sensitive to the needs of individuals. Pupils reciprocate their concern and, as a result, there is a good deal of mutual respect that underpins the good learning and pupils' good conduct.
8. The pupils are very willing and eager to play a full part in all school activities. There is very good support for all the clubs that take place outside class times. The pupils are enthusiastic about the various activities and clearly enjoy the additional provision. They show real interest in their lessons and very readily join in discussions with their fellow pupils. They show respect for other people's views and can justify their own opinions.
9. Spiritual education is promoted very effectively through worship, religious education lessons and through the wider curriculum. During personal, social and health lessons pupils are given good opportunities to develop their own values and beliefs, and to talk about events in their lives. The pupils feel strongly that 'everyone should be treated fairly' and take very seriously their role as mini-buddies through which they encourage good relationships. The strong Christian ethos helps pupils to understand how their actions may affect others, not just in school but also in the wider community. Quiet prayer places are established in all classrooms and pupils use these if they want some time to reflect. Some prayers written by pupils show that they value their friends and family and the less tangible things in life such as the beauty of nature.
10. The provision for moral education is very good. Pupils are involved in making their class rules and clearly understand the need for guidelines. Although it is not an issue in school, pupils consider how bullying affects people and are confident that their teachers deal quickly with any incidents. The older pupils are given good opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as they support the younger ones at lunchtime. The playground 'bus stop' bench promotes social skills effectively. Pupils know that anyone sitting on that bench would like someone to play with and they willingly oblige. This approach was suggested by the pupils themselves and is an example of their caring, considerate approach.

11. The quality of social education is very good. Through class and school council meetings, pupils learn to take some responsibility for the running of the school. They begin to understand the need for hard decisions and for compromise. Pupils appreciate the importance of the community, both within their school and in the wider world. There are strong links with the church through which pupils may take part in clubs such as The Boys Brigade or Brownies. There are many opportunities for pupils to get involved in social activities, such as those organised by the nearby hospice.
12. Staff place a very good emphasis on cultural education. Useful links with a school in another town provide valuable opportunities for pupils to make friends with those from different ethnic groups. An understanding of cultural diversity is taught very effectively through the curriculum in such subjects as geography, history, religious education and literacy. The backgrounds of pupils from ethnic minorities and Traveller pupils are recognised and celebrated. Teachers choose books carefully to avoid stereotypes and to ensure that peoples from around the world are represented as heroes and heroines. Pupils are well aware that there are many people in the world who are less fortunate than themselves and they work enthusiastically to collect for charities. They know about, and respect, different faiths and understand how customs and lifestyles are often linked to belief.

Attendance

13. Attendance rates are below the national average. This is mainly due to parents taking holidays during term time, even though the school does everything it can to publicise the adverse effects on pupils' education. Most pupils arrive on time and lessons begin punctually. The school makes good use of the service provided by the educational welfare officer if they are concerned about poor attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
244	1	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

There has been one short-term exclusion in the past year after considerable support was provided for the pupil and the family.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Most of the teaching is **good** and the curriculum offers a **good** range of learning opportunities. Consequently pupils learn effectively and, those who receive all of their education at the school, make **good** gains from the time enter the Reception class to the end of Year 6.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **predominantly good** throughout school and often it is **very good**. This promotes **good** learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. The processes in place for checking pupils' progress and for setting challenging targets are **good** in English and mathematics. They are developing well in science, ICT, geography and history but there is **room to improve** assessment of pupils' progress in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good range of subject knowledge, including a good understanding of the needs of children in the Reception class.
- The teachers' planning and preparation are good so that no time is wasted.
- Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and well briefed. They provide good, targeted support for pupils so that all, regardless of any special need they may have, have full access to all activities.
- Teachers use a range of techniques and resources to challenge, motivate and encourage pupils. They make especially good use of ICT in lessons.
- There is no uniform system for checking pupils' learning in art and design, music, design and technology and physical education.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	12 (27%)	22 (49%)	9 (20%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. The teaching in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) is good. Children have an inviting range of activities where they explore, investigate and exercise informed choice. Tasks across most areas of learning are provided on a continuous basis throughout the day, in line with the national guidance for this age group. Where this is not possible, it is through lack of space and teachers compensate by planning a good range of experiences at different times over the year. There is a good emphasis on independent learning and communication skills. Information about children's learning is collected on a daily basis. Thorough records of progress are kept and these are very well used to plan the next steps so that children move on quickly.
15. In Years 1 and 2, teachers place an especially good emphasis on teaching pupils to blend and segment sounds within words. This supports the acquisition of reading and spelling skills well. In all year groups, there are good, focused reading sessions where teachers promote a good range of strategies to help pupils tackle new texts, to extend their understanding of the story or to promote research work. In mathematics lessons, they encourage the use of different approaches to problem solving. Information and communication technology facilities

are used very well to present difficult concepts or to support pupils' work. For example, teachers use the electronic whiteboards to prepare word banks to support pupils' writing or to display the group and class targets for learning.

16. Teachers know their pupils well and choose the best methods of learning for them. For example, in an excellent Year 5 lesson, one group worked with the teacher on the computer because she had judged that they would progress better with a visual stimulus. Teachers provide good reference points for pupils to support their work. For example, in many classes the targets for writing are a prominent feature and there are useful prompts around the classroom to help pupils work out mathematical problems or to organise their writing. Marking is thorough and teachers often tell pupils which criteria they will use when evaluating work.
17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the class teacher, discuss and develop pupils' individual education plans. These are implemented well. Teachers use skilful questioning to ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons.
18. Teachers assess pupils' progress thoroughly in English and mathematics and use the information when planning work. Test results are analysed to spot any weaknesses and action is taken where necessary. The progress of different groups of pupils is checked routinely, for example boys and girls, those from ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language. The checking of progress in science, ICT, geography and history is developing well and is effective. However, systems for art and design, music, design and technology and physical education are inconsistent and do not relate to National Curriculum levels. The school has an unusually high percentage of pupils who have summer birthdays and are therefore relatively young compared to others in the year group. Teachers keep a close eye on their attainment and maturity to ensure that they attain as well as they can.
19. The headteacher, together with the subject and senior managers, evaluate the success of teaching and provide helpful feedback. There is a good programme of training in place to enhance skills. Teachers pool their ideas and successes through staff meetings and this is an effective way of sharing good practice. These factors are largely responsible for the very good improvement in teaching since the last inspection. Teaching assistants know the expected learning outcomes for the groups or individuals with whom they work and are well trained. All staff have attended the local authority's 'good practice' workshops and incorporated new ideas into their work. Very good relationships are an important feature in lessons. Teachers set high standards and expect pupils to work hard. Pupils rise to the challenge because they know that their efforts are valued and will be rewarded through praise and encouragement. This is helping them to develop good industrious habits and to enjoy their learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum for the Reception group of children and pupils in Years 1 to 6 is **good** in the breadth and balance of opportunities it provides. The accommodation is **satisfactory** overall and resources are **good**. There have been **good** improvements in the curriculum since the previous inspection and **very good** improvements to the accommodation and provision of resources for Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a broad and balanced, interesting and worthwhile curriculum which enables pupils to achieve well. There have been very good improvements to the planned programme of learning since the last inspection.
- Children in the Reception class experience a good range of activities, which are specifically planned to meet their needs and to encourage independent learning.

