

INSPECTION REPORT

SUTTON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ellesmere Port

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111103

Headteacher: Mr P D Jenkins

Lead inspector: Mr D S Roberts

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 March 2004

Inspection number: 258068

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	296
School address:	Armthorpe Drive Little Sutton Ellesmere Port
Postcode:	CH66 4NW
Telephone number:	0151 339 4604
Fax number:	0151 348 1401
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Jones
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sutton Green Primary is a larger than average sized school. It provides full-time education for 296 pupils. It is a popular school, which draws many of its pupils from outside the traditional catchment area. At present over 40% of them come from areas classed as socially deprived. The proportion entitled to free school meals is below the national average, but there are strong indications that many families fail to claim their entitlement. Just over two per cent of pupils are from families belonging to ethnic minority groups, none of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Although the intake represents a wide range of ability, overall attainment levels on entry to Reception classes are similar to those found nationally.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1743	D S Roberts	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language
19669	F Kennedy	Lay inspector	
14459	G Owen	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
17767	S Power	Team inspector	Science Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school, which provides very good value for money. It provides high quality education, taking care of its pupils very effectively, and promoting very successfully their academic and all-round development. Generally very effective teaching enables most pupils to achieve very well, in relation to their capabilities, particularly in the key areas of learning. The school works hard and very successfully to ensure that all pupils are included and involved in all aspects of the curriculum. It provides a welcoming and supportive community, and is highly regarded by parents and the local community.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children are given a very good start to their education in Reception classes.
- Pupils acquire a very good grasp of key skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The quality of teaching is generally very good, particularly in the key areas of learning.
- The school provides a very good curriculum within a rich and stimulating learning environment.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour is of a high standard.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good.
- The performance of older boys in national tests is significantly below that of girls.

The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues identified by the previous inspection. National Curriculum test results for the last four years indicate a rate of improvement which is better than that found nationally for seven year olds, and similar to the national picture for 11 year olds.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils throughout the school generally achieve very well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. Children at the Foundation Stage, in Reception classes, achieve the appropriate learning goals in all of the areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1, and a significant number achieve higher standards. By the age of seven and 11, pupils achieve standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing, which are well above average for their age. Standards in mathematics are well above average for pupils' age by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6, and standards in science are above average by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11. This is broadly similar to the most recent National Curriculum test results for English and science. In mathematics, inspection evidence indicates a better picture than that indicated by national tests. Pupils, at all levels of ability, achieve very well in ICT, where standards by the end of Year 2 are above average for age and pupils show a high level of competence by the end of Year 6. In all other subjects, pupils' achievement is at least good and often very good particularly in history, art and design, design and technology and music, where standards are above those expected for pupils' age. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve highly, and make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

Pupils show very good attitudes to learning. They are very enthusiastic, and keen to work hard and involve themselves in the rich variety of learning opportunities on offer. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally promoted very successfully, standards of behaviour are high, and the pupils' attendance is good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **very good**. The school provides a rich and varied curriculum, and makes very good provision for extra curricular activities. High quality provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, and the school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equality of access and opportunity to all aspects of provision. Overall, the teaching is **very effective**. High quality teaching at the Foundation Stage, in Reception Classes, gives children a very good start to their education and promotes very good learning and achievement in all areas of the curriculum. In other year groups, the teaching is generally very effective, particularly in the key areas of learning, providing pupils with a very good grasp of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Throughout the school, teaching assistants co-operate very effectively with class teachers, and make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Their work in supporting pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective in promoting high achievement by the pupils. The highly effective use of assessment to help pupils to improve is a very strong feature in the teaching, which contributes significantly to the pupils' very good achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. Very good leadership is provided by the headteacher, who sets the tone for this school. He demonstrates clear educational vision and a strong sense of purpose. He is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher and senior management team, who also provide very good leadership and management, and a very hard working staff. The highly committed governing body works very successfully with the headteacher to ensure that all statutory requirements are met fully. The knowledge and hard work of its members contribute greatly towards the high quality of education provided by the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have high regard for the school. They feel that the teaching is good, and their children are expected to work hard and make good progress. A small minority say that their children have experienced a degree of bullying at some stage. Parents who attended the meeting with inspectors emphasised that the school listens carefully to any concerns, and responds with appropriate urgency when such situations arise. Some parents would like more information about their children's progress. Pupils like school and appreciate the help that their teachers give them to make progress. A significant number feel that the behaviour of a small minority of children is not always as good as it should be.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the achievement of older boys, in relation to that of girls, in English, mathematics and science, so that this is reflected in the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6.

(Note: The school has identified this issue as a priority for improvement in its current school development plan.)

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

During their time in the school, most pupils achieve **very good standards** in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. Children at the Foundation Stage, in Reception classes, achieve very well in the various areas of learning. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment, generally achieve very well in acquiring the key skills of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision helps children in the two Reception classes to settle quickly and make rapid progress.
- By the end of Years 2 and 6, very effective teaching helps pupils to achieve standards which are well above average for their age in all aspects of English.
- Good teaching in science and mathematics enables pupils to achieve above average standards for their age.
- In ICT, a well-planned programme of work enables pupils throughout the school to achieve very well in relation to their capabilities.
- High quality provision contributes towards high standards in creative areas of learning.
- Good provision enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.
- The attainment of older boys in national tests is significantly below that of girls.

Commentary

- 1 Teachers and support staff in the two Reception classes co-operate very effectively to make high quality provision for the children. Most children achieve, and a significant number exceed, the early learning goals in all of the areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1. Their personal, social and emotional development is promoted very effectively, helping them to settle quickly and grow in confidence. This helps them to make particularly good progress in the areas of learning concerned with communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical development.
- 2 Throughout the school, pupils achieve very good standards in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are well above average for pupils' age. This is consistent with the most recent National Curriculum test results, which showed the pupils' performance in English to be well above the national average and, more significantly, well above that of pupils in similar schools. Very effective teaching, high quality support by teaching assistants and the very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy are important factors in achieving high standards in English. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant progress in improving handwriting standards for older pupils, which are now of a good standard.
- 3 In mathematics, the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and good teaching contribute to pupils' good and, at times, very good achievement in mathematics. Standards are well above average by the time pupils are seven and above average by the end of Year 6. Inspection findings indicate a better picture than the recent National Curriculum test results. The improvement in performance is due partly to differences in the ability levels of various year groups and, more significantly, to the positive effect of the arrangements for setting pupils according to ability for mathematics lessons. In science, good teaching enables pupils to achieve well in relation to their capabilities and earlier achievement. Standards are above average by the time pupils are seven and 11, and consistent with the most recent National Curriculum test results.

