

INSPECTION REPORT

THE DASSETT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southam, Warwickshire

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 130379

Headteacher: Mrs H A Barnwell

Lead inspector: Mrs J E Platt

Dates of inspection: 28 – 30 June 2004

Inspection number: 258114

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 196 |
| School address: | Memorial Road Fenny Compton Southam Warwickshire |
| Postcode: | CV47 2XU |
| Telephone number: | 01295 770267 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs J Wilson |
| Date of previous | 29 June 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Dassett Church of England Primary school is smaller than average voluntary controlled schools, having 196 boys and girls on roll. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils need support because English is not their first spoken language. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, although a high number of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Their difficulties are wide ranging and include speech and communication, physical and hearing problems as well as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The area served by the school is socially and economically advantaged. Overall attainment on entry to the school is wide ranging but overall is above average. The school has an Investor in People (IIP) award and a Bronze School Safety Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---|
| 11565 | Mrs J E Platt | Lead inspector | English Music Physical education English as an additional language |
| 9399 | Mr R Watts | Lay inspector | |
| 22740 | Mrs M Leah | Team inspector | Science Art and design Design and technology Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage |
| 21910 | Mr G Longton | Team inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education Special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is **an effective school** with several very good features. Teaching and learning are good and this enables pupils in Year 6 to attain standards that are well above average in English, science and mathematics. Overall achievement is good. Leadership and management are good and this leads to the school being very much a community and a very pleasant and exciting place to learn. Value for money is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is effective in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils make good progress and reach above average standards in reading, mathematics and science although writing is below average.
- The headteacher and governors have established a strong team of staff with a clear focus for the future; self-evaluation, although informal, is effective but written action plans to lead subjects are too brief.
- The curriculum is rich and the focus on music and very good range of extra learning opportunities make school exciting and pupils look forward to coming.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons but do not always make full use of the computers in class.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils who respond by working hard and behaving very well both in lessons and around the school.
- The school is gaining a lot of assessment information from a range of tests but is not making the best use of this information when deciding priorities for the school or setting individual targets.

Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards are better and the school has received a nationally recognised Achievement Award for improvement in national tests. Planning has improved and the school follows national guidelines. As a result, teaching is better with more variety and demanding tasks. Assessment procedures are better in English and mathematics but further work is needed in other subjects and in making effective use of assessment information. Other concerns have been resolved including fulfilling statutory requirements, raising standards in design and technology and providing staff training especially in information and communication technology (ICT).

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall achievement is good.

Children in the Foundation Stage¹ make good progress and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception class. Standards in Year 2 in reading, mathematics and science are above average. This group of pupils includes a wide spread of ability and overall achievement is good especially for the pupils with special educational needs and the high number of pupils who exceed the level expected for their age. Most make satisfactory progress in writing but standards

¹ The Foundation Stage starts when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class.

are below average because higher attaining pupils are not always making enough progress and few pupils exceed the level expected for their age. The results of national tests for pupils in Year 6 show a dip in standards last year especially in mathematics. When compared with similar schools results were well below average. This was because higher attaining pupils had not made enough progress and the number of pupils reaching above average levels was well below average. This was not the case in science when a very high number reached a high level and results were in the top five per cent in the country. In response to challenging teaching in Years 5 and 6 current standards show a return to the previous high standards and are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Achievement of pupils of all abilities is good. This includes pupils with special educational needs who benefit from effective support. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need often make very good progress because of the intensive, expert advice and the support of the whole of the community.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils are a delight to be with and behaviour and relationships are very good. Punctuality is satisfactory and attendance is very good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and cultural development is good.** Assemblies reflect the school's Christian ethos and music often makes these uplifting experiences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is especially effective in Years 5 and 6 and staff inspire their pupils and much is achieved. The focus on practical activities in the Foundation Stage leads to effective learning. Notable strengths throughout the school are the management of lessons and the encouragement teachers give to their pupils which inspires them to behave very well and work hard. English and mathematics are taught effectively. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but staff are not always using this information to set pupils' individual targets; in writing in the infants pupils are unclear about how to improve their work. Support staff provide very effective support and pupils with special educational needs benefit from this and participate fully in lessons. Good use is made of the computers in the suite but computers in class are not always used effectively. The curriculum provides a good breadth of learning experiences and is enriched by a very good range of visits, visitors and clubs. Pupils are looked after very well. Links with parents and the community are good. Effective links with other schools, especially a multi-ethnic school in Birmingham, enrich the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Under the headteacher's strong leadership a good team of supportive staff has been established. The headteacher and governors manage inclusion particularly well and are committed to welcoming all pupils into the school. Governance is good and governors play a full part in school life. Subject leaders are effective managers but the action plans to lead their subjects are brief and do not always make full use of assessment information.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents generally have positive views of the school. The school recognises their concern about the large classes and provides additional support staff to ease the situation. Pupils enjoy school and say they work hard, other children are friendly and there is always someone to help them if needed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure higher attaining pupils make good or better progress in writing in the infants;
- improve assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics and make more effective use of assessment information;
- extend self evaluation and subject leaders' roles in drawing up plans for their subjects;
- make more use of computers in class to support pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good and pupils reach well above standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching enables children in the Foundation Stage to make good progress.
- Overall achievement is good in the infants, although higher attaining pupils are not making as much progress as they should in writing and standards are below average.
- Pupils in Year 6 work hard and leave school as confident pupils with a very good grounding in numeracy and literacy.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set for them.
- Standards in religious education are good in Years 2 and 6.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with a wide range of ability but overall standards are above average. From this starting point the children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and exceed the early learning goals² by the end of the reception class. Achievement is good because of the rich curriculum and effective teaching. Children enjoy learning and quickly appreciate what is expected of them. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores³ in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 15.8 (15.8) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 15.1 (13.4) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 16.3 (16.1) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school's performance in national tests has been lower than the national picture with a significant dip in 2002. The grid above shows last year the results in national tests were average when compared with all schools. However, compared with schools with a similar intake results were below average in writing and well below in reading and mathematics. Staffing disturbances were a contributory factor to this decline as was a