- There is very good provision and support for pupils with special educational needs.
 - The school makes very good provision for the personal, social and health education of its pupils.
 - Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their learning.
 - There is good enrichment to the curriculum, including the good provision for the participation in sports and the arts.
 - There is very good participation in community and church activities.
 - Some classrooms have very limited space, especially for practical activities.
20. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and is very well planned to ensure the interest and enthusiasm of pupils. Timetables show a broad balance across all subjects of the National Curriculum for all year groups. This prepares pupils effectively for their education at secondary school. Very good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs, which is ensuring their good achievement. Teachers are developing ways to enhance the curriculum for those pupils identified as gifted and talented so that their talents may be developed to the full.
21. The curriculum is effectively reviewed and evaluated by the headteacher and subject managers who are constantly looking for ways to improve and enhance learning through innovative approaches. For example, the use of interactive whiteboards, to be found in all but two classes, often brings learning to life. Another innovation is seen within the well planned programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). There are planned 'social times' for the younger children that promote personal development effectively. Citizenship has an appropriate high priority in the timetable, with sessions dedicated to class council meetings where teachers help pupils to make their views known and to play a significant part in the future development of the school. Personal and spiritual development are well promoted through circle time where issues are addressed and teachers help pupils to make sense of their experiences. Homework is satisfactory and includes relevant tasks that supplement the work done in class. In returned questionnaires, 98 per cent of parents were happy with the work set.
22. As much as possible, subjects and areas of learning are well linked by teachers so that pupils' skills, for example in literacy and numeracy, are applied effectively when studying other subjects. For instance in a Year 6 science lesson pupils applied their mathematical understanding as they carried out investigations. Speaking and listening skills are an integral part of every lesson and this supports pupils' good achievements and their confident approach. The use of ICT features well in lesson planning for research, presenting ideas and recording work.
23. The curriculum is often adapted for pupils who have special educational needs so that they can progress at the same rate as the majority of the class. Established links with a special school are mutually beneficial. They extend pupils' social experiences and allow pupils from the special school to have time in a mainstream setting. In addition, the specialist teachers also help and advise staff at St Peter's on special programmes for specific pupils. At present, there is no additional provision needed for pupils who speak English as an additional language or those from Traveller families but the school consults the relevant experts when needed and monitors progress carefully. Higher attaining pupils have the challenges that they need through the planning of work at different levels.
24. Extra-curricular provision is good. There is a wide range of sporting and artistic activities taking place after school. Pupils especially like the fact that activities change regularly and, over the year, there is something to interest everyone. The 'cool club' is a good addition for pupils who have special educational needs. In returned questionnaires, 98 per cent of parents agreed that activities outside of school are good. There is good enrichment for the curriculum.

During the inspection, for example, pupils engaged in a field work study as part of their geography work. The day provided a very good practical experience on which to build further lessons. Visitors to the school, for example artists and poets further enrich the pupils' experience and the annual residential visit helps to broaden pupils' horizons and to develop independence.

25. The accommodation has been very well extended and improved. Overall, it is now satisfactory and there are plans to continue the programme further. Pupils benefit from having access to the infant and junior computer suites and two libraries. Many classrooms are of a suitable size but three rooms and the Reception classroom are too small to accommodate comfortably the number of pupils when engaged on practical tasks. Two classrooms are not accessible for pupils in wheel chairs and this is a priority area for governors who are keenly committed to offering a mainstream education for every child. The school provides good resources for the majority of subjects; all of which are well organised and used. The learning environment is considerably enriched by some very good, and often imaginative, displays which provide a focus of interest for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. The views of pupils are regularly sought and acted upon.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures in place to meet the personal and emotional needs of the pupils.
 - There are very good arrangements for when children start at the school and on an annual basis when they move into the higher classes.
 - Pupils know their views and suggestions are taken seriously by their teachers.
26. The school values each pupil as an individual, and the headteacher and teachers have very good knowledge of both the pupils and their families. This enables staff to deal sensitively with any problems the pupils may be having. Parents speak very highly of the support that families have received in times of crisis, for example, through bereavement counselling. The school keeps clear and precise details of the specific health needs of each child and ensures these are known to the appropriate members of staff, thereby ensuring very good care, especially in the case of allergies. The headteacher and staff are especially skilled at dealing with pupils' emotional problems and this is one reason why many pupils transfer to the school after having had difficult times at other establishments. The class teachers play a very important role in monitoring the personal development of each pupil, and the informal system works very effectively. Bullying is simply not tolerated and all pupils know this. The 'worry bins' were introduced as a result of school council meetings. Pupils post notes, anonymously if preferred, and staff regularly check the contents and take action where needed. The very good anti-bullying strategies at the school have been acclaimed by experts in the field.
27. The school helps pupils to settle quickly and happily by working closely with their parents. There are very good arrangements for parents and children to visit the school prior to starting, and parents are given the opportunity to find out for themselves what, and how, their children will be taught. Similarly, very good arrangements are in place to prepare pupils for their next classes and there is good preparation for transition to secondary school education. Towards the end of each school year, pupils have the opportunity to spend some time in what will be their new classroom, getting to know their new teacher. This is very good practice and helps to ease the natural anxiety and apprehension that some pupils have about change.
28. There are very effective systems in place to gather the views of pupils across the school. Each year the pupils are asked to complete questionnaires. One is aimed at gathering views on a specific area school-wide, whilst the other is to gauge general views of the Year 6 pupils.