- 4 Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment achieve very well in relation to their capabilities in ICT. Standards are above average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, and pupils reaching the end of Year 6 demonstrate high levels of competence. They benefit greatly from a well-planned programme of work. Most progress very well in all aspects of the subject, developing good skills in communication and handling information, and extending significantly their knowledge, understanding and skills in control technology.
- 5 Taken over four years, National Curriculum test results indicate a rate of improvement which is above the national trend at the end of Year 2, and similar to the trend found nationally at the end of Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained and in some areas, particularly at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), and in English throughout the school, made significant improvements in the standards achieved by pupils.
- 6 In all other subjects, pupils achieve at least good standards in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment, and standards are at least average for age. They achieve particularly well in art and design, design and technology and music where standards are clearly above those found nationally. In physical education, overall standards are satisfactory. Most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres unaided, and many achieve higher standards, before leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
- 7 Throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, in terms of gender, race and levels of attainment. This enables most pupils, including those who are particularly gifted, to achieve good and often very good standards in relation to their capabilities. Well planned support by teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve highly and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The school is currently working very hard to improve the achievement of older boys, whose performance in national tests is significantly below that of girls. Inspection evidence indicates that strategies to ensure that boys are interested and involved in all aspects of learning, and the increasingly effective use of ICT to support work in different subjects are having a positive effect on boys' achievement. The significant increase in the proportion of older boys classed as higher attainers in English and mathematics, provides early encouragement that these initiatives are proving successful.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (18.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (17.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 38 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	28.5 (26.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (27.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.5 (30.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are **very good**. They benefit from the very good provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- The pupils enjoy school.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Pupils benefit from the very good provision that is made for promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.

Commentary

- 8 The pupils behave very well in lessons, in assembly, in the playground and when moving around the school. There were no exclusions during the last academic year.
- 9 Children in the Reception classes achieve well in the personal, social and emotional areas of learning. A strong feature in the teaching is the way the children are encouraged to exercise an increasing degree of choice in selecting activities, which helps them to gain independence in their learning. All the Reception staff use praise and encouragement very effectively to promote positive behaviour and to help the children develop self confidence. The children approach new experiences with eagerness.
- 10 In Years 1- 6, teachers motivate the pupils to work hard. The pupils enjoy their lessons. They listen attentively, participate enthusiastically in class discussion and take a pride in the presentation of their written work. For example, in a Year 5/6 music lesson, the pupils responded with sensitivity to words and music depicting an air raid during World War II. They were able to empathise with the feelings of those whose relatives did not return from the war.
- 11 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through religious education lessons and assemblies, the pupils study Christianity and learn about other faiths and cultures. The contributions of the many visitors who come into school to work with the pupils in lessons and assemblies supports their cultural development significantly. Pupils respond with awe and wonder to many aspects of their learning, particularly the wonders of modern technology, great works of art and the world of nature.
- 12 The school's clear moral code and the very good relationships that exist throughout the school provide a strong framework for the pupils' moral development. The pupils know the difference between right and wrong and have very good role models in their teachers, who provide consistently high quality exemplification of moral and social behaviour. A very meaningful assembly, led by the local vicar, provided the pupils with a strong social message about the right way to behave, inside school and in the wider community. Educational visits and a very good range of extra-curricular activities make a very positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development.
- 13 The pupils are keen to take responsibility inside school. A school council was set up in 2003 and has already influenced a number of school improvements. One of the duties of the councillors is to help with the supervision of pupils in the corridors, for example when going back to class after assembly. Year 6 pupils carry out a wide range of duties which assist the smooth running of school routines and which contribute to the strong sense of community which exists inside the school. For example, they represent the Reception children on the school council, and help the Year 2 pupils with their reading. The pupils reach out to the wider community through fund raising for local, national and international charities.

- 14 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The pupils' record of attendance is consistently good, and above the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national median. Punctuality throughout the school is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
252
1
1
4

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **very good**. The school provides a high quality curriculum for its pupils and works very effectively to promote their academic and all-round development.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are generally of **very good quality**, and highly effective arrangements are in place for assessing pupils' progress. This represents continuing improvements since the last inspection, which found some weaknesses in assessment procedures. The quality of teaching is particularly high at the Foundation Stage, giving children in Reception classes a very good start to their education. It is usually very effective in English and ICT, throughout the school, and in giving pupils a good grasp of mathematics. This means that pupils generally achieve very well in the key areas of learning. Throughout the curriculum, teachers achieve a good balance between whole class, group and individual work. This enables pupils to make good progress in learning how to co-operate and work collaboratively, as well as working independently.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality teaching at the Foundation Stage, in Reception classes.
- Teaching is very effective in promoting the key skills of learning.
- Teaching of creative arts is particularly good.
- Teaching assistants work very effectively.
- Very good assessment procedures are in place.
- Good use is made of homework.
- Teachers create rich and stimulating classroom environments.

- Arrangements to set pupils according to ability for lessons in English and mathematics lessons are having an increasingly positive effect on the performance of boys.

Commentary

- 15 High quality teaching in Reception classes provides children with a very good start to their formal education. It promotes considerable progress in their personal, social and emotional development, helping them to develop confidence and to make significant progress in all of the areas of learning.
- 16 Throughout the school, teaching is particularly effective in developing the key skills of learning in English, mathematics and ICT. Pupils generally achieve very well in these areas, giving them important skills to assist their learning throughout the curriculum. Teaching is usually of at least good quality in most subjects, and is highly successful in promoting significant progress by the pupils in creative areas of learning such as art and design, design and technology, music and drama. The high quality provision made by teachers and support staff in these areas of learning made a considerable contribution towards achieving the prestigious Artsmark Gold award in 2003.
- 17 In English and mathematics, the very good use made of guidance provided by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy helps teachers to challenge pupils appropriately. The arrangements for setting pupils according to ability enable teachers and support staff to focus more precisely on the needs of particular groups of pupils. The arrangements are proving increasingly effective in improving the standards achieved by older boys, although this has yet to be reflected in National Curriculum test results, which indicate that older boys perform significantly less well than girls. The good use made of ICT as a tool to support learning in most subjects is a strong feature in the teaching, and is also proving to be particularly effective in motivating boys.
- 18 The very effective use of assessment information is a strong feature in the teaching. In English and mathematics, this information is used to set individual targets for improvements for pupils throughout the school. These targets are shared with pupils and their parents. The targets give pupils a better understanding of their own learning, and enable teachers to measure the pupils' progress with greater accuracy.
- 19 Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work together very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. The highly effective support provided by teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs, helps them to make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Very good classroom management contributes greatly towards high standards of behaviour and the purposeful atmosphere which exists in the school. The staff work hard and very effectively to create stimulating classroom environments. The very good partnership with parents contributes towards the effective use of work completed at home to support pupils' learning.
- 20 Teachers are generally very successful in making all pupils feel valued, taking account of their needs in terms of gender, race, prior attainment and background. This approach increases pupils' confidence and helps them to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	20 (51%)	14 (36%)	5 (13%)	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