² Early Learning Goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

³ The average point score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades by all of their pupils with the grades attained by all pupils in another similar school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The score is obtained from the National Curriculum levels attained by pupils in the national assessments. For example, in mathematics pupils are awarded 9 points for a level 1, 15 points for level 2 and 21 points for level 3. The average score is then calculated by adding up all of the points and dividing by the number of pupils who were tested.

misunderstanding about the new Foundation Stage curriculum which meant pupils had not had enough early practice at writing. The school did a detailed analysis of mathematics and very effective management plus daily sessions in mental mathematics have led to a significant rise in standards which are now above average. Effective teaching of letters and sounds has led to an improvement in reading and standards are above average. This group of pupils includes a wide range of ability and overall achievement is good in reading and mathematics especially

for the high number of pupils working at levels higher than expected for their age. Writing remains below average because few pupils are exceeding the level expected for their age. Although the Foundation Stage curriculum has been adjusted to include more writing activities pupils currently in Year 2 still have weaknesses in their use of punctuation and grammar. The school has given good attention to developing the skills of writing creatively and many examples of writing include imaginative vocabulary. Although pupils have regular handwriting sessions, these are not effective and many have difficulty in writing in a neat, legible print. The current Year 2 includes a number of pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well because of the effective support they receive.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.8 (28.1) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 25.8 (28.3) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 31.0 (30.8) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The results of national tests in Year 6 have been at least good over recent years and the school received a nationally recognised Achievement Award to celebrate this success. However, results dipped in 2003 and this had an adverse effect on the overall trend over the last five years which fell below the national trend. The major reason for this was underachievement of higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics and the proportion of pupils reaching above average levels was well below both the national average and the average for similar schools. This year sees the pupils' good response to very challenging teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the previous high standards have returned and are well above average in English and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils have always achieved well in science and in 2003 results were well above average and this continues to be the case. Overall achievement for pupils of all abilities is good.
4. The school welcomes pupils with special educational needs and has a higher than average number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These pupils thrive socially and academically in this supportive community. Overall progress is good and many make very good progress as can be seen in Year 6 where these pupils reach the level expected for their age, successfully overcoming many barriers to their learning.
5. There is no significant difference in attainment of boys and girls. Pupils identified by the school as academically gifted make good progress overall and exceed the level expected for their age. However, this is because of the effective teaching in class and they only achieve satisfactorily in the weekly withdrawal sessions planned specifically for them. The pupils enjoy these sessions but the link between what is happening in class and their activities is not always clear; some activities seen were providing different experiences but not always at a sufficiently challenging level.
6. Resources for ICT have improved although there are still shortcomings in the size of the ICT suite and the use of the computers in class which restrict pupils' opportunities to practise their skills. Nevertheless, in response to the teachers' high expectations in Years 5 and 6 pupils' overall achievement is good with pupils reaching the level expected for their age.

7. Achievement is good in religious education and standards are above the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Design and technology has improved since the last inspection and standards are now satisfactory. Although it was not possible to make overall judgements on standards in other subjects, it is very clear to visitors that music and art and design receive good attention and examples of high quality work were seen which contribute to the richness of the experiences offered to the pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is very good and punctuality satisfactory. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their school and behave very well. The school promotes their personal development very well. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested in the life of the school and their work and they behave very well.
- Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good and contribute to a good learning environment there is no evidence of any harassment.
- Pupils grow in maturity and through discussion learn to respect the beliefs of others.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture and a growing awareness of life in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.1 | School data | 0.0 |
| 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.