One very good outcome from this practice was the refurbishment of the pupils' toilets to a very high standard. There are very effective class council meetings, with the issues being taken to the school council. The pupils make many sensible suggestions and, wherever possible, the school follows up on their ideas. These arrangements are very effective in helping the pupils to experience decision-making within their own community.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with the parents are **very good** and families are very supportive of the school. There are **very good** links with the community and other educational institutions to enhance pupils' experiences and gain additional resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The partnership between the school and the parents is very effective in supporting pupils' learning.
 - The parents are made very welcome by the headteacher, staff and governors.
 - The school is seen as an asset to the community.
29. The parents are very happy with the school and the way it educates and cares for their children. Comments on the returned questionnaires and at the meeting include, 'there is a real family atmosphere' and 'the teachers are like extended family members'. Very many parents, carers, other family members and people from the community regularly help in school, undertaking a wide variety of tasks. For example, they hear pupils read and there is a rota of helpers in school every morning preparing the healthy snacks which are enjoyed by many pupils. The school makes a significant profit from this venture, all of which is ploughed back into providing good quality resources for pupils. Staff encourage parents to take an active interest in their children's' learning. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy that allows them easy access to the headteacher and other staff members. Information for parents is good. There are regular, informative newsletters and families of children in the Reception class are invited to themed evenings where their children demonstrate their new-found skills. Parents find the children's diaries a particularly good means of communication between home and school, especially for those who work. There is always good attendance at school productions, both in the school and at the nearby church. Parents' meetings are also well attended.
30. The school has very strong links with the church and the local community. It works closely with a number of groups, and generously shares resources with youth organisations such as the Guides. Many visitors are welcomed into school to talk to the pupils and to help with specific lessons. There are regular visits by the minister, a local artist, writers and poets. The pupils benefit from the many opportunities they have to meet and help people from outside their school. For example, pupils work very closely with the nearby hospice, both with fund raising events and in providing community entertainment. Students from various colleges bring their skills and interest to the classrooms to enhance pupils' experiences. The links with the church are very strong and the pupils take part in many events throughout the year. During the inspection, the high number of newly confirmed pupils were congratulated and presented with a memento of the occasion during worship time.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **very good** and is a major factor in the success of the school. The role of senior staff has improved considerably since the last inspection and they show **good** leadership. **Good** management enables the school to run smoothly. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers promotes high aspirations and constant improvement.
- Information gathered from the school's self-evaluation programme is used effectively in school improvement planning.
- There is very good team work.
- Day to day practice reflects the success of the school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils have full and equal access to all parts of school life.
- Governors play an active part in driving the school forward.

Commentary

31. Leadership is successful in providing a very caring environment where all pupils, regardless of any special need they may have, are fully integrated into all activities. The headteacher is highly regarded by parents and governors who value her hard work and approachability. There is a strong sense of shared purpose and a clear vision for future development among members of the senior management team, the headteacher and the subject managers. Staff are constantly looking for ways to improve achievement. Since her appointment the headteacher has worked tirelessly to overcome the identified weaknesses at the school. The very good improvements include:
- extensions to the building to provide adequate space in classrooms and to develop resource areas. As a result, pupils benefit from having two libraries and two computer suites. These have made a good impact on learning;
 - developing the resources to ensure that teachers have everything they need to deliver the National Curriculum programmes of study;
 - monitoring and developing strategies for teaching and learning in classes to promote high standards;
 - creating systems for planning and the checking of pupils' learning to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are progressively developed;
 - extending the role of the senior and subject managers so that they contribute effectively to school evaluation and improvement.
32. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the very good standards of pupils' personal development, their enjoyment of lessons and the pleasant, welcoming environment. Subject managers have a good overview of teaching and learning in their areas through checking completed work, looking at planning and observing lessons. They write action plans identifying future developments and take responsibility for their budget allocation.
33. There have been good improvements to the roles of the senior teachers who now play a full and active part in the day to day running of the school. They ensure that good communications are maintained and have the autonomy to sort out minor issues before they develop into problems. There is good professional development with training based on areas identified in school development planning and on personal requests.
34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well led and managed. The special needs co-ordinators have a very good overview of the provision for the pupils concerned. Parents are well informed about individual education plans and have opportunities to contribute at the termly reviews of progress.
35. There is an effective cycle of self-evaluation at the school that includes the active involvement of senior and subject managers. Very good improvements in teaching and learning have been made since the last inspection as a result of this work. Data from national and optional tests are analysed carefully to see if there are any areas requiring further development. The detailed tracking and target setting system for English and mathematics allows the

headteacher to check that individuals, classes and year groups are making the expected progress and to check that good challenges are set for the higher attaining pupils. At present, the subject managers' expertise is not used in setting the annual targets for pupils' progress; this is completed by the headteacher (who is also the assessment manager) and the relevant class teachers. The experienced school administrator has a good deal of experience and expertise and covers a varied range of duties to provide good support. As a member of the senior management team, she ensures good communication and is able to update management systems to support development planning. Standards of safety and cleanliness are kept high through the vigilant work of the site manager. Any safety issues identified are quickly reported and acted upon. The accommodation and resources are used efficiently and best value is rigorously sought. The headteacher dedicates much time and effort to seek out additional funding from a range of sources, both local and national. As a result, pupils have better play areas, more space in some classrooms, two libraries and extended computer facilities.