The school provides a **very good** curriculum within a rich and stimulating learning environment. A wide range of learning opportunities cater for the needs of all pupils. Strong support is provided for learning outside the classroom, and many activities are organised to enrich and enhance pupils' learning. Resources and the accommodation are generally of good quality, and teachers and support staff are appropriately qualified and suitably matched to the needs of pupils at different stages of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision is made for children at the Foundation Stage in Reception classes.
- The school provides a fully inclusive curriculum, placing strong emphasis on equality of opportunity and promoting high achievement.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, which helps them to make very good progress.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development.
- High quality provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Very good opportunities are created for pupils' participation in extra curricular activities, including sport.

Commentary

- 21 The curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage of their learning is very well planned, and provides children with a very good start to their education. Strong emphasis is placed on supporting the children's personal, social and emotional development, helping them to settle quickly and work with increasing confidence. The children's development is promoted very successfully in all six nationally agreed areas of learning, and particularly strong emphasis is placed on helping them to acquire confidence and good social skills and to achieve an early grasp of language and mathematical skills.
- 22 Throughout the school, the curriculum is well planned and structured, which represents continuing improvement since the last inspection. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting literacy and numeracy skills, and the curriculum for these two subjects is based securely on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The confident and effective use of national guidance contributes significantly towards the school's success in meeting the needs of all pupils and the very good progress which pupils make. Clear and helpful policies for subjects and aspects of the curriculum ensure that statutory requirements are met. Each subject is given an appropriate amount of time and teachers and support staff work together very effectively to ensure that all pupils are involved in all aspects of the work.
- 23 The highly inclusive nature of curricular organisation results in very good provision for all pupils, taking care to meet their particular requirements in terms of gender, race and capabilities. The school is currently working hard to ensure that curricular provision enables boys to achieve standards which are closer to those achieved by girls. Much work has been completed to improve the range of books which appeal to boys, and to ensure that work in English and mathematics makes effective use of ICT to support learning.
- 24 There is a genuine commitment to promote equality of access for all pupils. This is well illustrated by the involvement of a member of the behavioural management team who is currently providing support for several pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Key staff develop this further by providing clearly focused support for individual pupils, enabling them to take a greater part in lessons and helping them to gain the maximum benefit from their studies.

- 25 Very good curricular provision contributes considerably towards the highly successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils often respond with awe and wonder to aspects of their learning in science, such as the examination of various objects, using the digital microscope linked to the computer. Co-operative and collaborative work in subjects such as science, ICT and art and design, promotes good social skills. The pupils' cultural and multi-cultural awareness is promoted very effectively as part of work in English, geography, history, art and design and design and technology.
- 26 The curriculum provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are supported very effectively in lessons and in groups withdrawn from lessons. Provision and teaching during specific initiatives such as Springboard Mathematics and Additional Literacy are of high quality, and help pupils to achieve their targets in literacy and numeracy. Teachers and support staff make very good provision for pupils to work towards their targets in lessons, and match tasks well to the pupils' learning needs. The pupils' individual education plans are of good quality and contain specific and achievable targets that are reviewed regularly in order to evaluate pupils' progress.
- 27 Very strong support for learning outside the classroom extends and enriches curricular provision. There is a very good range of opportunities for pupils to be involved in extra-curricular activities. They compete regularly in local leagues and competitions against other schools. The school also provides instrumental tuition, choir and an art club. Visitors to the school, and visits to places of educational interest, further enrich pupils' learning. The accommodation is of good quality, and has been improved significantly since the last inspection. Learning resources are generally good and are well organised, helping teachers and support staff to meet pupils' needs efficiently and effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides its pupils with a very high level of care and gives them very good support, advice and guidance. The school is very inclusive. It works hard and successfully to ensure that all pupils are involved in all aspects of school life. Very good arrangements are in place for monitoring the pupils' academic progress and their personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides its pupils with a safe and healthy learning environment
- Pupils are provided with very good support, advice and guidance
- The school makes very good arrangements for seeking and acting upon pupils' views

Commentary

- 28 The school provides a very good level of care for its pupils. Accidents to pupils are recorded appropriately, and pupils who are unwell are cared for sensitively until their parents can collect them. Child protection procedures are good, adhering to guidelines provided by the local education authority.
- 29 Very good induction procedures help the youngest children to settle quickly into the Reception classes and to adjust to school routines. The school nurse meets with the Reception children early in the year, to talk to them about basic hygiene. This helps them to get to know the nurse before they are called for their school entry assessments. The nurse gives very strong support to the work of the school and is well known to the pupils and their families. A 'Transition' day is planned for the Year 6 pupils, to help prepare them for transfer to secondary school. The pupils will spend a whole day working with the nurse and a team of health professionals, covering topics such as risk taking behaviour, puberty, healthy eating, health related exercise, feelings and self esteem. This programme typifies the very good arrangements the school makes for preparing the pupils for the next stage of their education.