8. Attendance is well above the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Although pupils usually arrive at school in time, sometimes they are late because of reliance on the school buses. This is outside the school's control but does sometimes disrupt the start of the day.
9. Most parents believe that their children enjoy school and this can be clearly seen in the way pupils enthusiastically approach all aspects of school life. When pupils are asked, they can think of little that would improve it. They praise the teachers, who make learning fun. Pupils start work quickly and strive hard to solve any problems they might face. In lessons, they are attentive and keen to answer questions. Children in the reception class are confident talking to other children and staff when collaborating in their work. Pupils willingly accept the responsibilities offered, for example, older pupils working with younger ones. Year 6 pupils have a wide range of responsibilities, such as house captains and prefects and these are carried out conscientiously. Behaviour is very good, in lessons, assemblies and on the playground. Pupils are considerate towards others and teachers rarely have to reprimand them. There were no exclusions last year.
10. The school rightly prides itself on a positive ethos in which pupils are encouraged to consider others in their actions. Staff provide very good role models and pupils respond with equal respect to all staff, whether teachers or lunchtime supervisors. They understand the effects of bullying and racism and respond with good sensitivity to these issues. They know what racism is and speak strongly against it. Pupils and parents are confident that staff resolve any problems that do occur.

11. The school raises pupils' very good social awareness and citizenship through the personal, social and health education. Pupils confidently discuss their feelings and problems because they know their opinions are respected. The school council is well established as a means of seeking pupil opinion and of developing knowledge of democratic procedures and what it means to be a good citizen. Staff take time to explain to pupils about why some actions are hurtful. As a result, pupils understand right from wrong and talk openly about the impact of their actions on others.

12. Spiritual awareness is developed very well in assemblies and throughout the day. The hall is decorated with excellent large, hanging painted fabrics that have been made by pupils with the help of a visiting artist, and these promote the feeling of occasion and calmness. The pupils' playing of instruments is very well appreciated by the congregation, which sits in respectful silence. A time for reflection is always respected as seen during the inspection when pupils were asked to consider and reflect on the consequences of cheating at sport on their own feelings and those of their friends. At the end of the day, pupils in a Year 3 class discussed who deserved to be the next day's 'badge-holder' in a mature way that showed great sensitivity and awareness of actions of their classmates.
13. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture, visiting the local church, taking part in Christian celebrations as well as secular festivities in village life. They are very enthusiastic about art and music which are important aspects of the school. Year 3 and 4 pupils recently participated with great enthusiasm in an exchange with pupils from an inner city Birmingham school. Since The Dasset is a school that is mainly white, with very few ethnic minority pupils, this added to their knowledge of other cultures, as does the learning about others' faiths in religious education and assemblies. Some older pupils are starting to understand the impact of faith on the lives of other groups in modern Britain, although this is not yet well established. Pupils do, however, take part in a locally organised multi-cultural day. A striking feature of the hall is the display of large pictures of famous black people, painted with the help of a visiting African-Asian artist. The making of this display, as well as the explicit knowledge of the achievement of those portrayed, contributes well to the pupils' awareness of the contribution of other ethnic groups to the world they live in.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of extra learning activities. Pupils' care, welfare and safety are given very good attention. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 6. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The active approach to teaching in the Foundation Stage encourages effective learning.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very challenging and raises pupils' standards.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support and check that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all lessons.
- Staff throughout the school set high standards of behaviour and encourage and involve pupils in their learning. Pupils' thrive on this support and behave very well and work hard.
- Teaching of English and mathematics is good overall although there are shortcomings in the teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment information is not always used effectively.
- Computers in class are underused to support learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| 1 (3 %) | 7 (23%) | 14 (45%) | 9 (29 %) | 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.

14. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because teaching is often good or better. The majority of teaching seen was good and in Years 5 and 6 was often very good and in one lesson in Year 6 the teaching seen was excellent. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and no teaching seen was less than satisfactory.
15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good because it is based on a secure understanding of the needs of this age range. Lessons include stimulating activities and first hand experiences so that children are attentive and eager to learn. Numeracy and literacy skills are taught effectively and reinforced through a variety of games and role play activities. As a result, children not only quickly grasp this information but also enjoy themselves. These experiences provide a secure foundation for children as they transfer to Year 1.
16. Throughout the school teaching has many strengths. Most notable in Years 5 and 6 is the challenge provided in lessons which makes pupils think for themselves and try hard to extend their knowledge and skills. In these lessons, the teachers' own enthusiasm shines through and inspires pupils. This amount of challenge was less apparent in the early years in the juniors.
17. Teachers and support staff work very well together and this ensures pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. These pupils are extremely well supported in school. Staff provide dedicated help and make good use of outside agencies for advice, such as in the use of ICT. Staff give good attention to pupils' individual education programmes, which are informative and have clear targets which are shared with pupils.
18. English and mathematics are taught well. In mathematics, the additional time allocated to problem solving is used most effectively. Sessions are lively and teachers skillfully draw from pupils their methods of calculations so that pupils learn from each other. Reading is taught well and teachers select stimulating texts to interest pupils. In Year 2, *The Owl Babies* by *Martin Waddell* was greeted with great enthusiasm. In its attempts to raise standards in writing the school has focused on teaching pupils how to write creatively. In this teachers have been successful. Shortcomings remain in the infants in the teaching of

