

INSPECTION REPORT

STOKE POGES SCHOOL

Stoke Poges

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 130328

Headteacher: Mr M Bridges

Lead inspector: Mr J G F Parsons

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 February 2004

Inspection number: 258043

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	377
School address:	Rogers Lane Stoke Poges Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	SL2 4LN
Telephone number:	01753 643319
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Barton
Date of previous inspection:	16 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

It is a much larger than average primary school and is the result of an amalgamation of two separate schools in the village of Stoke Poges. Pupils come from a wide catchment area including the urban area of Slough. Attainment on entry is above average. There is an average proportion of pupils with special education needs most of whom are at the early stages of support, but the percentage who have statements is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high. Most come from the Asian sub-continent. Although a significant number do not speak English as their first language, many are bi-lingual. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals appears well below the national average but no hot meals are served and the take up of free packed lunches is slight. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than that recorded. The headteacher has been in post since September 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22546	Mr J G F Parsons	Lead inspector	Art and design Physical education French
9092	Mr R Elam	Lay inspector	
18346	Mr R Bristow	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs
15474	Mr J Fairclough	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a good school that has made significant progress since the previous inspection and has managed a period of major change well. Overall standards are above average and all pupils achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in English, mathematics and physical education and good overall. The school is very well governed and well led and managed. The school offers **good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good use of teaching assistants in support roles is an important factor in the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- Standards in many subjects across the school are above average.
- Pupils, regardless of background, achieve well.
- Behaviour is very good, and the quality of relationships is a strength. The school is a harmonious place, free from any oppressive behaviour. Attendance is below the national average despite the school's endeavours and there is some lateness.
- Disruption was minimised during the amalgamation of the two previous schools into one building. This was due to the very good leadership of the governors, supported by two effective deputy headteachers and with the help of the staff. The very good leadership of the governors, supported by two effective deputy headteachers, helped minimise disruption during the amalgamation of the two previous schools into one building. The gap between the departure of one and appointment of another headteacher was well managed at this time.
- The new headteacher is having a significant and positive impact on the development of the school.
- Many new subject co-ordinators have been recently appointed; their roles in evaluating and leading their subjects are not fully developed. There is no strategic long term strategy or vision for school development due to the recent demands of managing the rapidly changing situation.

There has been good overall improvement since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupils regardless of background achieve well across the school. The majority achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and many will exceed them, standards are above average. The inspection found that by Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics standards are rising and achievement is often very good. They are above average and better than the results in the national tests recently. The improvement in English is due the priority given to development of this subject and an overall improvement in the quality of writing across the curriculum. Standards of numeracy are very good and pupils achieve very well due to the very strong teaching. In science, standards are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by Year 2 and 6 although they are improving due to the better facilities and teachers' subject knowledge.

Standards in the national tests in Year 6 in 2003 were adversely affected by the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the year group taking the test. The very high mobility of pupils in Years 3 to 6 also disrupts the continuity of their education and impacts negatively on results in the national tests. *The judgement of results in comparison with schools in a similar context is unreliable. It is based on pupils' eligibility for free school meals. No hot meals are served, and the take up of free school meals is slight. Eligibility is therefore higher than records show. Standards in all other subjects are at least average and above average across the school in physical education, art and design, design and technology, religious education, geography, history and French by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve similar standards to their peers. **Pupils' personal qualities are well developed and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall, although they could be more aware of the multicultural nature of society.** Pupils have good attitudes to school; behaviour is very good but attendance is below average and there is some lateness.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning is very good in English, mathematics and physical education and good overall across the school. Teachers know their pupils well and plan challenging activities to take their learning forward. The procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are very effective. The curriculum offers a good range of activities and is enriched very well by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sport, leading to some very high quality work in team games, athletics and gymnastics. Music is very well supported by a wide range of instrumental tuition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The newly appointed headteacher has strong leadership and management skills. He is well supported by two effective deputies. There are many new subject co-ordinators and their role in evaluating teaching and learning and leading their subjects has not been fully developed. The very good governance of the school has enabled it to manage very effectively the major period of change due to amalgamation, with minimum disruption to pupils' education. The school improvement plan is effective at planning for the school's immediate future and consolidating its situation but there is as yet no strategic vision for its long term future development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the school, a few feel that the school could seek their views more readily and keep them better informed. Pupils have a positive view of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- a vision for the future and clear strategic thinking and planning for long term improvement after the current consolidation period;
- the leadership roles of the co-ordinators so that they are better able to evaluate their subjects and further drive up standards;
- more effective strategies for improving pupils' attendance and punctuality;
- a wider range of opportunities for pupils to be more aware of cultures other than their own.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement of all pupils regardless of background is good overall. The inspection found standards are above average in English, mathematics, physical education, geography, history, art and design, design and technology and religious education by Year 2 and Year 6, and above average in science and French by Year 6. In all other subjects they are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In English across the school the improved quality of writing for different purposes has had a significant impact on standards overall.
- Standards in the numeracy aspect of mathematics are very good and pupils achieve very well across the school.
- The effective introduction of the National Primary Strategy has had a positive impact on literacy and numeracy.
- The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the high mobility of pupils generally in Years 3 to 6 have had an adverse effect on results in the national tests of 2003 by Year 6 and they were not as high as might be expected, particularly in English. The inspection found standards better than this.
- Consistently good teaching and learning have been developed. This, together with the initiatives introduced by the senior management team in developing English and reorganising the management of subjects, has had a positive impact and is driving up standards and levels of achievement.
- The newness of many subject co-ordinators due to the re-organisation of responsibilities since amalgamation means they are not yet fully effective in leading the development of their subjects to drive up standards.
- In the core subjects very effective assessment procedures mean that teachers know their pupils well and set them challenging tasks that raise standards.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (16.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.4 (15.1)	14.5 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
mathematics	28.8 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
science	28.8 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In the national tests of 2003 results were average by the end of Year 2 in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, results were below average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. The inspection found that all pupils achieve well regardless of background including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Standards are better than reflected in the national tests and are above average in English and mathematics by Years 2 and 6 and in science by Year 6. This improvement is due to a number of recent factors. The school is now settled into one building after the disruption caused by the amalgamation of two schools. There was a new headteacher appointed in September who has reorganised the posts of responsibility. He has introduced effective initiatives to improve the quality of writing and refocused the school on driving up standards. All these factors have had a positive impact on standards. In addition, the group of pupils taking the tests in 2003 in Year 6 had a high proportion with special educational needs leading to lower standards than might be expected especially in English. No accurate comparison can be made with schools in a similar context. This is based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. No hot meals are provided and the take up of free school meals is slight and below that expected for a school of this size and intake. Although the school is situated in an advantaged socio-economic area, not all pupils come from this immediate environment and a significant number come from social housing and less prosperous areas.
2. In the reception class, children regardless of their background, achieve well. Standards on entry are above average in terms of speaking and listening and social skills. However, many are not as advanced in the early development of reading and writing skills, which are average for their age. They make good progress due to the good organisation and teaching and learning in these classes. Children are carefully tracked through effective assessment procedures during this period and this means that teachers know how well children are achieving and makes for a seamless transition into Year 1. The majority of children achieve the early learning goals and some exceed them; standards are above average.
3. Good achievement of all pupils regardless of background continues in Years 1 to 6 due to good teaching and learning. Pupils rapidly gain confidence. Speaking and listening skills continue to be well developed due to consistently good teaching and learning and the effective implementation of the literacy element of the National Primary Strategy. Pupils are very articulate, with a very good vocabulary and standards in this aspect of English are rising. The recent prioritisation of writing as an aspect of English for development has been successful and pupils write for different purposes and audiences effectively. There was some high quality writing in evidence both on display and in pupils' books. Similarly, the numeracy element of mathematics is very well developed and this aspect of the Primary National Strategy has been effectively adopted, leading to very good standards in this important aspect of mathematics.
4. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6, they are average in ICT across the school but are rising due to the good teaching. In science, the pitch of work is not varied enough to cater for the different abilities of pupils in the class particularly in Years 1 and 2. All pupils tend to be taught the same lesson with little recognition of the higher and lower attaining pupils. In ICT much of the teaching is done by the co-ordinator and this is consistently good. However, in some instances this makes class teachers over reliant on the subject co-ordinator and means that the overall quality of teaching in ICT is less effective and standards are lower in class lessons. There is an under development of pupils' skills outside of formal ICT lessons.
5. In all other subjects standards are at least average and in many are above average. Standards in French are above average and pupils are effectively introduced to a topic based, practical approach to the subject from Year 4 onwards. In art and design the wide range of media used and enthusiastic co-ordination of the subject has been most effective. Similarly the strong focus that the school has on physical education means that teachers have good