- 30 Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils enjoy school. All of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are of the opinion that their children like school. The parents feel their children are treated fairly and expected to work hard. Pupils treat one another with fairness and respect. They are taught to be kind and caring towards one another, to value friendship and to understand the qualities needed to be a good friend.
- 31 The whole school behaviour policy is very effective in achieving a high standard of behaviour throughout the school. Pupils know the school rules, which are displayed prominently in all the classrooms. Strong emphasis is placed on praising and rewarding positive attitudes, hard work and good behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants provide perceptive and sensitive support for the very small minority of pupils who have difficulty in following the accepted code of conduct. The school involves parents at an early stage if an individual's attitudes or behaviour are giving cause for concern. Where necessary, the co-ordinator for special educational needs draws up an individual behaviour plan, in consultation with parents, and in accordance with the special educational needs Code of Practice. The school receives very good support from the local education authority's behavioural support team, working with individual pupils and helping staff develop effective strategies for managing difficult behaviour.
- 32 The school council is well established and organised and contributes toward the general level of care provided for the pupils by identifying areas for improvement. All year groups are represented on the council, which has influenced a number of school initiatives. School councillors are currently co-ordinating the pupils' views and ideas about the proposed plans for the development of the school's outdoor environment. The councillors wear distinctive badges, so that they are easily recognisable, so that other pupils can approach them with ideas or concerns. Several members of staff are designated 'listeners', with special responsibility for supporting pupils who are unhappy or anxious for any reason. The pupils know that they can go direct to the headteacher if they have any problems. During the inspection, the parents voiced strong appreciation for this aspect of provision.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a very good partnership with parents. The school has good links with the community and works in close partnership with other local schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school keeps parents very well informed about the life and work of the school and about their children's standards and progress.
- The school involves parents by seeking and acting upon their views.
- The school works in close partnership with other local schools.
- The school has established good links with local churches and the local community.

Commentary

- 33 The quality of the information provided for parents is very good. The governing body's annual report gives parents an interesting overview of the life and work of the school, together with details of training undertaken by staff, pupils' attendance and the results of national tests. The aims of the school are set out clearly in the prospectus, which also includes a wide range of information about the curriculum, school organisation and the behaviour policy. Parents are kept fully informed as to the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through the home-school agreement, which explains how the school and the family can work together to create a happy, caring environment in which all the pupils can achieve their full potential.
- 34 Formal parents' evenings are held twice a year, when pupils and their parents can discuss, with the class teacher, progress made and standards achieved. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets for English and mathematics, and these are reviewed on parents' evenings. New targets are set and parents are advised as to how they might support their children's learning. Pupils' annual written reports provide detailed information about pupils' progress in

all areas of the curriculum, although there is scope for greater consistency in the emphasis placed on what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. The consultation exercise, prior to the inspection, revealed that the vast majority of the parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children. They value, for example, the school's quick and effective response when any incidents of bullying are reported.

- 35 Parents are made very welcome in the school. During the inspection, the parents expressed their appreciation for the school's open door policy, and for the way in which the headteacher and the staff listen to parents and pupils. Parents also appreciate the caring environment which the school has created in which all the adults in the school community work together as a cohesive team.
- 36 Parents make a very good contribution to their children's education through their support for the home-school reading scheme and for homework in general. Parents of pupils on the register of special educational needs are closely involved in their children's learning. They are given a copy of their child's individual education plan and can discuss this with the special educational needs co-ordinator on parents' evenings. A large number of parents and grandparents give valuable support in class and help with swimming lessons, extra curricular activities and educational visits. The parents hold a weekly 'Parents and Tots' session in the school hall, which is valued by prospective parents and the local community. Parents' views are canvassed on a regular basis, giving the school a good insight into what pleases parents most and what they would like to see improved.
- 37 The Parent Teacher Association is active in arranging social and fund raising events for the pupils and their families. During the inspection, members spoke very highly of the way in which the school staff support and value their efforts. Funds raised by the association have been spent wisely and have greatly enhanced teaching and learning opportunities for the pupils.
- 38 The school works in close co-operation with other local schools and has established good links with local churches and the community. Church leaders come into school regularly to work with the pupils and to lead assemblies. Numerous other visitors share their expertise, for example in art, music and dance. Visits to places of interest in the locality provide valuable first hand learning experiences for the pupils. Overall, links with the community make a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **very good**, and similar to that found at the last inspection. Very effective leadership is provided by the headteacher, who sets the tone for this school. The deputy headteacher and senior management team work very effectively to ensure that all aspects of provision operate successfully. The highly effective governing body works closely with the headteacher to provide clear vision and appropriate educational direction for the school. Its members work hard and very effectively to ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Their knowledge and hard work contribute greatly to the high quality of education provided by the school. They are highly successful in providing an equitable and inclusive school where every child matters.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Purposeful leadership by the headteacher and other key staff contributes significantly to the high quality of education.
- There are very effective arrangements for communication with parents.
- Strong emphasis is placed on the professional development of staff at all levels.
- The highly committed and knowledgeable governing body make a significant contribution to the leadership of the school.
- Highly effective strategic planning results in good resourcing and very effective use of staff.

- The very effective arrangements for setting targets, and for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress towards them, contribute positively towards high achievement.
- Strategies to improve the achievement of boys are beginning to close the gender gap in performance.

Commentary

- 39 The purposeful leadership provided by the headteacher is an important factor in the high quality of education provided by the school. The headteacher and senior management team co-operate very effectively with the governing body to provide clear vision for the future development of the school. This is reflected in the comprehensive school development plan and very effective strategic planning. Financial resources are well-managed, drawing appropriately on the support of the highly efficient school administration.
- 40 Good resourcing makes an important contribution to the high quality of provision throughout the curriculum. Strong emphasis is placed on improving the skills of all staff. Since the last inspection, for example, closer attention has been given to the training of teaching assistants. The value of such initiatives is reflected in the improved support provided for pupils and their increasing progress.
- 41 The very good quality assessment arrangements, and highly effective procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress, help to ensure that pupils at different levels of attainment are challenged and extended appropriately as they move through the school. An example of this is provided by the current focus on the attainment levels of boys, which is significantly below that of girls in national test results. New strategies such as the arrangements to set pupils according to ability for English and mathematics, and the increasing use of ICT to support learning, are having a positive effect on boys' performance.
- 42 Good procedures are in place to enable co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Lessons are observed at regular intervals. Criteria for observation are shared with teachers in advance and feedback is provided. The information from lesson observation contributes towards agreed targets for improvements as part of performance management.
- 43 Very effective communication procedures help to create a positive and supportive ethos where high achievement by pupils is strongly emphasised. Teaching and support staff feel involved and valued, and good communication with the home enables parents to contribute effectively to their children's learning and achievement.
- 44 The highly committed governing body makes an important contribution to the success of the school. Governors are entirely successful in meeting all statutory requirements. They ensure that the school provides equality of opportunities for all pupils, and that their needs are met fully taking account of varying requirements in terms of gender, race and ability. Members show a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a good understanding of the school's current priorities as set out in the school development plan. Governing body committees and other activities are well organised. Initiatives take full account of the principles of best value, and members regularly take advantage of training to update their knowledge and skills.
- 45 The school's commitment to high quality provision is reflected in the richness of the learning environment inside the school and the on-going commitment to continue improving outside areas and playgrounds. All areas of the school are well maintained by a very efficient caretaker and cleaning staff.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	661,623
Total expenditure	632,445
Expenditure per pupil	2,027

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	31,845
Balance carried forward to the next	29,178

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision at the Foundation Stage, in Reception classes, is **very good**.