36. Most of the awards involved a matched element of funding from the school. Much of the money came from the Parents and Friends Association, profits from the healthy snack scheme run by parents and through some excellent financial management.
37. Taking into account the good quality of education, the good achievement in English and mathematics, the very good leadership of the headteacher, good management and costs that are slightly above the national average, the school provides good value for money.
38. The governors are very supportive and have the interests of the pupils at heart. They are totally committed to the school's aims and ethos and ensure that the mission statement is lived out in everyday practice. The chair of governors takes an active role by visiting weekly. As a result, she knows staff and pupils very well and has an in-depth knowledge of the school's work. Her expertise on child protection matters is a valuable asset.
39. There are link governors in place who effectively support the managers of literacy, numeracy, ICT and special educational needs. Subject managers report on a regular basis to the curriculum committee, presenting the findings of their evaluations and consulting on their action plans. Finance is monitored extremely well and governors are well informed about attainment trends and pupils' progress through the reports of the target setting governor. This governing body is well informed about the school's strengths and areas for future development. They have a long-term strategic view for improvement, are prudent in their financial management and save funds for specific projects. The balance currently held is targeted for the school's share of the building work in progress at present.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	528,147
Total expenditure	546,653
Expenditure per pupil	2,204

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	78,677
Balance carried forward to the next	60,170

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) is good and has improved well in the aspects of personal and social education and knowledge and understanding of the world since the last inspection. When children enter the Reception class, their prior learning is just below that typical of the age group. They achieve well and when they move into Year 1 their learning is slightly above average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematical understanding. The adults in the Reception class work effectively as a team to ensure that children experience a varied and interesting curriculum; those with special educational needs are very well supported. The space in the Reception class accommodation is restricted and this limits the continuous provision of physical and creative activities. Staff compensate for this by using other spaces in the school such as the library, the ICT suite and the hall to ensure that children have the experiences that they need. At the time of the inspection there was no direct access to an outside play area but work was underway to create one. The children settle quickly into school life because of the good programme of meetings and visits arranged in the summer term before they start.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teachers and other key adults provide a secure, interesting and enjoyable learning environment.
- Children are encouraged to be independent learners when preparing for, and clearing up, after practical sessions.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.

Commentary

40. The personal, emotional and emotional development of the current Reception class is better than that expected for children of this age. This is because the staff regard development in this aspect as a priority and they work very hard to establish routines for the children to follow. As a result, children know what is expected of them. They sit quietly listening to adults and are confident enough to contribute their own thoughts and ideas to group discussions. There is a quiet and calm approach in the classroom, together with high expectations of behaviour and learning.
41. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and they readily clear away their toys and other materials when asked. Children are encouraged to take responsibilities in the classroom, such as the distribution of drinks and the collection of the empty cups. A strong feature of provision is the 'social time' sessions when the children enjoy each other's company as they have their drinks and toast.
42. The very good learning in this aspect is constantly reinforced by all the adults, who themselves provide very good role models for the children to copy. The social development of children with special educational needs is well supported and they progress well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and time is used effectively to promote literacy in all areas of learning.
- Teachers plan well to make learning exciting and enjoyable.
- The direct teaching of letter sounds is helping children to develop their early reading skills.

Commentary

43. Children are likely to achieve the level expected in this area and a significant number are on track to achieve above this in communication and reading skills. They recognise sounds within words and achievement in this area is much higher than expected. The majority of children can blend sounds together in order to read simple words, for example when they read a simple letter from "Gran Mags" as part of their topic about the past. Work in this area is also reinforced through the very effective use of computers both in the Reception area and in the ICT suite. Children's listening skills are good and the adults constantly seek to engage them in conversation in order to help them improve. A good example of this was the session on 'Victorian life' where the children were engaged in a variety of practical activities. Each adult spent time explaining, and then questioning, the children about their understanding. The provision of a dedicated role-play area is effective in encouraging the children to interact with each other.
44. Children are making satisfactory progress in developing early writing skills. Adults model correct letter formation for them and they are encouraged to hold pencils correctly. The lack of space limits the continuous provision of creative mark marking materials such as paint, felt tips and large crayons but adults make sure that children have the experiences that they need. The teachers maintain a regular dialogue with parents through a newsletter which ask parents to talk to their children about topics being covered in school. This is an effective way of extending learning beyond the school day.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve the learning goals set for them.
- Teaching is good and time is used well to promote mathematical understanding in other areas of learning.

Commentary

45. Most children are working at levels appropriate for their age. Every morning, registration contains a variety of number activities including counting the children present and working out how many school meals are required. The teacher often extends this by asking children to add one more. Another useful application of the children's mathematical skills is seen as they select milk, orange juice or toast by placing a cube in the appropriate basket. The children then work out the total numbers needed. The majority of children can count reliably to ten and, some higher-attaining ones, up to thirty. Children enjoy their counting rhymes and explore shapes as they build models or make patterns.

46. Teachers plan activities which are relevant to everyday experiences and allow children to apply their newly-learned skills. A good example of this was seen where children explored the concepts of 'heavier and lighter'. They compared the weights of their friends by using a see-saw. Extension activities then included the introduction of scales for comparing smaller objects. Children use their mathematical knowledge and vocabulary effectively in role-play, for example when using scales to weigh out ingredients for 'baking'. The practical activities provided form a sound basis and understanding for later work in National Curriculum mathematics.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of interesting, practical experiences.
- Children are encouraged to ask questions and to find things out for themselves.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to help children learn.

Commentary

47. Pupils' achievement in this area of learning is higher than that expected for the age group. Teachers plan a variety of these themed projects throughout the year. They include such topics as 'growing plants', to develop children's awareness of living things or "where have I been?" to promote a sense of place and direction. The use of information and communication technology by both teachers and children is a notable strength. Children have access to both ICT suites in the school and they have a good knowledge of the vocabulary associated with computers. They use a mouse to move the cursor around the screen, selecting items from drop down menus. Two thirds of the children are able to end programs and shut down the computers with minimum help from adults. Computers are very well used for children to practise their early reading skills. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard very effectively to illustrate ideas and model work for children. This visual stimulus helps them to progress at a good rate.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills.
- At the time of the inspection, there was no continuous access to an outside play area, although work was underway to provide this. Children's whole body co-ordination is not as well developed as their manipulative skills.