subject knowledge. The subject is well co-ordinated and standards are driven up effectively not only in lessons but by extra-curricular activities such as team games and gymnastics which are taught to a high standard by well qualified staff.

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Guidance and support from the local authority and good teaching strategies ensure that the small number of pupils at an early stage of using English as an additional language pupils also achieve well. Pupils are included in all activities, are provided with a full range of opportunities and their talents are fully explored. They work well together, are well behaved, and are proud of their achievements. Pupils with gifts or talents are recognised and given additional challenging work. Provision for these pupils is particularly good in English, mathematics, extra-curricular physical education and instrumental music when opportunities are given for pupils to reach their full potential and extra support is given.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to school are good. Despite the school's endeavours, attendance is below the national average and punctuality is not good enough. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well, have positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.
- The school's provision for social and moral development leads to very good relationships around the school.
- The level of attendance is below the national figure.
- The promotion of multicultural awareness does not permeate the curriculum.
- The school is not taking sufficiently effective action to improve attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

- The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The level has dropped since the previous inspection. Absences are mainly due to medical reasons but a number of families insist on taking holidays during term time. The number of pupils who arrive late at school is too high. Nearly a tenth of pupils have arrived late several times in the first half of this year. In the newsletters the school regularly emphasises the need to avoid such holidays and to provide reasons for their children's absence. This has helped to improve the level of unauthorised absence in the current year. Nevertheless the school is not fully utilising the expertise of the education welfare service to support its endeavours.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	1.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

- Pupils' social development is very good. The school provides very good opportunities for them to interact with classmates in group work, paired discussions, and monitors their development. The pupils in Year 6 show maturity when undertaking a range of responsibilities around the school. Their awareness of the wider world is enhanced with the choir singing in the community, inter-school sports matches and collections for charities.

Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults have been maintained at the high level identified at the time of the last inspection and this contributes to the high quality of work in lessons and to the progress they make.

9. Pupils' personal development is very good. The opportunities for them to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are good. As well as providing a brief time for reflection, school assemblies help pupils to a sense of belonging to a whole school community and, each week, to celebrate the contributions and achievements of others. Circle time (personal development discussions) helps pupils to start to appreciate their own worth and raises their self-esteem. The pupils from a wide range of different cultures mix well with each other and it is very apparent that racial harmony is one of the strengths of the school.
10. Overall the provision for cultural development is sound. Various subjects provide pupils with a fuller understanding of the world around them with, for example, painting and music developing aesthetic awareness. Pupils gain an appreciation of western culture with work on, for example, the Greeks and Tudors in history, European artists and composers and an understanding of French life as they learn the language. An awareness of non-Western cultures is provided with work such as Hindu dance during physical education lessons, art from India and South America and the study of different religions. However, the school does not take full advantage of the wide range of different cultures within its own community.
11. The pupils' attitudes towards learning are good across the school. This includes those with special educational needs. Parents confirm what their children told the inspectors and what was seen during the inspection; that school is an enjoyable place. They listen attentively and follow instructions well. They are eager to answer questions and are prepared to contribute their ideas. Pupils settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities built into the lessons.
12. Pupils' moral development is very good. The great majority of pupils behave very well in the classroom, at play and lunch times. They are aware of how their behaviour affects others and many have developed good self-discipline. They are well mannered, polite and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised. The school uses a variety of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour and they are used consistently by all the staff. Pupils with special behavioural needs are well supported by the staff. Parents and pupils confirm that the school has effective and appropriate procedures to deal with the occasional misbehaviour that may take place. Last year, no pupils were excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good in English, mathematics and physical education and good overall. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. This is a good improvement from the findings of the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall, but with eight per cent of teaching unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very high expectations by teachers and very good subject knowledge lead to very good learning of basic skills and facts.

- Very well planned and prepared lessons and good classroom management help ensure that pupils learn at a good rate.
- There is very good use of support staff, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning especially for those with special educational needs, and for those who do not speak English as their first language.
- Pupils demonstrate very good concentration skills and co-operate with one another very well. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.
- In English and mathematics, pupils know the targets they are expected to achieve. However, the best way to achieving them is not always clearly understood by pupils.
- Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not fully developed.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the reception classes is good. As a result, the children achieve well and make good progress. Most will reach and many exceed the goals set for their age at the end of the reception year. The new national assessment procedures for children in the Foundation Stage have been implemented well.
14. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 to 6 varies from satisfactory to excellent. Teaching and learning in English, mathematics and physical education are very good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. This reflects the high priority that is given to providing in-service training for staff as well as the school's emphasis on supporting pupils in improving standards in English. A focus on the development of a suitable vocabulary for each subject with specialist words being taught is also in evidence in lessons. In most other subjects, key vocabulary is shared with pupils, explained to them and frequently reinforced throughout the lesson.
15. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is very good overall particularly in numeracy. Teachers give clear explanations and make good use of pupils' white boards so they assess pupils' understanding. Teachers use very effective questioning and are aware when pupils are ready to make progress, raising challenging questions to push forward their thinking. Teachers include a good range of activities to consolidate and extend learning.
16. Physical education lessons are very well organised and teachers help pupils to develop their physical skills very well. Strengths in many of the lessons include teachers' high expectations of pupils. Pupils are well managed. This is largely achieved as a result of the very positive relationships between pupils and staff. In lessons, teachers question pupils well to check their understanding throughout the lesson and they present ideas to them in a variety of ways. This recognises pupils' different learning styles, helps to keep them interested and moves their learning on at a good pace. Teachers often ask pupils to discuss their views in pairs and groups. For example, in a very good Year 5 art and design lesson pupils discussed in depth what needed to go into a collage of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' to ensure it represented the key elements of the story. As a result, pupils learn from each other and extend their thinking. Teachers often make very good assessments of pupils' learning on a day-to-day basis through good questioning and careful marking of pupils' work. Very good use of such information when planning work is evident in the way that it is often well matched to the pupils' needs and the way in which they are grouped and supported. Homework is used appropriately to support pupils' learning across the school.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well. All teachers are well aware of pupils' needs and levels of attainment so that suitable work is planned and appropriate support given during lessons. Those with special educational needs apply themselves well and are always fully involved in lessons because teachers plan tasks that meet their needs; their learning is good. Additional help is given by a number of support assistants and this gives pupils extra time to receive greater explanation and confirmation of their work. As a result, pupils become more involved in learning and more included in the work of their classes and

groups. Teachers and support staff use pupils' individual education plans well and support assistants are effectively deployed. This helps pupils of widely varying abilities to achieve well. The very effective links with outside agencies make a positive contribution to the quality of education of these pupils.

18. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged by appropriate work, time constraints to finish their work and by sharing their learning with other pupils at the end of the lesson. They enjoy specialist teaching in instrumental music and in sports activities such as gymnastics, which is effective. All pupils are included very well in lessons and the needs of those for whom English is an additional language are met very well because assessment is used very effectively to monitor and support the progress of these pupils.
19. Assessment and recording procedures in English, mathematics and science are very good. Results in the national tests are analysed and whole school targets set. All pupils take part in termly assessments in English and mathematics. The strategies and procedures used by the school allow teachers to develop a clear understanding of pupils' abilities. This information is used very well to organise pupils in Years 3 to 6 into ability groups for mathematics. Teachers also use it to set individual targets for pupils to achieve in English and mathematics. Pupils know what targets have been set for them and are responsible for keeping a record of their progress towards these. However, they are not always aware precisely how these targets are to be achieved and what skills they need to learn to achieve them.
20. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers use constructive comments and suggest ways in which they can improve. The school has just written a new assessment and marking policy based on the existing good practice in English, mathematics and science. But as yet, there is no consistent form of assessment in other subjects.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7%)	18 (39%)	18 (39%)	7 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

There is a good, broad curriculum including that in the Foundation Stage (reception classes). The accommodation is very good, teaching and support staff are well matched to the needs of pupils, and the quality of resources is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the reception classes is effective in meeting the needs of the children and in promoting successfully all the areas of learning.
- The school effectively promotes learning across the academic, physical, creative and personal elements of pupils' development.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment, for example through very good extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of learning.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language is good and leads to good achievement by these pupils.

Commentary

21. Throughout the school, learning is well planned. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and all statutory requirements are met fully and national guidelines are followed to plan for all subjects including religious education. Governors, given the responsibility of being attached to areas of learning, are actively involved in monitoring provision by discussing with co-ordinators and observing lessons. The National Primary Strategy for numeracy and literacy has added consistency to the teaching of skills for all pupils and for setting targets for improvement. Daily literacy and numeracy sessions are taught very well and in each class and this is having a positive effect on the quality of provision. Effective provision is made for sex and relationships education together with planned opportunities to understand the differences between medicines and harmful drugs especially during the Year 6 'Police Week'. The school pays good attention to developing personal, social and health education through timetabled lessons and discussion time. Issues such as healthy eating, bullying and resolving conflict are dealt with well.
22. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans have clear targets that teachers, parents and the pupils themselves can understand. These pupils are largely taught with their peers, but they also work in small groups with well trained teaching assistants. They effectively follow structured programmes to improve their reading, spelling and co-ordination skills. This promotes good achievement. The school ensures that, wherever necessary, pupils receive specific support from outside agencies. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are given good support and achieve well, with many excelling, by Year 6. Pupils at an early stage of acquisition of English language skills receive well planned support and teachers and teaching assistants use a good range of strategies to ensure that they are included in all activities. Since the previous inspection, arrangements are in place for groups of higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented to be challenged successfully at more advanced levels in literacy, numeracy, extra-curricular physical education and instrumental music.
23. All pupils have equal access to the full range of curricular experiences with the addition of French for older pupils. The school has a good range of instrumental provision by visiting specialist teachers. This gives good support to all those pupils involved and particularly those who have a gift or talent for playing an instrument. The curriculum has been enriched considerably by activities in addition to those experienced during the normal school day that add much to the breadth and relevance of the curriculum. Well planned residential visits provide invaluable opportunities for the development of personal and social skills; and an exhaustive list of club activities enable pupils to develop sporting and artistic skills organised by teaching, non-teaching and voluntary staff. All clubs are very well attended. There have been wide-ranging visits and visitors to support learning. Stoke Poges School is deservedly acquiring an impressive reputation in sporting achievement against other schools throughout the year, especially in team games and gymnastics. Pupils benefit from links with local organisations, with visiting coaches sharing skills, techniques and tactics in experiences such as tag-rugby, table tennis and football. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are included in all activities and have access to the full range of National Curriculum experiences and activities outside of the normal school day.
24. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school and there are very good links involving staff visits. Well planned opportunities are in place for pupils and parents to become more aware of the next stage of education. Strategies are being considered to improve the transfer from the foundation year for those pupils who are not yet secure in the skills associated with the requirements of the early learning goals.
25. Although the well designed accommodation has had some teething problems, it has significantly improved since the previous inspection. However, the shared library and computer suite facility restricts both activities and plans are in place to remedy this situation.

Similarly, outdoor provision for the youngest pupils is under review as at present it does not fulfil the needs of the Foundation Stage. Parents have contributed significantly to the range of good resources available. Teaching and non-teaching staff are sufficient and well matched to the needs of the curriculum and the smooth running of the school.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- Staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage their development.
- The school effectively promotes pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage.
- The school has good arrangements to enable new pupils to settle in.

Commentary

26. The governors are actively involved with the headteacher and site manager in touring the school to identify any potential hazards. Various risk assessments are in place for many of the subject areas and for visits. The local authority reviews the school's procedures for this each year. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science and design and technology. The procedures for child protection are good. The school follows the local procedures and staff have received guidance on how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The designated teacher ensures that the office staff are familiar with the procedures. The arrangements for first aid are good.
27. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. Pupils consider that the staff support them very well and know to whom they would go if they needed help. In particular, parents agreed that their children were well supported when they first come into the school either into reception or if they arrive in other years. The pupils have the opportunity to discuss concerns during circle time (personal development discussions) and other lessons. The school is also considering the introduction of a school council to widen pupils involvement in decision-making.
28. The monitoring of their work leads to good advice to pupils on how to improve. The school's assessment procedures each term in English and mathematics enable it to track their progress to ensure they are working at the expected level and effectively to set targets. The information enables teachers to group pupils appropriately. When marking pupils' work, the teachers' comments refer to what they need to do to improve. If the pupils have achieved a target the marking guides the pupil to the next target. The arrangements for the other subjects are less precise but, nevertheless, include an assessment of whether pupils are achieving their targets. The recording of pupils' personal development is informal, relying on the staff's knowledge of the pupils, and is not always used effectively to develop in full the personal qualities and social skills of all the pupils.