handwriting and in ensuring higher attaining pupils use the grammar and punctuation skills taught in literacy lessons in their writing tasks.

19. A positive feature in most lessons is the very warm relationships between pupils and all staff. This creates a caring, learning atmosphere. Pupils confidently collaborate and enjoy group discussions because they know their opinions and ideas are respected. Staff are equally adept at managing the pupils and behaviour is very good and pupils work hard.
20. Parents expressed a concern about homework. Overall this is good, although varies between classes. Pupils enjoy carrying out independent research and some resulting topics are of a high quality.
21. Resources are often imaginative and add that extra interest to pupils. For example, in history in Year 4 the teacher provided the rations families had during the war so pupils could gain a real insight into the hardship of that time. Teachers often use computers in the ICT suite to support learning in other subjects and effective use was made of laptops to support literacy in Year 5. However, in general, the computers in class were underused during the inspection.
22. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Weaknesses have been in the accuracy of school targets and teacher assessment not being closely linked to results in tests. The school is tackling these issues with new procedures in mathematics and in English which are providing teachers with a more accurate picture of standards compared with National Curriculum levels. Assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics is satisfactory. Older pupils are developing good habits of self-evaluation because the teachers are setting them individual targets. For example, in Years 5 and 6 pupils have literacy and numeracy targets in their books and mark off when they have achieved them. This good practice is not seen in other years. For example in Year 4, although targets are set, these are not closely matched to the pupils' differing abilities. They are not referred to in lessons and are, therefore, not effective in telling pupils how to improve. Marking of pupils' work is variable with good examples where teachers give considerable advice. In other years, marking is not always up-to-date and advice is minimal. Teachers do not always make effective use of assessment in lessons. Occasionally, tasks do not closely match pupils' needs and lower attaining pupils need extra resources to enable them to work independently.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is enhanced by a very good range of extra learning opportunities. The accommodation and resources are good and support learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides a good balance of experiences.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, but sessions for gifted and talented pupils do not always fully meet their needs.
- A very good range of clubs and out-of-school activities add richness to the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils to develop their musical talents is very good.

Commentary

25. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. The school successfully teaches the full curriculum and ensures it is rich by maintaining a good balance between academic, creative and physical experiences. Pupils also enjoy learning a modern foreign language. The school has resolved a weakness identified in the previous inspection by adopting national guidance which has improved the planning of all subjects. This provides a suitable framework for the development of skills systematically across the school. In ICT and design and technology in particular, this is raising standards. The curriculum in mathematics and in science has been considerably improved through the provision of regular opportunities for problem solving and investigational work. Reading sessions outside the literacy hour are successful in promoting high standards but the curriculum in writing in Years 1 and 2 is not always sufficiently focused on using the specific skills needed for success. Issues concerning sex education and drugs awareness have been successfully resolved and the school now fully meets statutory requirements in these areas. The good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is securely based on the six areas of learning⁴ and rooted in well-planned, stimulating practical experiences which meet the children's needs successfully.
26. The school makes good arrangements for the inclusion of all of its pupils and, in the main, adjusts the curriculum purposefully to meet the needs of different groups. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good staff are committed to enabling these pupils to participate fully in all the school has to offer. The school has identified academically gifted pupils and provides extra work in withdrawal groups. These sessions do not always provide sufficient challenge and these pupils sometimes miss more exciting work in class. The provision for pupils talented in music and the arts is more effective because of the emphasis on these skills in the curriculum.
27. The provision of a very good range of extra-curricular activities and the enrichment of the curriculum through the contributions of visits and visitors are especial strengths. A very good range of activities beyond the school day in sports and music as well as gardening, computer and Christian clubs extend learning very well. Residential visits in Years 5 and 6 foster social skills through exciting well-organised activities. The care club, before and after school, supports families well. Thoroughly planned educational visits, for instance, to Ryton Pools or to the Butterfly Farm deepen pupils' understanding. Visitors, like an artist in residence and several theatre groups, bring the curriculum to life. Themed weeks, such as World Week, are carefully organised to link all subjects together with a shared focus. This makes experiences very purposeful as well as adding variety to learning.
28. The music curriculum is particularly successfully enhanced by a wide range of peripatetic instrumental lessons. The sharing of these talents by regular playing for the rest of the school, for instance, in assembly and school productions raises all pupils' awareness and appreciation of music.
29. Accommodation and resources are good overall. A good number of teaching assistants are effectively deployed and contribute significantly to the pupils' good achievement. The building and grounds are attractive although some classrooms are a little cramped and the hall is small. Displays are very good and provide a stimulating learning environment. While good use is made of the small ICT suite, it is too small to teach a whole class and