Children enter school with average skills and, as a result of very good teaching make rapid progress and achieve very well in all areas of the curriculum. The great majority are on course to reach or exceed the learning goals in all areas of learning. Children are taught in two parallel Reception classes. The two teachers and the classroom assistants work very closely together as a team to ensure that all children experience a full and rich learning programme that is very closely matched to their needs and interests. Classroom assistants have high levels of expertise and make a significant contribution to the very good achievement of all ability groups, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Teachers and other adults have a very good understanding of how young children learn and use strategies that are very successful in engaging the interests of all groups of children. A strong feature of teaching is the very good balance that exists between learning that is teacher directed and activities initiated by the children in imaginative play contexts. Both boys and girls, thrive in an environment that caters imaginatively for their needs and interests. In all areas of learning, very thorough assessment procedures are used effectively to match the work closely to the needs of individual children, enabling them to achieve very well. Management and leadership are very good overall, contributing significantly towards the high quality of provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children behave very well and know what is expected of them.
- Adults provide excellent role models in promoting very good relationships.
- Children quickly become independent, confident and resourceful.

Commentary

46 The very good quality of teaching in this area is highly effective in promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development, enabling them to achieve highly. Most achieve and a significant number exceed the early learning goals by the time children enter Year 1. Personal, social and emotional development is an implicit part of provision and is developed carefully in all activities throughout each day. Children's behaviour is exceptionally good for their age and is a very significant factor in their very good achievement in this area. They know what is expected of them and need very minimal guidance in maintaining an orderly working atmosphere. They behaved impeccably when observing live ducks at close quarters, and were very gentle when they were allowed to touch the feathers. The very well organised activities provide many opportunities for children to become independent and resourceful learners. Teachers and other adults provide excellent role models, treating children with courtesy and respect to create a harmonious and positive learning environment. As a consequence, children feel valued and are keen to please. Learning quickly becomes an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for the children and this helps them to achieve very well in developing social skills, confidence and independence.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are helped to become confident and articulate in speaking and listening.
- Reading and writing are taught very effectively.
- Literacy sessions are very effective in promoting interest in books and written language.

Commentary

47 Teaching and learning are very good, resulting in high levels of achievement by children in relation to their capabilities. Most achieve, and many exceed, the early learning goals by the time children enter Year 1. Lessons are interesting and stimulating, and provide children with very good opportunities to answer questions, express opinions, give explanations and communicate ideas. As a result, their spoken language skills develop rapidly and their achievement is very good in this area of learning. The excellent relationships that exist between adults and children are significant in building the confidence and self esteem necessary for developing spoken communication. Children achieve very well in developing their early reading skills. Texts are carefully chosen to appeal to both sexes and all children show huge enjoyment in handling and using books. The high quality teaching of phonic skills in literacy sessions enables children to learn letter sounds and read familiar words at a very good rate. Achievement in writing and spelling is very good. Children develop very positive attitudes towards writing due to high expectations and very good teaching in this area. They are highly motivated to write captions, lists, messages and simple stories with great confidence. The very good quality classroom support is effective in helping all children, including those with special educational needs, to use phonetic spelling strategies and form letters correctly and they achieve very well as a result.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of high quality and places very good emphasis on practical learning.
- Mathematical skills are put to good use in imaginative contexts across many areas of learning.

Commentary

48 Highly skilled teaching enables children to achieve very well in this area. Most achieve, and a significant minority exceed, the early learning goals before entering Year 1. Every opportunity is taken to strengthen children's number recognition, counting skills and mathematical language. Learning is set in imaginative contexts that are enjoyable and interesting. For example, positional language is taught very effectively in games such as hunting for 'stars' up, behind and in front of trees. Matching and counting pairs of shoes helps children to understand the concept of counting in twos. As a result, children recognise, order and write numbers confidently, count objects accurately to ten and beyond and are beginning to understand the concepts of adding and taking away. Number songs and rhymes add greatly to learning and help to develop confidence in counting and using numbers. Many children are already able to record simple addition sums using conventional signs and understand the concept of more and less. Children apply their mathematical skills very well in play contexts, such as in counting and organising objects in the Shoe Shop and the Garden Centre. All children achieve well in developing their mathematical understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Rich and stimulating opportunities are provided for children to learn about the world around them.

- Children use computers and other equipment with great confidence.

Commentary

49 Teaching and learning are very good and help children to achieve very well in developing their scientific, geographical, historical and technological awareness, in rich and stimulating contexts. Most of the children achieve, and many exceed the early learning goals before entering Year 1. First hand experiences, such as visits to a garden centre and a car wash, provide relevant and exciting learning experiences. The visit to the garden centre was followed by the creation of a similar centre in the imaginative play area of the classroom, and children planted and cared for their own plants. As a result, they learned very quickly about plant growth and the names and functions of different plant parts such as roots and leaves. The presence in school of the teacher's pet ducks gave children excellent opportunities to observe the features of these creatures at close quarters. Skilful teaching and questioning helped them to notice details such as webbed feet and to understand behaviour such as preening and communication. They showed great care and concern for the ducks and made great strides in learning about living creatures and their needs. Children's achievement in technological understanding is very good. They operate computers with great confidence and learn very effectively about the potential of digital photography by taking photographs of their own 'sculptures' in a creative activity.

Physical development

Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetable arrangements, no physical development lessons were observed. Therefore no judgement can be made about teaching or overall provision in this area of learning. Children's skills in handling pencils, paintbrushes and scissors are developed appropriately through a wide range of suitable activities. Teachers' planning for physical development lessons in the hall, makes good provision for developing children's large motor skills, by giving access to a large space with climbing and balancing apparatus. The teaching staff work hard to overcome the limitations of the rather small outside play area. The school is aware of these restrictions and is planning to make appropriate improvements in this area of learning.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities are provided for children to be imaginative and creative.