29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good and all statutory requirements are met. Individual needs are identified early and teaching and non-teaching support are managed and organised effectively. Targets for improvement are shared with parents and carers, and gains in skills, knowledge and understanding are recorded. Outside agencies are used very well. Half yearly reviews for pupils with statements of special educational need measure gains in skills, knowledge and understanding and are used to modify improvement programmes. Pupils are present at their reviews and their views are encouraged. Bilingual teachers are used effectively to identify need and to match activities to the requirements of the National Curriculum for those at an early stage of the acquisition of English.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good overall. Links with other schools are good and with the local community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are supportive of what the school provides.
- The parents' support at home and in school makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school provides a wide range of information about school life.
- Links with local primary and secondary schools are good.
- Structured opportunities for parents to contribute their views about the school are limited.

Commentary

30. In their high response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the meeting with the registered inspector, parents showed that they are pleased with what the school provides. Their children like school, the staff expect their children to work hard and they consider that the teaching is good. A number stated they are not well informed about their children's progress. However, the school has already decided that next school year; a timetabled consultation meeting will take place each term. Others do not consider that the school seeks their views enough. The school is already planning to send out questionnaires to enable parents to be actively involved in helping to formulate school policies.
31. The school sends home regular news and other letters about general matters and, each term, to outline what is to be taught in each class. Teachers are readily available. In particular, the infant teachers come into the playground at the end of the day. Junior parents usually wait outside the school but several were seen to have brief conversations with their children's teachers at the start of the day. Parents also confirm that teachers ensure that the pupils bring their parents into school if there are any concerns. From the relaxed, informal conversations seen to take place during the inspection, it is apparent that parents are comfortable talking to the staff. The annual reports on pupil progress in the summer term have a detailed summary of what the children know and can do in each subject. However, the targets for improvement differ in quality between classes and are sometimes missing or make only a very general statement.
32. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the achievement of the pupils. Pupils confirm that their parents ensure the homework is completed. Most parents come to the consultation evenings with the teachers or meet them shortly afterwards. The committee of the parent association works hard to organise both fundraising and social events. A good number of parents help regularly in the classroom or with after-school clubs and more help with one-off activities and accompany trips out. However, a number of parents take their children out of school for holidays, causing some disruption to their learning and a few do not ensure they arrive at school on time. In addition, a few parents do not follow the sensible parking arrangements at the start and end of the day.

33. The links with other schools and the community at large help to broaden the experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs from within the cluster of schools and very good procedures when transferring to secondary education. They have various opportunities to meet others in the inter-school sports matches, singing carols to senior citizens and taking part in village events including readings on Remembrance Day. The reception staff visit the local playgroups and their pupils use the playground in the summer resulting in the new pupils being familiar with the school when they eventually arrive in the reception class. Contacts at the secondary level also help to smooth the transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6. Staff from a local secondary school help enhance the teaching of subjects such as science and mathematics. The very good contact with local firms has led to support both financially and in kind with, for example, the donation of furniture and the sponsorship of the gymnastics team.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The governance of the school is very good. The leadership of the school is good with some very good features. The management of the school is good also with some very good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership of the headteacher introducing good management structures and initiating changes in teaching is leading to rising standards in English especially the quality of writing.
- The decisive and positive senior management team, particularly the two deputies, have a clear view of their management roles and are effective in monitoring the development of teaching and curriculum.
- Governors are fully involved with the work of the school, hold it to account and provide very strong leadership in seeking to raise performance.
- Very effective administration supports the school well in ensuring its smooth day to day running.
- The roles of co-ordinators are not fully developed, so that they can fully lead initiatives and drive developments and standards in their own subjects.

Commentary

34. The headteacher is new to the school and has continued the good procedures previously established in bringing the school together on to one site. His good leadership has further ensured the unity of the staff so that the school operates with a commitment to further improvement. The very good awareness of the needs of individual pupils ensures the involvement of all pupils in all aspects of school life. The structure of the senior management team has been developed well so that changes in teaching of subjects such as English have been implemented effectively. Benefits are already evident in the rising standards observed during inspection. A clear focus on sport and physical development has been introduced and good standards in physical education were observed. The headteacher is well supported by his two deputies. They give good support to initiatives and provide a strong and positive link with the staff of the school. Many aspects of the role of curriculum co-ordinators have been developed well since the previous inspection and schemes of work are now in place and effective. However, co-ordinators have not yet been clearly challenged with responsibility for the leadership in the further development of their subjects. The school is aware this next step in the development of their roles.
35. The good management of the school makes positive use of performance management procedures. Targets for personal improvement focus on areas for school development and the raising of standards as well as professional and personal development. The senior managers of the school organise the development of teaching and curriculum well. They understand their roles clearly and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. There is very good use of information about the standards achieved by the pupils.

Pupil performance is monitored and areas for development in teaching and learning as well as the curriculum are identified. The clear focus on raising standards in English has introduced specific targets for pupils. Analysis of performance has also identified the need for development of investigative skills in science. A very effective administration unit, that supports the work of the school and the provision of information for governors, underpins the good management of the school. Financial management is secure and focused on school priorities. The potential overspend for the current year is a managed situation that has ensured provision of resources for the new accommodation and includes expenditure on special educational needs. Funding to cover this deficit has been identified.

36. Governors have guided the school very well through a difficult time of merging two schools and the development of new accommodation. They have made very good appointments and made clear their expectations of the headteacher in developing a committed team to take the school forward. A clear evaluation of the work of the school recognises that stability has been achieved and that now is the time to look for long-term objectives. The headteacher has benefited from the very strong support of the current chair of governors and his predecessor. The current chair of governors maintains regular contact with the headteacher and provides a challenging evaluation of all initiatives. Committees monitor the work of the school well through a series of meetings, reports, and observations of teaching. Finances are monitored thoroughly. Monthly budget reports support decisions about school development planning.
37. The co-ordinators for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language maintain the register of pupils efficiently. They have very good subject knowledge and continue to play an effective part in raising whole school awareness in responding to pupils' needs. They manage a very effective intervention programme and the register identifies stages of development, and improvements made. There are enthusiastic responsible governors who monitor the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. The governing body is well informed and carries out its statutory duties thoroughly.
38. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. Teachers are fully aware of how to respond to their needs and pupils are fully included in all activities. Targets are detailed and reviewed half termly. Pupils are increasingly more involved in their reviews and negotiate their own targets for improvement. Leadership of special educational needs is good and teaching assistants are well trained.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	829,798
Total expenditure	840,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,074

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	3,307
Balance carried forward to the next	-10,202

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) is **good**.

When children start reception, their attainment is above average in personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, and in physical development. It is broadly average in most other areas of learning. In mathematics it is below average. Evidence from assessments of pupils as they left the reception class shows that over the year 2002-2003 the children achieved well and made good progress by the end of their year in the reception class. Standards overall are above average.

Leadership and management are good. The knowledgeable co-ordinator has implemented a well thought out curriculum that reflects good early education practice. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the new national assessment scheme have been implemented well. Lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those who do not speak English as their first language are provided with additional adult support. Good use is made of the space and resources available inside the school. However, the activities provided for using the outside area are not always planned as carefully as those inside and the enclosed outdoor play space is small and not readily accessible to both classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of the reception year.
- The children settle into school very quickly and know both class and school routines well because induction processes are good.
- Children enjoy school and are keen to learn.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between the children themselves are good.
- Children select tasks and concentrate for long periods of time.