Commentary

48. Attainment in physical development is generally in line with what is expected for children of this age and the majority are likely to achieve the learning goals set for them. Skills of handling small objects, building with blocks and other construction toys are well developed and achievement is good. Skills such as jumping, skipping or moving to music are around average and achievement is satisfactory. The difference is accounted for by the limited space in the Reception accommodation and the fact that there is no continuous access to an outside play area at present. Teachers compensate for the problem by using the dedicated, safe area of the general playground at break times and the school hall to enhance physical

provision. As part of this provision, children participate in simple dance routines and explore different ways of moving on different parts of their bodies. However, where the whole class of 36 is involved, there are fewer turns on the mats and learning is much better when teachers work with children in small groups.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to participate in role-play.
- Over the year, children have opportunities to experience a good range of materials and to use them imaginatively.
- The limited accommodation inhibits the continuous provision of a good range of creative activities, from which the children may choose on a daily basis.

Commentary

49. It was not possible to observe the full range of activities in this area of learning but attainment in those aspects seen is line with that of similar-aged children. Completed work and evidence from previous years, indicates that children reach their learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Teachers encourage children to participate in singing a variety of nursery and counting rhymes, often spontaneously where the situation allows. This helps them to develop a good awareness of music. They are encouraged to clap along, increasing their ability to keep a steady musical beat. The provision for role-play has improved well. Children enjoy using the area which they have created themselves, as 'Gran Mags' kitchen', complete with their cardboard 'period furniture' and genuine artefacts. They select appropriate clothes including aprons and mop caps and get into role as they use the metal tub and washboard to wash clothes. In a good link with knowledge and understanding of the world, they explain why and how Gran Mags would have used these implements.
50. Staff work hard to overcome the lack of space and provide a satisfactory range of activities over the year, using a suitable selection of media such as paint, modelling and collage materials or junk. However, children do not have opportunities to choose from this wider selection on a continuous basis.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and pupils **achieve well** in speaking and listening and reading from Year 1 to Year 6. In writing, achievement is satisfactory and is improving well. Teaching is **good** and some is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in speaking and listening and reading is above average and attainment in writing is satisfactory and improving following the action taken.
- Standards in Year 2 have improved well since the last inspection.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils have individual targets that are based on careful assessments of work completed and this helps them to improve.
- There is good leadership for the subject and resources are good.

Commentary

51. There have been very good improvements in the teaching and provision for English since the last inspection, especially by Year 2 where standards have risen from below to above average in speaking and listening and reading and to average for writing.
52. With reference to the school's tracking records and on the basis of work seen during the inspection, standards are around average for the present group of Year 6 pupils and above average in Years 5, 4 and 3 in speaking and listening and in reading. Some good improvements have been made to teaching and learning in writing. The good progress seen in lessons and in pupils' books is partly due to the fact that pupils now have individual targets for writing and know which parts of their work need improving.
53. There is a strong emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on teaching pupils to blend and segment letter sounds within words. This promotes good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 and in spelling across the school. When writing their instructions, Year 2 pupils used 'command words' to make their meaning explicit and organised their work effectively. Capital letters and full stops are evident in most pupils' writing by the end of Year 2. Some particularly good writing was seen in the Years 1 and 2 class where pupils were working on science fiction stories. Some Year 1 pupils were using capital letters and full stops and their spelling was logical. For this group, attainment is above average.
54. During Years 3 to 6 pupils consolidate their early reading skills and develop good research techniques. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils compared two versions of a traditional tale, contrasting the different styles and vocabulary used. Skills in writing are improving and a good range of material was seen during the inspection, including some interesting poems, playscripts, letters and journalistic work. Speaking and listening skills develop well through class council meetings and opportunities to perform in the school's productions. The drama club and visiting authors and poets enrich the curriculum effectively.
55. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to inspire their pupils. They choose interesting books to study that cover the interests of both boys and girls. Throughout school, teachers are developing a much closer link between reading and writing. This is providing a good model for pupils' work and is extending their experiences of fiction and non-fiction styles. In the Years 1 and 2 class, the teacher constantly reminds pupils to rehearse their sentences and thoughts out loud and this is proving to be a useful technique. In Years 3 to 6 teachers 'model' writing, sharing their thoughts and ideas with pupils who then copy the good habits illustrated. Throughout school, pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' at spellings or sentence construction using the wipe-off boards. They can then discuss and improve their work before committing it to paper. There is a good amount of time allocated to handwriting and, as a result, presentation is generally of a high standard. Marking is good, with helpful comments that support pupils' own evaluation of their work and point out ways to improve. In Years 1 and 2 much evaluation is completed orally as pupils consider whether they have met their target for the lesson. This is a good way of encouraging younger pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Homework is used well to extend work done in the classroom and is usually completed conscientiously.
56. Teachers make excellent use of the electronic whiteboards and of overhead projectors in whole class sessions to project text and allow pupils to try out strategies. There is very good use of computers and ICT generally. In a very good reading session in Years 1 and 2, the teacher used the whiteboard to 'hide' words so that pupils had to use their knowledge of grammar and comprehension clues to work them out. In a Year 6 lesson, the teaching assistant supported some pupils very well by having the text on a small computer for two pupils so that she could explain in more detail, as the rest of the class were viewing the whiteboard.

57. Leadership is very good and focused on constant improvement. All staff attend training to ensure that they keep up to date with new developments. The subject managers have a good overview of standards, teaching and learning and resources across the school. They provide useful support for colleagues. The checking and tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and results in the setting of group targets for improvement. Pupils who have special educational needs have individual learning programmes and are well supported in achieving their goals. The long-term target setting is completed by the assessment manager, together with class teachers. There is little involvement of the subject managers at this stage and their expertise is not used to the full. Resources for English are good. The two libraries are well stocked with up-to-date material that is well classified and easy to access. There is a good selection of fiction books, including those by significant children's authors. The junior library is intelligently sited next to the ICT suite so that pupils can combine research using books, CD ROMs and the Internet. Enrichment for the subject is good and comes through the drama club, visiting authors or poets and visits to live theatre.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Reading skills are very well applied as pupils study other subjects. Year 3 pupils, for example, had completed research on their animal topic using both printed and electronic methods. The promotion of writing skills when working on other subjects is a development focus for the school and there are some good improvements. Year 4 pupils write reports about an Indian village they are studying and Year 6 pupils write a diary extract, pretending to be Queen Victoria. Speaking and listening skills are constantly extended during whole-class introductions or discussions. As a result, pupils are confident in expressing their views and in providing evidence to justify their opinions.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen by Year 2 and pupils are working above national averages.
- Pupils achieve well throughout school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good.
- There is a good emphasis on mental computation.
- Resources are good.