⁴ Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage include communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

this restricts the amount of time available for pupils to extend their skills. Computers in class are not always of a good quality and are not used effectively to support learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school promotes a high standard of pastoral care, and health and safety procedures are very good. The school gives satisfactory support and guidance for its pupils, based on the monitoring of their academic work. It consults pupils very well on what they would like to see improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very happy, secure and safe place where pupils feel confident and are able to learn.
- Pupils' views are valued and acted upon through the school council.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are good.
- Pupils are not always clear enough about how to improve their work.

Commentary

32. Most pupils in the survey carried out for the inspection said they felt secure in school because they have an adult to turn to if they have concerns. Pupils confirmed that they could rely on staff to resolve minor conflicts and personal worries, but they have very few concerns about bullying or racism. Staff work well together, using consistent rewards and sanctions so that pupils know exactly where they stand. The pupils appreciate the fairness and security that this promotes. Academic target setting is used well in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6. Teachers refer to these targets so that pupils understand what they have to do to get better. This process is not well established in other classes and pupils are often unclear about what would make their work better. An example of good involvement in setting individual targets is seen in the support for older pupils with special educational needs. They help in setting their own targets in their individual education programmes and in evaluating their progress to meet them.
33. The premises are regularly and carefully inspected for safety hazards and any necessary remedial action taken promptly. No hazards were identified during the inspection. When pupils are taken on educational and residential visits, risk assessments are thoroughly made and recorded. Staff visit the site beforehand and make careful checks to minimise any risks. All equipment is correctly maintained. Child protection procedures are good and all staff thoroughly trained. Relationships with outside agencies are supportive. All staff are trained in first aid and give sympathetic and appropriate treatment to those who need it.
34. The school gives parents and children a good introduction to the school when they start, so that children quickly and happily settle into the routines of school life. Staff explain school routines to parents so that they can support the new starter and reassure them. During the inspection, children who are joining the reception class in the autumn visited the classroom. The present children helped them settle in; most were confident and happy in their new surroundings.

35. The school gives very good attention to encouraging pupils to be involved with the school. Every pupil in Year 6 has an additional responsibility recognising their importance as role models for others in the school. Pupils on the school council meet regularly to discuss improvements they would like to see in the running of the school. They confer with their classmates and report back what has been decided. The school takes these opinions seriously and has acted on their ideas. For example, they have been looking at making the best and safest use of the hard play area which can become overcrowded on a wet day.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and the community which contribute well to school life. Pupils benefit from good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents provide very good support at home for their children's work and work well with staff to raise their standards.
- General information about the school is good, but some parents are dissatisfied about the information given in pupil reports.
- Parents are consulted about improvements they would like to see.
- Pupils have the opportunity to broaden their knowledge through links with local businesses.
- Transfer to secondary school is smoothed by good liaison between the staff.

Commentary

36. The school explains to parents, both when their child begins school, and throughout their time there, about what is taught, and how it is taught. Weekly newsletters effectively keep them up-to-date with practical information and the school has a web site that parents can access for information. The annual pupil reports meet statutory requirements and report on all subjects. This is done best for the older pupils, with a good indication of what has been achieved in the year, particularly in English and mathematics. For the rest of the pupils, teachers' comments are too limited and sometime describe what the whole class has covered, rather than the progress the individual pupil has made. Parents would like to see the results of the tests conducted at the end of each year. While this is not a legal requirement (except for Years 2 and 6), it is good practice and would give parents a clearer view of progress, which could form the basis of discussion at meetings with teachers. The school gives all parents the opportunity to visit the classroom each week and this gives very good contact for those who can attend.
37. Most parents hear their child read at home and this support has helped raise standards in reading to their current high levels. Most parents are well informed about how to help and have the general expertise and confidence to encourage their child in the work at school and at home. Several parents have been trained to hear children read in school and pupils benefit from this additional support. The friends of the school organisation raises impressive amounts of money that increase resources as well as providing opportunities for parents and staff to meet together socially. The school has taken opportunities to consult parents about how the school should progress, and values those views. Surveys are followed up where issues are identified, for example discipline and homework policies have been reviewed and effectively adjusted.