Commentary

39. Standards and achievement in this area of learning are well above average and most children will exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of their first year in school. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers and their assistants ensure that children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The good induction process that takes place prior to the children starting school helps them to settle in as a result, they enjoy school and are keen to learn. Good relationships between staff and children and their parents are quickly established and adults encourage the development of social skills in a variety of ways including playing board games with them so that they know how to take turns and share. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are very well integrated and receive very good support. All are encouraged to join in, try new things and to persevere with tasks.
40. Children are given sufficient opportunities to select what they want to do. They are shown how to work together co-operatively and are given opportunities to work independently. In these lessons pupils demonstrate imagination and flair and concentrate for long periods.

Occasionally, however, the adults interrupt children who are engrossed in a task and ask them to do something on the teacher's agenda. This runs against the stated objectives of child-initiated learning. Good opportunities are provided for the children to take on suitable responsibilities such as helping to get equipment out, tidy away and take the registers to the school office. They enjoy this and carry out these tasks well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff place high priority on speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- There are too few high quality 'big books' (oversize books for use with large groups) available for use in whole class sessions.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning are good overall. Children achieve well in developing their speaking and listening skills because they are given opportunities to share news and contribute to question and answer sessions when working as a whole class with the teacher and when being taught in small groups.
42. When children start school standards in reading and writing are average, however, the development of reading and writing skills is given a high priority. Many lessons include the reinforcement of initial sounds and the reading of simple words. As a result, pupils make good progress in the learning of early reading skills. They show enjoyment, anticipation and recognition of the key words taught to help to start reading. They make sound progress in linking letters and sounds, and the standards they achieve in writing are average by the end of the reception year. Children try hard and enjoy their lessons and whilst many appropriate resources are used for the tasks planned, there is a lack of 'big books' to enhance teaching and learning when the whole class is listening to a story and to make these lessons more appealing and relevant to the children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are taught well.
- Support staff are used well to help move learning forward.

Commentary

43. Teachers build well on the children's prior learning and children achieve well throughout the reception year. Teaching is good because the teaching and learning of mathematics is often set in naturally occurring contexts. The terms 'more than' and 'less than' are used regularly and misunderstandings corrected as a matter of course. Children are taught mathematics both as a whole class and in small groups using well-designed games and activities that help children to learn in a practical way. Adults question the children whilst they are engaged in a variety of activities and are good at getting them to count and recognise numbers, shapes, size and pattern. As a result, children attain above average standards by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

44. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about this wide-ranging area of learning because too few aspects of it were observed. From the evidence gained both in the reception classrooms and from analysing the children's work, standards attained are at least average. However, the science lesson observed was very good. All children actively participated and their understanding of the properties of materials increased quickly. The lesson was exactly the right length to maintain the interest of the children. Evidence from teachers' planning shows that all aspects of this area of learning are fully covered.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Regular formal lessons are provided in dance, gymnastics and games skills.
- Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their fine muscle control in the classroom.
- Sufficient opportunities are provided for developing children's muscle control outside, but sometimes the activities provided lack focus because the learning intended for different groups and individuals is not identified on teachers' plans.
- The reception class outdoor play area is small and not readily accessible to one of the classes.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well in this area of learning and standards are above average by the end of the reception year. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for children to develop physical skills. They make good use of the school hall for the more formal lessons of dance, gymnastics and games skills. Inside the classroom, fine muscle control is developed well both inside through use of chinks, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, paint, small toys and construction kits. The outdoor play area is used daily across the curriculum and children have good opportunities to practise and improve the skills learnt. However, the activities provided outside are not always planned in as much detail as those provided inside and opportunities to move learning forward are sometimes lost. The location of the outside play area means that it is more difficult for one of the classes to access. The teachers have gone some way to addressing this in their planning and the school has good plans to provide a further outdoor play area for the other class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

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

Commentary

46. Standards in creative development are average on entry to school but are likely to be above average by the end of the reception year because children are taught skills in a wide range of art activities and they achieve well. The children enjoy art and craft activities and produce high

quality work. They use all their senses in wide ranging activities in a way that is natural to young children. Each classroom has a role-play area linked to the topic being taught. Most children use these areas well. They play co-operatively and concentrate for long periods. No music lessons were seen although planning shows that children are given the opportunity to sing and play percussion instruments in formal lessons.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

The provision of English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are rising and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.
- All pupils regardless of background achieve well, including the more able and those with gifts or talents in the subject.
- Provision is good for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language.
- Teaching is very good overall and occasionally excellent teaching was seen.
- Literacy skills are used well to enhance learning in other curriculum areas.
- The leadership and management of English are good.
- Presentation varies considerably from year-to-year.

Commentary

47. The inspection found standards in English are above average by Years 2 and 6 and better than the results in the most recent national tests of 2003, which were average by Year 2 and disappointingly below average by Year 6. However, the recent development of the subject, especially in writing, has been successful. No judgement has been made comparing this school with schools in a similar context due to inaccuracy of data concerning free school meals.
48. Standards of writing have improved since the last inspection and are now above average especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of writing styles including story, letter, instruction and report writing linked to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 wrote questions to tease out the character of the wolf in the 'Three Little Pigs'. Most used capital letters and question marks accurately and presented their writing well. An appropriate proportion was writing at the higher Level 3, using adjectives to improve their writing such as the 'fat, juicy pig'. In previous work, others showed good standards when referring to the 'beautiful birds' and 'wow! It looks brilliant.' Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught to write in paragraphs; and more attention is being given to the teaching of common words and spelling patterns. When rebuilding the story of the 'Iron Man', pupils used short sentences to build tension and also used connectives, such as 'meanwhile' and 'as if by magic' to build more complex sentences. Older pupils enjoy using increasingly more complex sentences and use more exciting vocabulary until by Year 6, 'she rose in a tantrum, flailing her arms and screaming frantically'.
49. Speaking and listening skills are above average and pupils are confident and articulate communicators. Pupils are encouraged to ask and answer questions and they thrive on the value and respect which is given to their responses by other pupils and adults. Opportunities are provided for pupils to express themselves in 'circle time' (personal development

discussions) and in discussions within lessons. This helps them to speak clearly and to explain their ideas with increasing confidence. For example, when they are speaking to wider audiences in class assemblies or school productions. This was particularly evident in a Year 2 lesson, when excellent strategies enabled pupils to improve the quality of their questions significantly. High attaining pupils in a Year 5 class were most impressive when presenting their 'film script' to portray the fight scene between Robin Hood and John Little. Their awareness of audience and command of imagery was of the highest order.