Commentary

59. Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 2 which is an improvement from last year's test results. In Year 6, present standards match the national average and this is lower than last year's results, mainly due to the fact that there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group. In Years 3, 4, and 5 pupils are often working at above-average standards. This gives a lot of ground for optimism for the future attainment patterns at the school. Throughout all year groups, pupils achieve well in the subject, including those who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have arrived part-way through their education.
60. The quality of teaching is good and much is very good; in turn, this leads to good learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This enables them to plan their lessons very well to build effectively upon pupils' prior attainment. Lessons are interesting and pupils enjoy the challenge that is often to be found in the very good oral and mental work. Teachers manage their pupils very well and monitor their progress as they work, providing suggestions on how to improve. Support assistants help the less able children so that they can complete tasks that contain a high level of challenge for them. Homework is satisfactory and is regularly set; it is

marked and valued by the teacher. Pupils have very positive attitudes and enjoy their lessons. In some cases, an overuse of worksheets and workbooks has the effect of detracting from the quality of presentation which is generally very good. The school is currently reviewing this practice.

61. Pupils use various strategies for problem solving and explain their working-out clearly. They learn and recall multiplication facts quickly and this is an important factor in their good computation skills. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 practise their tables by means of music and rhymes which injects fun into learning. An excellent lesson on telling the time illustrated how keen they are to acquire new skills. At the lesson onset, few were confident in telling the time but by the end, almost all knew the hour, half past, quarter to and quarter past. Older pupils work equally hard. A class of Year 5 pupils had considerable challenge in learning a new method of addition. They maintained very good concentration and all were quite confident by the end of the lesson. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in lessons and both enjoy the challenges that their teachers set.
62. There were very many examples of teachers using the electronic whiteboards as a very good aid to learning, for example in making demonstrations very clear or in helping to explain their workings to the rest of the class.
63. Leadership is satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' progress is good, test results are analysed and targets are set, although the part the coordinator plays in this latter process is not sufficient. The professionalism and confidence of the staff is allowing more freedom for pupils to choose their own methods for working out problems and to choose how to record the results.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The school is developing an integrated approach to learning and the use of mathematics across the curriculum is a very important and successful aspect of this. A very good example took place during inspection week in a Year 6 science lesson. The pupils were investigating the time taken to dissolve a cube of sugar. This involved accurate measurement of the liquid, temperature, accurate time keeping, the collection of data and the construction of a scatter graph. The lesson allowed pupils to apply their mathematical skills in a meaningful way and to see the purpose in their learning.

Science

Provision in science is **good** in most aspects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good improvements in attainment and teaching in the subject since the last inspection, especially by Year 2.
- Pupils have a good understanding of fair testing.
- Most lessons provide practical experiences for the pupils.
- Some practical lessons are too teacher directed.

Commentary

65. Standards seen in Year 2 during the inspection are improving, with some pupils on target to achieve the higher level this year. This is a good improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Attainment in Year 6 is average but there are pockets of above-average standards in Years 3, 4 and 5. Achievement is good overall and instances of very good learning were seen during the inspection, which is a promising indicator for the future.

66. The quality of teaching is good overall; there are some examples of satisfactory and of very good teaching. Teachers plan well within the framework of the school's scheme. Most activities are practical and involve some investigation and experimentation. In some lessons, however, pupils are not given enough opportunity to ask their own questions and find ways to answer them. Instead, they are required to work to a series of instructions and, as a result, they have diminished ownership of their findings. In the best practice, teachers give pupils an open-ended task that allows them to try out ideas, evaluate their work and learn from their own mistakes. This was seen in a very good Year 2 lesson on electrical circuits. In the review session, pupils judged if the circuits made would work, purely by looking at them. There were some surprises at the testing stage and pupils then engaged in a good trouble-shooting exercise to explain the problem and rectify it. The lesson illustrated that they are beginning to 'think as scientists'.
67. Pupils have good opportunities to use mathematical skills in science, as is well illustrated in the 'mathematics across the curriculum' section of this report. Information and communication technology is very well used by some teachers in demonstration, using the interactive whiteboards. Pupils use ICT effectively for research purposes and for recording their findings using computer-generated graphs and charts.
68. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject managers are aware of the need to develop planning and teaching further and for staff to share good practice so that all lessons reach the higher standards seen. The school provides good resources for the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is very **good and has improved very well** since the last inspection. Facilities have been considerably upgraded.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen and are set to improve further.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have a secure knowledge of the subject.
- The subject manager provides very good leadership in driving standards upwards.
- Teachers use ICT facilities extensively in lesson planning and presentation.
- The attitudes of pupils are very good and they have a strong desire to learn.
- The Internet and e-mail connections require upgrading; there is a clear action plan in place and work is scheduled to begin soon.

Commentary

69. Improvements are very good in this subject. The school has a large suite of computers in the junior area and a smaller suite in Years 1 and 2. Both are in almost constant use. Overall, the school has one computer for every seven pupils which is better than the recommended ratio. There are interactive whiteboards in most classes that are very well used to enhance teaching in other subjects as well as in ICT. The teachers are now following a structured scheme of planning which ensures the progressive development of pupils' skills as they move through the school. A new scheme of assessing pupils' learning is being introduced; this is comprehensive and provides good information for teachers in planning the next steps. In the lessons and work seen, attainment meets national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Standards are likely to rise further as the programme of regular lessons in the ICT suites, upgraded resources and increased staff knowledge continue to make an impact. Attainment for some Year 1 pupils is above expectations and staff are already having to add more challenge to the original scheme as pupils progress faster than anticipated. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the subject and are very keen to learn. They take turns fairly and constructively point out errors or make suggestions for improvement.