Commentary

50 Teaching and learning are very good, promoting very good achievement by children in relation to their capabilities. Most achieve, and many exceed the early learning goals before entering Year 1. The rich and stimulating learning environment provides very good opportunities for children to develop their imagination and creativity. They are able to explore what it is like to work in a garden centre or a shoe shop through imaginative play in well-planned play areas and with small toys such as the farm and doll's house. During the inspection, children achieved good levels of artistic expression in creating plant 'sculptures' made from natural objects found in the school grounds. Sensitive pencil drawings of real ducks showed how closely children had observed their subject and reflected the enthusiasm and expertise of the teaching. Other creative work, in sketch books and on display in classrooms, indicates very good achievement in this area of learning. No music provision was observed but children enjoy performing songs and actions as part of learning in other areas of the curriculum.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) achieve very well in all aspects of English.
- By Year 6, standards in the subject are well above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently very good.
- Very effective work by teaching assistants contributes significantly to the rapid progress of pupils at all levels of attainment.
- Highly effective assessment procedures ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately in all aspects of the subject.
- Pupils extend their literacy skills very effectively during work in other subjects.
- Very good subject leadership and management contribute significantly to high quality provision in the subject.
- The school has built successfully on the good picture apparent at the time of the last inspection.
- Girls outperform boys by a significant margin in national tests.

Commentary

- 51 By the time pupils reach the age of seven, standards in English are high. This judgement is consistent with the most recent National Curriculum test results for those reaching the end of Year 2. They showed pupils' performance in reading and writing to be well above both the national average and the average for pupils in similar schools. Pupils benefit from a very well planned programme of work and high quality teaching, which enables those at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, to achieve highly in relation to their capabilities. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted very effectively, enabling them to achieve very good standards in relation to their age and capabilities. The very effective way in which pupils' phonic skills are developed, enabling them to identify accurately and use effectively the sounds which make up words, contributes considerably towards pupils' very good progress in reading and writing.
- 52 Pupils at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) also achieve high standards, which reflect the performance of those taking the most recent national tests. The results showed the pupils' performance to be well above the national average and above that of those in similar schools. Very effective teaching enables pupils to make consistently good progress in the key areas of the subject, and to demonstrate a high level of competence by the time they reach the end of Year 6.
- 53 In speaking and listening, older pupils show a capacity to vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listener, and to use their skills confidently to express views or ask questions. Pupils read accurately and fluently with good expression, and derive great enjoyment from their reading. They talk confidently about their preferences, in terms of authors and types of books, and explain enthusiastically why they like particular characters in the various stories they have read. Writing skills are very well developed. Most pupils have acquired a good handwriting style, their spelling is generally accurate, and punctuation is used appropriately and effectively. A substantial proportion of pupils work at levels which are clearly above those expected for their age. Their writing is particularly lively and imaginative, regularly making use of an adventurous vocabulary. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to write at length and for different purposes. They demonstrate well developed skills in adapting their writing to suit different requirements and audience.
- 54 High quality teaching and the very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy are important factors in the good progress made in the subject since the last inspection. Standards have continued to improve, particularly in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving above the levels expected for their age. In addition, careful and successful

attention has been given to improving standards of handwriting in classes for older pupils, which was a weakness in the last inspection.

- 55 Throughout the school, class teachers and highly effective teaching assistants plan and co-operate successfully to meet the particular needs of individuals and groups of pupils. They are highly successful in ensuring that all pupils are included and involved appropriately in all aspects of the subject. Very good provision is made for those with special educational needs, who make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The success of the increasing emphasis placed on helping gifted and talented pupils to make progress is reflected in their good achievement and high motivation. Teachers and support staff are currently giving particularly close attention to improving the performance of older boys, which recent national test results showed to be significantly below that of the girls. The arrangements to set pupils according to ability for English lessons and increasing use of ICT to support learning in the subject, appear to be having a positive effect on the achievement of boys, although this issue will continue to be a priority for attention for some time.
- 56 Very good leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator contributes significantly towards the high quality provision made in English. Very good curricular planning and highly effective assessment procedures ensure that pupils, at all levels of attainment, are challenged appropriately.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 57 Strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' literacy skills during work in other subjects. Pupils extend their writing skills considerably during work in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education. The very effective use of ICT to support learning throughout the curriculum regularly contributes to a growing vocabulary and increasingly effective use of reading and writing skills to search for information and to record findings.

MATHEMATICS

The school makes **good** provision in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, pupils achieve good and often very good standards in relation to their capabilities.
- Generally good and often very good teaching promotes significant progress by pupils and positive attitudes towards mathematics.
- Regular monitoring of planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and the quality of teaching has a positive impact on standards.
- Rigorous analysis of test results helps teachers to track the progress of individual pupils.
- Since the last inspection, provision for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in everyday situations, has been improved significantly.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to increase their skills in handling data.

Commentary

- 58 Provision in the subject is characterised by generally good and often very good teaching, which draws extensively on the guidance provided by the National Numeracy Strategy. This enables pupils to achieve good and often very good standards in relation to their prior attainment.
- 59 Standards attained by pupils aged seven are well above the average for age. This represents continuing improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be above average. Inspection evidence shows standards at the end of Year 6 to be above those found nationally, which is the same as in the previous inspection. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and make good and often very good progress. Older pupils in particular

benefit considerably from arrangements to set pupils according to prior attainment for mathematics. This contributes significantly towards a better picture than that indicated by the most recent National Curriculum test results. Basic skills are taught very thoroughly, most pupils have good recall of number facts, and understand and use mathematical vocabulary appropriately. By the end of Year 6, many pupils show a high level of accuracy in computational work and a good ability to select and use appropriate strategies for solving problems. They achieve good standards in their work on shape and space, and generally use ICT effectively to support their learning.