50. Standards in reading are above average by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils explore and understand a range of genre from myths and traditional tales to science fiction. Good opportunities are provided for Year 1 and 2 pupils to read individually and in groups. Parents contribute to the good quality of reading and progress is logged in reading diaries. Pupils are heard to read regularly using the support of teachers, teaching assistants and parent volunteers. Pupils use the new library effectively and are acquiring good library skills. Pupils share their teachers' enthusiasm for literature. They take pleasure in reading and enjoy the progress they are making. Older pupils read expressively and use skills to solve problems. Pupils in Year 4 used a 'skimming' technique to identify the stages of rebuilding the Iron Man, and pupils in Year 6 coped very well with vocabulary and style of writing of H G Wells.
51. The teaching of English is consistently very good. The National Literacy Strategy is now well embedded in the school's work and the high levels of skill and understanding shown by teachers has contributed to raising standards. All teaching is characterised by the use of a good range of teaching strategies; excellent relationships and a high level of mutual respect between pupils and adults; and good use of teaching assistants during group activities. In two excellent lessons in Years 2 and 4, teaching assistants contributed significantly to the quality of learning throughout the lesson, especially during the introductory sessions when they sat on the carpet and constantly prompted and reassured the pupils in their target group enabling them to be fully involved. The pace of learning was very effective, with pupils sharing their answers and ideas with their 'talking partners' encouraging full participation. Systems for planning and assessment are effective and progress can now be tracked and targets set for improvement. Marking of pupils' work is very good; they are informed of their successes and shown how to improve.
52. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. By analysing national test results she identifies areas for improvement. Monitoring has been carried out by members of the senior management team and the governor with responsibility for literacy has observed lessons to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Although she has monitored pupils' work and teachers' planning, the subject co-ordinator has not monitored the quality of teaching and learning in other classes, and in this respect her role is not fully developed.
53. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection; all pupils now have targets for improvement. There has been good development of the planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is not their mother tongue. There is an awareness that the presentation of pupils' work is not always good enough. All pupils are included in the full range of activities; their achievement is good, and their self-esteem is high.

The use of literacy skills across the curriculum is very good

54. Literacy skills are increasingly well used in other subjects and older pupils are developing good research and study skills when extracting information from text or internet. Pupils are taught how to apply their skills. They use suitable writing techniques in geography, history and religious education; record concisely in science, often using bullet points; and they write lists and instructions in design and technology. They report concisely and write descriptively, expressively and persuasively. Planned opportunities to develop communication skills are very good and ICT is becoming more important when writing scripts, poems and reports.

French

55. Only a few lessons were seen in French so no overall judgement about provision can be made. However, in the lessons seen pupils achieved well, and standards are above average. Lessons are taught from Year 4 upwards. Particularly significant is that lessons are taught by non-specialists, the class teachers, all of whom have enough subject knowledge to teach the subject well at this elementary level. The approach is mostly oral and is topic based. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson seen the pupils were effectively taught the 24 hour clock and how to ask the time of day. Pupils had a good attitude to the subject and participated well in groups or pairs as they practised asking and telling the time of day. They all achieved well and reached a good standard. The teacher had a good accent and used effective visual aids to help pupils' learning. In another good Year 5 lesson, pupils played a game of mimicking the teacher by touching different parts of their body and naming them. The teacher had a good accent and subject knowledge. Care is taken to make sure that the subject is kept relevant to the pupils. In one written exercise, after finding out the names of the subjects they learn in school in French, they translated them into their timetable. In the lessons seen, pupils were confident and enthusiastic and keen to learn the language. The school reinforces its work in the language by organising an expedition to France. This gives pupils the opportunity to practise in a real life situation as well as exposing them to some French culture and history such as the Bayeux tapestry. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and is keen to develop the subject further within the constraints of the timetable.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is consistently very good throughout the school and enables all pupils to achieve well. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
- Questioning is used effectively in numeracy to extend pupils' learning.
- Resources are used well to support teaching and learning.
- Marking, target setting and assessment procedures are used well to help teachers and pupils understand how good their work is, but the route to further improvement is not made clear enough to pupils.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are very good and good improvements have been made since the time of the previous inspection.

Commentary

56. The inspection found the quality and impact of the consistently good teaching throughout the school means that pupils regardless of background achieve well and standards are above average. These good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 6 in the 2003 tests were well above average. However, the school's assessment indicates there are fewer higher attaining pupils in the current Year 6 to achieve the higher Level 5 results this year, similar to last year.
57. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy lessons because of the very good relationships that they have with the teachers and their assistants. They are given frequent opportunities to work in pairs. This increases their self-confidence and motivation for the subject. They concentrate very well in lessons and the work they produce is carefully written and very neatly presented.

58. The very good match of work to the needs of individuals, coupled with additional adult support for those who need it ensures that all regardless of background, including the higher attaining pupils, achieve well. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The grouping of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 by ability is having a positive effect on the standards achieved. Throughout the school, teachers use questioning effectively during numeracy sessions to extend pupils' learning. This encourages pupils to think mathematically and to explain the strategies they use to answer or solve problems. Teaching styles are imaginative with pupils' understanding well supported by good use of resources. Teachers provide time for pupils to reflect and recognise their mistakes whilst also providing them with strategies for improvement. Time at the end of lessons is used effectively to review what pupils have learned.
59. Assessment procedures tracking pupils' progress are used very effectively to raise standards throughout the school. Marking is used consistently well to inform them about their learning. Teachers have high but realistic expectations of pupils and provide appropriately challenging targets for future achievement. However, individual pupils are not always clear about which target to work on next or how to go about achieving the next step in their learning.
60. Leadership and management are very good. There is a very knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides a very good role model for the rest of the staff. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very successfully implemented throughout the school and standards in this aspect of the subject are well above average. The mathematics co-ordinator has a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject because she has monitored the teaching and learning in lessons, looked at teachers' planning and the work that pupils produce. The good work in analysing standards has been built upon well to include individual target setting. Resources are good and well maintained.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The breadth of the curriculum ensures that pupils have a good all round knowledge in mathematics that they are able to use to support work in a wide range of subjects. Evidence of the effective planned use of mathematics was seen in science, geography, history, religious education, ICT and design and technology.

SCIENCE

The schools' provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning at in Years 3 to mean that all pupils achieve well at the expected levels of attainment.
- Above average standards by Year 6 is based on good factual knowledge by the majority of pupils.
- Insufficient focus on investigative science means that higher attainers in particular do not have opportunities to use their knowledge in pursuit of answers to scientific questions in some lessons.
- Good management of the subject by the co-ordinator supports other teachers well.
- The co-ordinator is not fully focused on a drive to raise standards further particularly for higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