38. The school plays an active part in the local community and calls on local people to broaden pupils' experiences. School events, like the musical productions, form a focus of local life and musicians and dancers perform at local events including the summer fete. Pupils entertain local old people at Christmas. Representatives of public services visit school and talk to pupils as part of the personal and social education programme. The local vicar and Methodist minister take assemblies which aid spirituality and supports religious education. Pupils visit several local companies to extend the curriculum. For example, the control technology aspect of ICT is taught at the local technology centre. Some ambitious design and technology projects, such as designing a hovercraft, have been sponsored by a prestigious national engineering company.
39. Close liaison with local nurseries means that children are well prepared to start the reception class. Staff from local secondary schools liaise well with teachers at The Dasset to ensure that the move is as smooth as possible. This includes joint planning for projects in mathematics and science for pupils in Year 6 and this enables pupils' to gain in confidence about what is expected in their new schools. Detailed information concerning pupils' special educational needs is also shared to help these pupils to settle quickly. The main secondary school to which pupils transfer is a specialist sports college and staff visit and help the school with sports, such as football and unihoc.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership and management of the school are good. The governance of the school, and the leadership of the headteacher are good. Overall, the management of the school is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership from the headteacher is purposeful and she has a clear vision for the school.
- Governors and staff have a strong shared commitment, which focuses on sustaining a rich curriculum and raising standards.
- The monitoring of teaching is effective.
- Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Leadership of most subjects is good, although only in mathematics is there a detailed written action plan recording how changes are to be implemented.
- Assessment information is not always being used effectively when setting priorities in the school's improvement plan.

Commentary

40. At the time of the last inspection, the school had just opened as a new school merging several local village schools. In the interim years, the headteacher has been most instrumental in uniting staff and establishing the status of the school in the community. She has effectively monitored teaching and staffing has been strengthened by good appointments which carefully match the needs of the school. As a result, teaching has improved and is now good. The school now has a united staff all working as a team to provide the best for the pupils.
41. Governors play a full and active role in the management of the school. They carry out an analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development and their findings contribute

to the school's improvement plan. As a result of this analysis, their links with subject leaders and their regular visits to school, the governors are well informed about school life. All statutory duties are now fulfilled. This includes very good attention to health and sex education which was previously identified as a weakness. Appraisal is now firmly established for all staff and training matches identified need. The school has successfully achieved an Investor in People award. Governors are fully committed to provide education for all, regardless of the pupils' ability or ethnicity. A race equality policy is in place, although there has been no occasion to put it into practice. The minutes of governors' meetings are well kept and show governors challenge the headteacher to justify requests and decisions. Governors are fully aware of parents' concern about large class sizes and are easing the situation by providing classroom support, and more time for teachers to prepare lessons and carry out administrative duties.

42. Most subjects are effectively led and managed. Staff have looked at examples of work and visited lessons to gain a clear picture about standards in their subjects. To raise standards in mathematics the co-ordinators have had additional management time. This has been used most effectively. A detailed analysis of test results has led to a clear action plan identifying extra problem solving sessions for all classes which have dramatically raised standards. This action plan provides a good model for other subjects. Other co-ordinators have not yet had this opportunity and their written contributions to the school development plan are brief and do not reflect the good actions being put in place to raise standards.
43. The leadership role of the special educational needs co-ordinator is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice⁵ are fully in place. Assessments are carried out promptly and detailed individual education plans shared with staff so that all are enabled to give these pupils good support. As a result, their progress is good compared with the targets set for them.
44. The school lacks a formal procedure for self-evaluation but staff meet regularly to review the school's priorities. As a result, the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The school identifies these in the school improvement plan which is a collaborative document and easy to follow. Shortcomings in the plan are the brevity of some actions and priorities are too general. Overall, insufficient use is made of assessment information to set measurable targets and, consequently, it is difficult to measure success. For example, raising achievement of the higher attaining pupils was not identified as a priority last year, although data clearly identified this as a weakness. In practice, the headteacher and subject leaders react promptly to test results and the success of their action is very evident in the rise in standards with a marked improvement in the number of pupils reaching above average levels.
45. Financial management is good. The day-to-day finances of the school are well managed. The recommendations of the most recent audit report, which were of a minor nature, have been implemented. The budget setting and monitoring processes are secure and the school makes full use of the financial advice purchased from the local education authority. The budget surplus is well within bounds. The timing of the identification of priorities in the

⁵ Code of Practice- this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

school improvement plan does not always facilitate the most effective allocation of funds when the budget is set. Governors search for best value when making spending decisions but do not always follow through these decisions to check on their effectiveness on raising standards. A check is always carried out to ensure that a good price is obtained on major purchases of goods and services.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Total income | 427,766.73 |
| Total expenditure | 427,685.74 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,430.03 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Balance from previous year | 13,633.00 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 13,714.00 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good**.