- 60 Pupils requiring additional support make very good progress throughout the school. Class teachers are aware of their needs, and provide work that is well matched to their abilities. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' very good progress. The school is currently working closely to help boys achieve as well as girls in the subject, and has initiated several strategies to help them improve. Much care is taken to ensure that boys participate and contribute effectively during the class discussions which form part of the introductions to lessons. Teachers and support staff ensure that their questions draw boys into the discussions. Information and communication technology is used constructively to support learning, helping to capture the interest of boys, and increasing emphasis is placed on the use of practical work. These measures, together with the arrangement to set pupils according to ability for lessons, are having a positive impact on boys' achievement, and inspection evidence shows that the gap in the performance of pupils in terms of gender is significantly less than indicated by national test results.
- 61 The quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes very good. Lessons are characterised by lively introductions that capture pupils' interest and imagination. Most maintain a good pace of learning, and teachers ask appropriately challenging questions that extend pupils' learning. Work is carefully prepared and is well matched to the abilities of the pupils. Most elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are addressed very effectively, although some teachers do not allow enough time for pupils to check their learning during the closing plenary session. Very effective management of the pupils promotes very good standards of behaviour. The relationships between teachers and pupils are constructive and supportive. Pupils show very positive attitudes and are often engrossed in their learning and work hard on the tasks provided. Teachers generally achieve a good balance between explanation and creating time for pupils to engage in worthwhile learning activities.
- 62 Very good assessment procedures are in place, and each pupil's progress is carefully tracked and monitored, in order to identify areas for further improvements. The subject is managed well by the subject leader who scrutinises planning and observes colleagues teaching. The programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, but there is scope for increasing opportunities for pupils to collect and analyse data. The school has correctly recognised that, in order to improve further, opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in everyday situations need to be extended, and that pupils do not have enough opportunity to collect and represent information in different ways.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 63 Although there are some good examples of the development of pupils' mathematical skills through work in other subjects, this is not yet a consistent feature throughout the school. Ensuring that planning for all subjects identifies opportunities for extending mathematical skills would increase consistency in this area.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of pupils achieve standards that are above average in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in extending their scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Since the last inspection, more opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in investigative work.
- Teaching is good.
- The very good behaviour of pupils in practical lessons helps them to achieve well.
- In some lessons, there is scope for teachers' marking to put more emphasis on identifying ways in which pupils can improve.

Commentary

- 64 By the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, standards are above the national average. This positive picture is confirmed by the most recent National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6, which showed the pupils' performance to be above the national average with over 40 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. Throughout the school, pupils generally achieve good standards in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment and make particularly good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of science. The practical contexts for learning in many lessons are a strong feature in science. This helps pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to achieve well in developing their scientific understanding. The active learning opportunities are particularly effective in motivating boys to engage well in lessons.
- 65 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good command of the subject and high expectations for what their pupils can achieve. Very good provision is made to support pupils with special educational needs. Lessons are active and interesting with a good balance of independent practical exploration and teacher directed activity. The good behaviour and positive attitudes of pupils in practical activities are significant factors in their good achievement. In a good lesson in Years 5/6, pupils were well behaved and highly motivated to complete the tasks they were given and, as a result, they achieved well in learning about electrical circuits.
- 66 Since the last inspection, investigative skills are taught more frequently and the school places much more emphasis on learning through practical activity. However, in some lessons, more could be done to provide appropriately challenging tasks for the different of abilities and age groups, when planning for scientific enquiry. Pupils' work is usually marked conscientiously. It is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6 where helpful comments by teachers give pupils a very clear indication of how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. However, in some classes, marking does not provide sufficient information as to how improvement might be achieved.
- 67 Due to very recent staff changes the subject does not have a permanent coordinator, and this has caused a delay in working towards the targets identified in the action plan for science. The acting coordinator is working hard and effectively to ensure that provision is maintained, and the school is planning to appoint a permanent coordinator in the near future.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision enables pupils to achieve very well and attain high standards.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the guidance and very good support provided by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Resources have been improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Very effective subject leadership during recent years has contributed considerably to the very good provision.
- The use of ICT to support and enhance learning in other subjects is a strong feature throughout the school.

Commentary

- 68 Pupils' achievement in relation to their capabilities is very good. By Year 2, standards are above those expected for the pupils' age and standards are high by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. The school has built very effectively on the good picture apparent at the time of the last inspection by increasing the pupils' skills in all elements of the subject. Throughout the school, the curriculum for ICT provides pupils with a rich variety of learning opportunities. They benefit from well-planned activities and achieve very good standards in all aspects of the subject.
- 69 High quality teaching promotes very good progress by pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. The use of individual computer files for all pupils to store their work is a very good feature, contributing to continuity in learning, and developing a sense of responsibility in pupils. By Year 6, pupils make good use of an increasing range of resources to enhance their work. In science, for example, good use is made of the digital microscope to support investigative work. The pupils' ability to use ICT to present their work in ways which meets the requirements of particular purposes and audiences is a strong feature. They adjust the size, shape and colour of text confidently, move parts of the text about to improve quality and use illustrations and sound to enhance their presentations. They make good use of spreadsheets as part of their work in mathematics, with higher attainers using formulae appropriately to change variables. During the course of the year, pupils extend their understanding of control technology, entering a set of information accurately to program a screen image. Older pupils build effectively on the same principles to control an external device, such as traffic lights, connected to the computer. The pupils' confidence and competence in using the internet means that information to support learning in various subjects is accessed quickly so that the pace of lessons is rarely interrupted. Older pupils, in particular, contribute towards developing the school's own web-site. A significant proportion of them are able to adjust, refine and perfect their work very effectively, showing a good sense of audience.
- 70 Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to ensure that all aspects of ICT are accessible to all pupils, and good care is taken to check that boys and girls enjoy the same opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very carefully and make good progress. Opportunities are also created during formal and extra curricular activities to ensure that higher attainers, and those that are particularly gifted, are set tasks which challenge and extend them appropriately.
- 71 The hard work and very effective leadership and management provided by the subject co-ordinator is an important factor in the significant improvement in provision achieved since the last inspection. Teachers are provided with clear guidance, and benefit from regular training in new skills. The computer suite and good range of ICT learning resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, all help teachers to capture pupils' interest, challenge their thinking and extend their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 72 The very effective use of ICT to support pupils' learning in work across the curriculum is a strong feature in the school. Identifying appropriate opportunities for ICT to enhance learning is a systematic part of curriculum planning in most subjects. The fact that teachers are able to select from an increasing range of suitable resources and materials helps them to ensure that the ICT element is appropriately related to the main focus of lessons and not a contrived exercise.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use good questioning skills to extend pupils' knowledge.
- Pupils are interested and show positive attitudes towards learning.