62. Standards in science are benefiting from the development of the structured scheme of work. Performance in 2003 national tests by Year 6 pupils was below average overall, due to insufficient pupils achieving the higher Level 5. This is linked to insufficient teaching of investigative science and development of scientific concepts; but for this, standards would have been even higher. The inspection found standards that are above average due to good teaching and learning and development of the subject.
63. By Year 2 pupils reach average standards overall; standards are above average in some aspects of the subject. They have a broad factual knowledge about living things, the environment, growth of plants; properties of natural and man made materials and changes that can be made. They are aware of the idea of a fair test and make and record observations in their own words. They know that electricity can be used for light, heat, movement and sound but do not have a basic understanding of how electricity works. This represents sound achievement in relation to prior attainment on entry to the school. Achievement during the Years 3 to 6 is good. Year 5 pupils' standards are above expectations as they seek to develop a fair test to identify the factors that affect evaporation. Standards in Year 6 are also above average. Higher attaining pupils draw clear diagrams to illustrate the process of photosynthesis and use labels well to explain the process. Lower attaining pupils write accounts of their work in terms of what they did during the lesson. But there is little evidence of higher attaining pupils working at the more advanced levels and seeking answers to scientific questions by following their own lines of investigation independently.
64. Teaching and learning are good overall with consistently effectively teaching in Years 3 to 6. In all lessons planning reflects the structure of the scheme of work. Teaching involves pupils well and resources are used effectively to give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, good experience of practical work. However, there is seldom any difference in the tasks set for pupils with special educational needs or higher attaining pupils. There was good learning in lessons where teaching challenged pupils to investigate ideas in a practical setting. Regular shifts of emphasis from factual information to practical enquiry to review of progress with the investigation, maintained interest. Resources were used well to give pupils opportunities to measure accurately and investigation was structured to enable them to observe the practical application of their factual knowledge. For example, in one good Year 6 lesson on gravity, pupils called upon their mathematical knowledge as they took several readings in Newtons of a variety of objects. They then repeated the process with these objects suspended in water and observed the differences. However, opportunities for higher attaining pupils to deepen their understanding by investigating suspension of objects in liquids of greater density were not taken. This illustrates the general lack of a variety of approaches for different groups of pupils and contributes to the lack of challenge at the higher levels of attainment.
65. The school has maintained standards of attainment and of teaching since the previous inspection. This is against a background of constant change and adjustment. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has developed a good scheme that is used effectively by the teachers. She has sought good quality professional development and has good plans for the development of the subject. The need for a drive towards standards at the higher levels of attainment is already recognised. However, the school management structure has not yet given subject co-ordinators the responsibility for fully leading their subjects and further raising standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **satisfactory** with some good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good management of the subject has developed resources and significantly improved the quality of teaching and learning in ICT.
- Standards have improved and now match the expectations for pupils' age.
- Although teachers' subject knowledge has improved not all teachers are confident enough in teaching the subject without the support of the co-ordinator.
- Resources now good and offering the potential for significant improvement in use of ICT.

Commentary

66. There has been very good improvement in provision for ICT. At the time of the previous inspection standards were low and progress was unsatisfactory due to lack of resources; an unsatisfactory scheme of work, and lack of subject knowledge by teachers. Good management of the subject, through a difficult period of change with good resources only recently installed, has significantly improved the learning opportunities for the pupils. Standards now match expectations for pupils' age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils do not however make sufficient use of their skills as a tool for learning in other subject areas.
67. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well and reach average standards although these are rising. They use a good variety of software and skills are developing in the use of graphics software and word processing. Work on display shows use of a painting program to create very realistic self-portraits from photographic images taken with the digital camera. Higher attaining pupils are confident with the keyboard when preparing and editing text and use function keys well. Lower attaining pupils are less confident but do succeed in using basic editing keys to obtain an accurate piece of text.
68. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 and good progress is made. Year 4 pupils learn well when using control software to give instructions for the 'Turtle' (a programmable robotic device) to draw a square and later to draw letters. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils are using graphics programs confidently to design a garden with images, explanatory key and text and use word processing skills to write letters as part of history lessons or display poems in a variety of colours and fonts. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the teaching assistants in the completion of tasks at all stages of the school.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall across the school but all the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 were taught by the co-ordinator. This is not therefore representative of the skills of all the teachers. There is a good range of ICT work on display in classrooms. However, the skills pupils have developed in ICT are not evident in the displays for other subjects. The good teaching was based on good subject knowledge and effective planning. This generated teaching that gave the pupils confidence, involved them fully in their learning and set graded challenges of alternating demonstrations and practice. As a result pupils learnt well and maintained interest and enthusiasm. For example, Year 6 pupils first used an object-based software package to locate and manipulate shapes into various arrangements. Further focused teaching in a small group avoided the distractions of computer keyboards or displays and gave pupils an insight into the next level of manipulation by order of position. As a result, they readily controlled the software on their return to the computer.
70. Good management of the subject has effectively overseen an increase in ICT resources to a good level, so that the whole of the subject's programme of study can be taught well. There is good access for all pupils and opportunities are available for class teachers to use the

computer suite in support of their lessons. The co-ordinator has good expertise and is responsible for teaching the subject to most of the pupils in the school. Development planning focuses on the use of software and the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator does not yet lead the subject fully, by raising standards through developing teachers' expertise, and ensuring the use of ICT skills in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. There was some use of ICT in other lessons during inspection. During a religious education lesson pupils used graphics programs to create patterns and images in response to sensitive music about feelings. There was display evidence of a range of exemplar work that included repetitive patterns from ancient Greece, letters home from evacuees in history, sensitive poetry and creative stories on the subject of 'When I am 86'. A virtual tour of the 'Mary Rose' had been made in history and the children had benefited considerably from this when they visited the exhibition.
72. However, little evidence was seen of pupils using their skills as a natural part of lessons in other subjects. Writing directly into the computer for example in literacy, calling on spreadsheets for recording information in science or using the Internet for research during lessons in subjects such as history and geography.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

73. It is not possible to make a judgement about provision in geography and history as only a few lessons were seen in history and none in geography. However, analysis of teachers' planning; talking to subject co-ordinators; an analysis of previous work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are at least above average in both subjects. National guidelines are used to plan for both subjects and assessment strategies have recently been introduced to record the gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. Planning indicates full coverage of National Curriculum requirements and that skills and knowledge are built upon year-on-year. Good strategies are promoted to enrich pupils' studies in history and geography and a wide range of visits and visitors play an important part in making learning interesting and relevant. Research and study skills are good, with the use of the computer suite at an early stage of development. The co-ordinators for these subjects are enthusiastic and they manage them effectively. However, their leadership roles in the subjects are not fully developed. There is not enough opportunity for them to monitor teaching and learning in order to develop teachers' subject knowledge and drive up standards.
74. Literacy skills are used effectively in history to support learning with pupils writing in a range of styles. Diaries are used in Year 2 in the style of Samuel Pepys, and lists and bullet points are used effectively in Year 6 as when taking notes concerning the experiences of the navigator of a Lancaster Bomber in their studies of World War Two. Pupils use accurate conventions when writing letters either to King Charles concerning the Great Fire of London, or to their parents when pretending to be evacuees.
75. In the lessons seen in history in Year 2, pupils achieved well and showed an understanding of differences and similarities between Victorian and present times, and pupils in Year 1 are being introduced to chronology by studying toys from other periods. Pupils in Years 5 also achieved well and had a good awareness of life in Tudor times and invaluable experiences have been provided by to the Mary Rose and Hampton Court Palace. Pupils were transfixed when listening to the experiences of a World War Two navigator and later prisoner of war.
76. Although no lesson was observed in geography, there is evidence that planning uses national guidelines to ensure that that progress is made year on year and that requirements are met. Map work is well developed with pupils in Year 2 using keys. Contrasts are made between

places, and the effects of climate are studied by pupils in Year 6. Pupils know the difference between physical and human characteristics and younger pupils are encouraged to comment on what they like and dislike about the local shopping area. Older pupils study conservation, deforestation, and how to remedy health hazards from river pollution.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good across the school.
- The conscientious co-ordinator has overseen the rationalisation of provision as a result of school site merger well.
- Good teaching develops pupils' awareness of the way in which religions meet personal needs of individuals as well as factual knowledge about world religions.