Improvement since the last inspection is good overall due to strong leadership from the co-ordinator. Assessment procedures have been improved and children's attainment is now carefully and regularly checked. Assessment data is used satisfactorily to plan new work to meet children's needs. This is enabling children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, to make good progress. While the school has broadened its curriculum considerably, to provide many good opportunities for structured play, there is still some overemphasis on teacher directed activities, and children are not always sufficiently encouraged to become independent learners. Teaching assistants make very positive and significant contributions to learning across all areas. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well from above average starting points. They are on course to exceed the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff establish a calm and purposeful working environment where children feel secure and become confident learners.
- Very good relationships promote co-operative and collaborative skills well.
- There is an imbalance between work that teachers ask children to do and opportunities for independent learning.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Team points and merit awards together with praise and encouragement are used positively to establish simple rules and routines. As a result, children generally settle quickly to tasks, concentrate hard and behave well. Because of the way all staff listen carefully and show respect for children's ideas, children are confident to talk about their work and take pride in their achievements. Many interesting opportunities are provided in group tasks for children to learn to share and co-operate. Consequently, most children wait their turn, for instance, at snack time and share fairly in the role-play area even when not directly supervised. Good opportunities are provided for children to take personal responsibility. They enjoy being chosen, for instance, to be a class monitor, and carefully carry out small tasks. Children respond positively to well-directed opportunities to evaluate their work. However, the organisation of group work leaves too little time for children to select their own tasks. Opportunities are sometimes missed to promote skills where pupils work purposefully and persevere to complete a worthwhile task of their own choosing. Consequently, whilst children are good at following instructions, they are not as confident in developing their own ideas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well.
- Children make very good progress in early reading skills.
- There are not always enough opportunities for children to practise writing independently.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are good overall and children achieve well. Throughout the curriculum, all staff provide good role models for the development of speaking and listening skills. They use questions effectively to encourage children to extend their ideas. Consequently, children speak articulately in sentences, sticking purposefully to the subject with well-developed vocabularies. Most children listen to instructions carefully with good understanding. Early reading skills are taught very well with particularly effective attention being given to the teaching of letters and their sounds. Many children read fluently from their first reading books. They use their knowledge of letters sounds competently to break down unfamiliar words. Most are enthusiastic readers and show good understanding in their animated discussion of the text. Children are successful in a range of writing tasks from making labels to writing news sentences or retelling a part of a story. Letter formation and spacing are good. However, children do not always make enough use of their knowledge of letters and sounds in their own writing. They tend to wait for the teacher's help to spell words for them. There are insufficient opportunities, both in formal lessons and in play activities to practise independent writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New learning builds securely on what children already know.
- Practical first-hand experiences and well-organised games promote good progress.
- Information and communication technology is generally used effectively to reinforce learning.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well. Assessment data is used carefully to plan new work so that children confidently acquire skills building successfully on what they already know. Lively practical activities in sorting, matching and counting hold children's interest successfully so that they learn well. Children enthusiastically take part in games which reinforce concepts effectively by making learning fun. Children confidently recognise numerals and count accurately to 20. They are adept in a range of

strategies to carry out simple addition, for instance, by counting on along a number line or by counting all the items in two, or three, groups. Higher attainers competently add and subtract to 10. The computer and the interactive white board are generally used effectively to promote interest and skills. However, in whole class sessions with the white board, some children lose interest because they interact with it one by one and they wait too long for their turn.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- First-hand experiences including visits and visitors enhance the curriculum.
- Skilled questioning promotes observational and thinking skills successfully.

Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well. The curriculum is rich and well organised to enhance children's knowledge and understanding. Children successfully learn about the needs of living things through focused activities when growing plants or caring for the gerbils. Their appreciation of the life cycle of a butterfly is greatly widened by a well-organised visit to the butterfly farm. The visit to Kenilworth Castle gives children good insights into lifestyles of long ago. In focused discussions, investigations and interactive displays, teachers make good use of questions which extend children's awareness, for example, of the features of the seaside. Children consider, for instance, *Are all beaches sandy?* or *What is the lighthouse for?* Most children confidently use the main keys on the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Groups are well organised and successfully managed in a range of interesting activities.
- There is sometimes insufficient focus on the development of skills.
- Resources are carefully prepared.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well. The teacher makes good use of the school hall for whole class activities like physical education lessons or maypole dancing. Teachers' planning indicates that in these lessons, there is a clear focus on skills and children make good progress. Daily short sessions in the adventure play area on tricycles and scooters are well managed so that children play safely. However, they are not sufficiently focused to provide good challenge. Children move with control and co-ordination travelling around, over and through the apparatus as well as climbing and balancing. They do not practise to improve or focus on specific areas, such as landing safely. A wide range of resources are well organised to promote fine motor skills. Consequently, children's control of small tools, like scissors and pencils, is good and their ability to manipulate construction toys to fulfil their own purpose is well developed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff give clear demonstrations and instructions where appropriate.
- Imaginative role-play is not well developed.