Commentary

- 73 Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities and, by the ages of seven and 11, standards in geography are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to that of their classmates. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. By the end of Year 2, pupils are aware that physical and human features determine the characteristics of different places. This was shown by the work focusing on the routes used by people for travelling, when pupils provided good logical arguments to support the positioning of features such as crossings, footbridges and traffic lights. In a successful Year 6 lesson, the pupils showed that they had a sound understanding of water's effect on the landscape and of how decisions concerning the environment affect people's quality of life. The subject is managed effectively and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

History

- 74 Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe history being taught, and it is therefore not possible to make an assessment of provision. Judgements are based on the examination of pupils' work completed previously, and discussions with staff and pupils. This evidence indicates that standards of work in the subject are above the average for pupils' age, by the time they are seven and 11, and that pupils' achievement in relation to their capabilities is good.
- 75 Pupils in Year 2 extend significantly their knowledge of historical events through their work on 'Change'. They are provided with good opportunities to explore and examine artefacts and to investigate at first hand. For example, the frameworks provided helped pupils to structure, organise and record interviews with grandparents. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 used authentic colours to decorate drawings of Ancient Greek pots, and pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a good understanding of chronology and could correctly sequence historical events. They talked confidently about their World War 2 project and were enthusiastic about the 'history days' during which the whole school re-enacted aspects of life during the 1940's. History is managed effectively and the programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**. Standards, by the age of seven and 11, are appropriate for the pupils' age. Good attention is given, during the year, to the study of Christianity and two other world religions.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The subject is led and managed effectively.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

- 76 Pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attain standards that are appropriate for their age. Teaching is good, promoting good achievement by most pupils, in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they plan their lessons carefully, taking account of the needs of different groups of pupils. The teachers' enthusiasm for the subject was evident in the four lessons observed during the inspection.
- 77 Pupils visit local churches, as part of their studies, and benefit from visits by church leaders, who come into school to talk to them and to lead assemblies. During a Year 1/2 lesson, following a visit to the Anglican church, the pupils were able to name and describe things they had seen, such as the altar, the font, the lectern and the stained glass windows, and demonstrated a good understanding of the meaning of 'church', in the wider sense.
- 78 In a lesson observed in Years 5/6, pupils contributed very effectively during work under the theme of 'Love thy neighbour'. They showed a good ability to empathise with and understand the problems faced by people in parts of the world currently facing difficulties. Religious education is well led and managed and meets fully the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The programme of work enables pupils to learn about other world religions as well as giving good attention to promoting their knowledge and understanding of Christianity.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

Provision in the subject is of a **high quality**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities.
- Very good use is made of the work of great artists.
- Teaching is very effective.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

- 79 By the time pupils are seven and 11, standards in art and design are above average and broadly similar to those apparent at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. They are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities and make good use of an extensive variety of materials. They benefit considerably from very effective teaching and very good support provided by teaching assistants. Teachers make particularly good use of the work of great artists to capture pupils' interest and enhance their skills. Visiting artists and artists in residence extend pupils' learning and improve significantly the quality of their work. The

subject is led and managed very effectively, ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are met fully.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A well thought out programme of work.
- Very effective teaching.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

- 80 Pupils achieve very well in relation to their capabilities, and by the time they are seven and 11, standards are above average and similar to the previous inspection. Pupils benefit from highly effective teaching and a well planned curriculum which places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge skills and understanding in different aspects of the subject. Pupils show good skills in planning projects, having taken account of user preferences, and in communicating their ideas to others in the class. They select and use effectively a variety of tools and materials to complete products, placing appropriate emphasis on finishing techniques to achieve good quality. Care is then taken to evaluate their work in order to identify improvements which can be made.
- 81 By Year 6, pupils are particularly effective in clarifying their ideas and plans, through discussion, and in drawing on the characteristics of commercially produced products before completing their designs. This was evident when pupils in Year 6 designed and produced their own musical instruments. Most also took care to check their products as they developed, making adjustments as necessary. The subject is led and managed very effectively and meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Music

- 82 Only one lesson was seen in music and therefore it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. Teaching was only observed in Years 5/6. This lesson was distinctive for its very good teaching and the highly sensitive response shown by pupils in appraising music, linked to their learning about World War Two. The whole school was heard in assemblies, singing and playing percussion instruments very competently. A recorder group and a choir of young children known as the 'Tiddler choir' were also heard performing. From this evidence, it is clear that standards are above those expected, and that music enjoys a high status in school life. The school has a long tradition of excellence in singing, as evidenced in the many documented tributes to public choir performances over recent years. Singing in assemblies was tuneful and enthusiastic with very good awareness of rhythm and dynamics.
- 83 The excellent deployment of the coordinator's specialist music skills, in supporting colleagues through team teaching, is a great strength of provision and is making a significant contribution to improving standards and teaching still further.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and an on-site playing field.
- Very good provision of extra-curricular activities.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

- 84 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in physical education are at least appropriate for the pupils' age, and most achieve well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. This is a broadly similar picture to the last inspection. Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in all aspects of the subjects. They move well and show good balance and co-ordination during lessons in dance and gymnastics. They demonstrate good individual and team skills in games, where their performance is enhanced significantly by extra-curricular activities and the good use made of the school's playing field. Swimming skills are developed successfully. Most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres unaided, and many reach higher standards before they leave the school at the end of Year 6. The subject is led and managed very effectively and meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- 85 In all of these subjects, the school has made good progress in strengthening assessment procedures, which were judged to be weak by the previous inspection. The high quality of provision made by the school in these areas of the curriculum contributed towards the award of the Artsmark Gold in 2003.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for these aspects is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A well established school council enables pupils to contribute towards school improvements.

Commentary

- 86 The school makes very good provision in all of these aspects through discrete lessons, school assemblies and through work across the curriculum. The pupils develop confidence, self awareness and an understanding of the differences between people. They develop good knowledge of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and learn to make choices that improve their health and well being. Considerable emphasis is given to teaching the pupils how to build positive relationships and how to be a good friend. In preparation for playing an active role as citizens, the pupils learn how important it is to care for the natural world. They consider how and why rules and laws are made and why different rules are needed in different situations.
- 87 The pupils benefit from the school's involvement in the local education authority's Junior Citizen Scheme. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make an annual visit to the council offices and discuss local issues such as the need for better facilities for people with disabilities and a greater commitment to recycling. The school council is well established. It has a high status in the school and gives pupils a good insight into how a democratic process can be of benefit to them. The council has already influenced a number of school improvements. For example, the members have initiated fund raising to purchase two benches for the school playground, where pupils can sit if they need someone to play with. School councillors are currently seeking pupils' views and ideas to inform the governing body's plans to improve the external environment of the school in the near future.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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