70. Year 1 pupils import pictures and use the word bank when typing their sentences. In a very good lesson, some pupils loaded the program, chose a picture, typed some text, printed the work and logged off, all in the space of less than 30 minutes. They were very confident in using on-screen prompts and sorted out problems independently by trying out different approaches. This work is above average. The Year 2 pupils have sound word-processing skills and produce pictures using tools such as 'spray', or 'flood fill'. By Years 3 and 4 pupils are able to generate text, insert appropriate pictures and save and retrieve information speedily. They edit their work and are able to alter font, size, type and colour and use spell check facilities effectively to correct errors. Pupils give and follow instructions using the screen turtle and use the spreadsheet program to make graphs and charts. Skills of finding and analysing information are well developed. The Internet is well used but, at the moment, not all computers have facilities to send and receive e-mails. The problem is being addressed and connections are currently being upgraded. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. Because their work is suitably adapted or they are well supported, they achieve well alongside their classmates.
71. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers begin their lessons by revising previous work. They explain which new skills pupils will learn, thereby providing a clear focus and purpose for the lesson. There is good support for those experiencing difficulties which enables pupils to think things through for themselves. Faster learning pupils are set higher challenges and allowed to explore the potential of the program in use. The teaching assistants often take groups in the computer suite, to ensure that pupils have a computer each. In the session seen, the teaching assistant had good subject knowledge and intervened sensitively to provide good support for learning.
72. Leadership of ICT is very good; the subject manager drives the area forward with great enthusiasm, keeping a close eye on teaching and learning and tackling issues quickly. She is an inspiration for colleagues and pupils. Through a comprehensive programme of training, she ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have the skills and updates that they need and all resources are managed very efficiently. A considerable amount of funding has been allocated in recent years. Both the headteacher and the governors are committed to maintaining the high quality of provision. Good value is keenly sought in this area of major expenditure. Some considerable savings were made in developing the infant suite by using second-hand donated computers and upgrading the systems. Both the headteacher and subject manager seek out any avenue of additional funding available to ensure that pupils have the most up-to-date facilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. The subject has a high profile throughout school and ICT skills are often applied during the study of other subjects. Word processing is used throughout school so that pupils may present their work in different ways.
74. Teachers use ICT effectively to research their lessons and to find interesting material or websites for the pupils to use. The interactive whiteboards help to bring lessons to life. In a very good geography lesson, the teacher enlarged photographs so that the pupils could easily identify the physical and human features of an Indian settlement. At the same time, she projected a plan of the village on another screen so that pupils could refer to both. There was very good learning as a result. Pupils make extensive use of the Internet and CD ROMs in their study of topics. Pupils who have special requirements make very good use of technology. One pupil with a hearing impairment has an amplified sound system and teachers often ensure that the same material used on the whiteboards is available on a computer for personal use to facilitate support by the teaching assistants.

HUMANITIES

Provision in both history and geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' very good attitudes are seen in the displays of very well presented work.
- The subjects are well resourced and there is good enrichment through visits and fieldwork.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

75. Pupils achieve standards in both history and geography that match expectations by Years 2 and 6. There are strengths in geographical fieldwork and historical enquiry. This judgement is well supported by scrutiny of work, lesson observations and the good quality of displayed work around the school.
76. Teachers plan well and in half the lessons seen, teaching was judged to be very good with the remainder being good. Tasks are matched to different ability groups and levels of prior learning. This allows pupils of all groups, including those with special educational needs, to learn and achieve well. There are very good attitudes to learning and pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers use the good resources to very good advantage.
77. Historical and geographical skills and knowledge are being well developed alongside the good acquisition of specialist language associated with the subjects. Pupils learn to gather and evaluate the validity of evidence in history. They study famous people and consider events from different viewpoints. In a very good lesson in Year 3 pupils investigated how Boudicca might have felt about the Romans and why. Much of the work is done in a practical way and there is a good emphasis on research. Year 6 pupils, for example, investigated how Victorian children might have spent their spare time. They had a go at playing traditional games of the era and used ICT to find out more.
78. In geography, pupils make comparisons between areas. For example, younger pupils contrast their own town with an island location. Year 1 pupils use a computer program effectively to make a street map including their chosen features. By Year 4 they contrast features such as landscape, or describe human activity such as the type of crops grown. In one very good lesson for this age group, the pupils studied large photographs displayed using the electronic whiteboard. They deduced many facts about the area and even worked out that there must be a forest near to the village because wood was used as the main building material.
79. Teachers bring the subjects alive through visits and field trips and pupils are very interested in the varied and stimulating experiences that they have. An example of this was seen during the inspection period when a Year 5 class visited a nearby lake in connection with their water topic. This provided a very worthwhile experience and good opportunities to raise environmental issues and interact with the local community. There were also very good links with art as pupils recorded what they saw in pictorial form.
80. The use of literacy skills in both history and geography can be clearly seen in the good quality of extended writing that is well presented in booklets. Mathematical skills were used effectively in a local traffic survey and ICT facilities applied in work combining text and graphics entitled 'The Delights of Hindley'.

81. The subject manager provides strong leadership and very good management. Through her enthusiasm, capability and hard work, she is constantly striving to improve provision and the quality of learning. One good innovation is seen in the planning for the mixed-age Years 1 and 2 class where she has developed extra units of study to avoid repetition of subject matter. All National Curriculum requirements are built into the unit, such as the current one on 'space', which the pupils are enjoying tremendously. Standards and the quality of teaching are monitored. Teachers check on pupils' progress, in terms of their knowledge and understanding and skills.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

82. Only one lesson was seen in art and design and it therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about overall provision. The examination of teachers' plans, pupils' sketch books, portfolios of work and displays around the school indicate that standards for both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are satisfactory. This is the same situation as at the previous inspection.
83. The school is successful in providing a wide range of experiences for the pupils and skills in art and design are well promoted in other subjects. In history, pupils have drawn portraits of Henry VIII as part of their work on Tudors. Younger ones have been creating 'alien' pictures and masks using oil pastels and junk material as part of a space project in science. Those in Year 3 have been working with an artist in residence to produce sliding pictures of their journey to and from school.
84. The use of outside resources to enrich the art and design curriculum is a notable strength of the school. Art in the wider community is promoted through displays of work from local artists in the school entrance hall. Children from Years 3 to 6 who participate in the art club help to prepare the scenery for school productions such as the Pied Piper and Robin Hood. Displays of children's work are of a high quality and help to maintain a high profile for the subject. The recent 'Artsmark award' pays testimony to the quality and range of the work. The school has not yet implemented consistent assessment procedures in the subject.