Commentary

77. Analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons confirms that the school has maintained the good standards of the previous inspection at both key stages. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus at across the school and teaching is consistently good from Year 1 to Year 6.
78. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Year 2 pupils show good factual knowledge about a number of world religions. They know that the Torah is a scroll, not a book, and show a sense of its sacred nature when they observe that the handles used for turning the scroll keep the manuscript untouched and special. Year 3 pupils have good factual knowledge about celebrations such as Eid, Diwali, and Easter. Year 6 pupils are sensitive in their illustrations of feelings as they listen to atmospheric music. They individually represent ideas of adoration, celebration, thanksgiving and supplication with discussion using examples from a full range of religions.
79. Good teaching at both key stages uses the locally agreed scheme well. Lesson planning effectively structures learning so pupils become involved in understanding the deeper ideas of religious celebrations. As well as giving pupils good factual knowledge about world religions the teaching explores questions of 'why?' and considers the similarities and differences between religions. Behaviour is very good as pupils listen carefully to their teachers and so make thoughtful and sensitive responses to the ideas taught. There are not however, sufficient opportunities for pupils to visit a range of centres of worship or to listen to a variety of visitors talk about their religions.
80. The co-ordinator has managed the subject well through a difficult period and is now focused on a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school. There is a good overview of provision and monitoring of pupils' work informs a view about standards achieved. However, there are few planned writing opportunities for the use of skills from subject areas such as literacy. Nor has the developing management structure of the school yet given the co-ordinator sufficient responsibility for leading the subject and taking it forward in pursuit of still better standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

81. Only a few lessons were seen so no overall judgment about provision can be made. However, the quality of work on display, and in portfolios seen was of high quality. It indicates that standards are at least above average and that pupils achieve well as their skills develop over their time at school. There has been good progress made since the previous inspection when standards were average. For example, from an early age in Year 2 pupils work effectively in the style of the abstract artist such as Paul Klee carefully copying the design and colour in his pictures. In Year 2, they experiment with materials making collages and print patterns using string templates. In Year 5, they follow up a school visit to the Bayeux tapestry with work in this style, effectively supporting history work. In Year 3, pupils make Ancient Greek masks with a similar result.
82. By Year 6 pupils are painting Clarice Cliff designs and pictures in the style of David Hockney carefully reproducing the techniques and colours used, work is of good quality. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved a good standard of work. For example, the teacher encouraged pupils to be creative as they produced an abstract collage using different materials in one very good Year 1 lesson. Pupils show dexterity and imagination in this lesson. One pupil says, 'I am going to make a spiral' as he works with a pipe cleaner as part of his collage. In another very good lesson in Year 5 pupils illustrated stories or events with the intention of showing the fundamentals of the event or events. Groups of pupils were working effectively on multi-media large scale illustrations of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', another group on the Mary Rose, a good link with their history work. In both lessons pupils were attentive and enthusiastic showing great interest in their work and showing well developed creative skills. In lessons, all pupils achieve well regardless of background often very well and they are developing their skills effectively. The subject is enthusiastically led and managed by the subject co-ordinator who is keen to develop the subject further; although she has only been in post since September so as yet has not had much impact.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. There is insufficient evidence of teaching and learning to make a judgement about provision. Analysis of pupils' work, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and analysis of schemes of work and teachers' planning supports the judgement that there has been good improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection. The scheme of work provides a good range of experience for the pupils and ensures a structured development of skills. Samples of pupils' work show above average standards at both key stages with good quality products made from an attractive range of materials. For example, stitching and decoration of slippers by Year 6 pupils were neat and precise. Pupils' planning shows a clear development of the design, make and evaluate process. The imaginative designs illustrate clear expression of pupils' own ideas and the opportunity to choose from a wide range of materials for their models.

MUSIC

84. Insufficient evidence was obtained to make a secure judgement about the overall provision of music. Two lessons in Year 2 were observed. These were both concerned with composition and the understanding of dynamics and tempo. In both lessons teaching was of a good standard, pupils were enthusiastic and performed at the level expected for their age. The only singing heard was during the acts of worship and the quality of this varied. The provision of instrumental tuition from visiting teachers is of a high standard. Extra-curricular clubs such as recorders and choir enhance the music provision and pupils talk with enthusiasm about the

concerts they have given to parents. Discussions with the co-ordinator indicate that improvements have been made since the previous inspection through staff training and the use of a published scheme to ensure continuity and progression. Resources for the teaching and learning of music are very good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **very good overall** and extra-curricular provision in sport is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils regardless of background achieve well across the school.
- Standards are above average and very high quality work takes place in extra-curricular sporting activities such as gymnastics and team games.
- High standards and innovation are driven by an enthusiastic experienced and knowledgeable subject co-ordinator.

Commentary

85. Physical education is a high profile subject in this school and most pupils achieve well. Many achieve very high standards joining specialist clubs and taking part in county gymnastics, for example. There are good opportunities for gifted or talented athletes or gymnasts to reach their full potential through the extensive extra-curricular provision as well as through the well taught lessons. In the lessons seen teaching ranged from good to very good and was very good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they are very well supported by the co-ordinator who is an enthusiast for physical education. There is a good range of expertise available in this subject and the headteacher is also a specialist and takes games and gymnastics classes both during lessons and after school. Pupils take part in a full range of activities including swimming and the school prides itself on the quality of physical education.
86. In lessons pupils achieve consistently well. In one good Year 1 lesson pupils warmed up vigorously and pupils expressed their feelings through dance enjoying the movement. They effectively explored emotions such as happiness and sadness making a good contribution to their personal development. The teacher constantly evaluated pupils' performance giving them opportunities to improve and reinforce their movements both through good demonstration and coaching. In a good Year 3 lesson the teacher kept pupils very active on a cold day by vigorous warm up. They learned how to move and stop quickly, an important skill in netball, and were encouraged to position themselves suitably to throw and catch a ball effectively. During this lesson most pupils were able to throw and catch accurately. In a very good dance lesson in Year 3 pupils warmed up to some well known pop music and then embarked on moving to expressive 'Garba' music an Asian folk dance. Some very good demonstration was used especially by some Asian girls who appeared familiar with the music. In a very good extra-curricular club, pupils of various ages up to Year 6 showed highly developed gymnastic skills and their movements were supple and very well controlled.
87. Physical education plays an important part in developing pupils listening skills, particularly in listening to instructions during lessons and speaking out during discussions about activities. Parents are very pleased about the range of physical education activities available to their children and all clubs are very well attended.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. Insufficient lessons were seen on these specific aspects of the curriculum, so no overall judgement can be made about provision or standards. The school is however aware of their importance and suitably planned arrangements are made. For example, there are good

opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and reflect on their own circumstances during lessons and assemblies. In the often very good dance lessons pupils are encouraged to express their emotions and role-play to explore unfamiliar ones. The school's strong ethos encourages pupils to be reflective and caring of others. They are very polite and courteous in and around the school and the school is an harmonious and inclusive organisation. The good personal development programme covers the dangers of drugs and has a sensitive approach to sex education. The school strongly recognises the importance of the individual and his or her place in the school. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in assemblies. The very strong relationships between all adults and pupils help pupils to develop a strong sense of self-esteem. They are given good opportunities to take responsibility both in class and around the school. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is keen to promote this aspect of the curriculum.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).