Design and technology

No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 therefore it is not possible to make a reliable judgement about teaching across the school and the overall provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the design process.
- Pupils with special educational needs progress at the same rate as other pupils.
- The school promotes opportunities to use design and technology in other subjects.
- Assessment procedures are not fully implemented and teachers do not compare work with nationally expected standards.

Commentary

85. Discussions with pupils, lesson observations in Years 3 to 6 and an analysis of work in all age groups, indicate that standards are in line with those expected by Year 6. Skills in design, making and evaluation are evident in pupils' finished products. For example, pupils in Year 1 have incorporated a simple mechanism into their push and models. Those in Year 2 have used a variety of constructional toys to create space vehicles and robots as part of their science work.

86. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of how designs need to be evaluated during the making process so that they can be improved. They are developing their skills of measuring, cutting and joining in their current project on slippers. Teachers make good use of the latest interactive whiteboard technology to emphasise key points in the learning process. For example pupils were well supported by the display of key vocabulary as they described their design process to the class or when reflecting and evaluating at the end of the lesson.
87. The co-ordinator gathers evidence of pupils' work so that she has a satisfactory overview of standards. A useful portfolio containing samples of pupils' best work provides some inspiration for staff in their planning and in checking pupils' progress. Formal systems for assessing standards attained have yet to be implemented.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Singing is good and there are good opportunities for pupils to perform in public.
- The school works well with local partners to provide enrichment activities that help to maintain standards and pupils' interest.
- Instrumental music lessons extend learning for interested or gifted pupils.
- Assessment procedures are not fully implemented and teachers do not compare work with nationally expected standards.

Commentary

88. Standards are satisfactory overall and good in singing. Older children are provided with plenty of opportunities to perform in public. During the inspection, for example, they sang to a very large crowd at the local hospice. In assemblies, pupils perform two part rounds and add a sense of spirituality to the proceedings. Pupils in Year 2 sing with enthusiasm and respond well to the challenges their teacher sets. They are able to discuss choices of instruments to match winter sounds and repeat simple patterns on a variety of non-pitched percussion instruments.
89. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is some good practice. In a good lesson seen in Year 4, pupils were well supported as they worked on simple melodic phrases using appropriate tuned percussion. There was plenty of opportunity for pupils to evaluate their work and improve. The school has implemented a scheme of planning that includes a good selection of music, including examples of different styles from around the world. This supports pupils' cultural development well. The clear lesson plans are a good aid for non-specialist teachers and help to ensure that pupils have a satisfactory balance of performing, composing and listening throughout the year.
90. Provision in the subject remains the same as that found at the previous inspection. There is good enrichment for the subject as the school successfully works in partnership with other schools and agencies. Visiting staff from the local authority's music service, Samba Bands and links with the local Arts College all make significant contributions to pupils' musical experiences and this helps to maintain standards. Resources have been improved and there is now a satisfactory selection of instruments for whole-class lessons. However, the school recognises that work remains to be done, including the implementation of assessment procedures and further staff training.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works well with local partners to provide enrichment activities that help to maintain standards and pupils' interest.
- Residential education work allows pupils to access a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities such as canoeing, fell walking and caving.
- Assessment procedures are not fully implemented.

Commentary

91. The school provides the full range of activities to meet National Curriculum requirements for physical education. Pupils in Year 5 are currently attending swimming lessons at the local baths and assessment records indicate that half of them have already achieved nationally expected standards for Year 6. This is above average. Teachers' assessment records indicate that standards of performance in athletics, invasion games and gymnastics are satisfactory with one quarter of pupils exceeding expectations.
92. The emphasis during the inspection was on gymnastics and direct observation of two lessons indicates that standards for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are both satisfactory. Pupils organise and use gymnastic equipment safely. They work together well in teams, taking turns on the apparatus which they use creatively. Pupils in Year 2 are developing their ability to combine several actions into a short sequence of movements.
93. Teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Pupils are well managed and no unsatisfactory behaviour was observed. This is a good improvement on the last inspection. Teachers have high expectations in lessons. There are appropriate references to health and safety so that pupils are aware of potential hazards.
94. Management of the subject has improved since the last inspection when several shortcomings were identified. There is a whole school scheme of work that shows clear skill progression and assessment procedures are beginning to be implemented. The school continues to provide a good range of after school clubs and activities that help to develop skills further. The school recently received the 'Activemark' award in recognition of the breadth of experiences provided for pupils' physical development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

95. The school makes very good provision for the teaching of personal and social education, health education and citizenship. There are dedicated lessons and aspects of the subject are interwoven into other subject areas. For example, pupils study conservation in geography, the importance of diet in science and the benefits of exercise in physical education. In one good PHSCE lesson seen, the pupils learned about money management and gave consideration to how much they should save or spend. They are thus beginning to develop good skills for life.
96. There are very good arrangements for pupils to work collaboratively and to share equipment, one notable example being during ICT lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, acting as monitors, looking after younger children and raising monies for a range of causes. There are planned occasions, such as circle time, where pupils discuss social and moral issues, talk about feelings and consider dilemmas.

97. The social time in Years 1 and 2 is a good innovation. Around 15 minutes are set aside each day for pupils to enjoy their toast and drink and to chat informally with friends and teachers. It is a good use of time since pupils save their exciting news for this occasion rather than using up precious time at the beginning of the day when lessons are due to start. The 'mini-buddies' scheme is very successful in promoting relationships. Trained pupils of all ages keep a look out for anyone who looks lonely or unhappy and they sensitively befriend them. The class and school councils deal effectively with issues raised by pupils and this extends their skills of citizenship. The residential experience for the older pupils successfully extends their social skills and presents them with new challenges.
98. Pupils are very proud of their Eco-school status which further enriches their social and citizenship skills. They have undertaken projects in the school grounds including tree planting and litter patrols and learned about the importance of re-cycling. There is a good emphasis on healthy eating initiatives and water is provided for pupils during the school day to keep them refreshed and ready to learn.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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