Commentary

51. In response to good teaching and learning, children achieve well. Work on display indicates that children explore a wide range of media with frequent good opportunities to work alone as well as to collaborate with others. Children show good observational skills, care and control in their flower pictures based on their discussions of still life paintings. Children join enthusiastically and tunefully in a range of songs and rhymes in successfully managed whole class singing and percussion sessions. They follow the teacher's clear instructions and purposeful demonstrations to play together, keeping the beat accurately. Informal group role-play activities reinforce topic work satisfactorily. However, role-play areas are not planned with enough focus or, structured with suitable props. There is not always enough adult intervention to sustain high quality imaginative play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching in the juniors enables pupils to achieve well and in Year 6 standards are well above average.
- Overall achievement in English in the infants is good, although standards in writing are below average.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set for them.
- Leadership and management are good, although the school lacks a detailed action plan for future developments.
- Assessment is not being used effectively to set both the school and individual targets.
- Computers in classrooms are not always used effectively to extend pupils' learning.

Commentary

52. Standards in Year 2 are above average in speaking and listening and reading and achievement is good. Higher attaining pupils do particularly well in reading and a high number of pupils are working at levels higher than expected for their age. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in writing but few pupils exceed the level expected for their age and higher attaining pupils are underachieving. Standards in Year 6 are well above average and achievement is good. Effective use is made of classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs. Overall, their progress is good with some evidence of very good progress being made in reading in the juniors by pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs; these achieve the level expected for their age.
53. Current standards are much better than the results of the 2003 national tests and have been brought about by effective management. The school has looked closely at pupils' performance in national tests and the following changes have been successfully put in place:
- more attention has been given to writing imaginatively;
 - pupils read to adults at regular times apart from in literacy lessons;
 - in the juniors, the literacy hour has been effectively adjusted; a two week programme is organised with reading being the focus in the first week and this is followed up effectively with a week of writing;
 - parents have attended training to hear children read and they attend school regularly to support reading.
54. Pupils throughout the school now enjoy reading and many older pupils are discerning readers with favourite authors. A very high proportion of pupils reach levels higher than those expected for their age. Speaking and listening are strengths throughout the school. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and also take on board the opinions of other pupils. In Year 6 pupils are articulate and use well expressed lively English to discuss a range of interesting issues with their teachers. Writing is well above average in Year 6 and pupils produce some imaginative work that is accurately spelled and punctuated. Although

pupils in Year 2 show confidence expressing their ideas in writing many are not confident using the grammar and punctuation taught in literacy lessons. Higher attaining pupils have not made as much progress as seen in other aspects of the curriculum. Some of this lack of progress is linked to a lack of focus on writing in the Foundation Stage. The new curriculum was not interpreted correctly for these pupils who did not get a firm foundation to writing independently.

55. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. A notable strength is the focus on extending pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils are often given time to share their ideas with a partner. In Year 2 pupils told each other their thoughts about the book they were reading and the teacher challenged them to expand their ideas. As a result, pupils are confident speaking in front of others and explaining their thoughts and ideas. The best teaching seen was in Years 5 and 6 where teaching was very lively and expectations were high. Pupils respond well and work very hard and are eager to please their teachers. In the Year 6 lesson pupils were quick to identify Rudyard Kipling's style of writing in the poem *If* and their work was of very good quality showing sensitivity of thought and the ability to use English to express a range of ideas. The pace of most lessons is brisk and made more interesting by a range of activities that sustain pupils' interest. Teachers have a good knowledge of teaching reading and pupils are confident using a range of strategies to tackle new words. Teachers stimulate pupils' writing through good examples of poetry and other styles of writing. Handwriting is taught regularly. However, teachers do not always insist that pupils follow the school's guidelines in their writing activities and some pupils continue to print when they have been taught to join their writing. A contributory factor is the marking of pupils' work. Teachers do not always insist on neat presentation and do not always make it clear to pupils how to make their work better. In Years 5 and 6, a good start has been made by teachers at setting individual targets. Pupils are involved in this process and regularly check their progress and when one target is met another is set. This is raising standards. This good practice is not seen to be as effective in other classes and targets are not always matching the different ability in classes.
56. Effective leadership and management have checked the decline in standards and overall improvement since the last inspection is good. A more detailed assessment system is ready to be implemented to ensure teachers are more accurate in matching pupils' ability to National Curriculum. The information that teachers' assessment yields in English is not being used effectively in the school's improvement plan to set measurable targets. Most of the co-ordinator's initiatives are monitored on an informal basis because, as yet, the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to present and monitor a detailed action plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Throughout the school, pupils make effective use of language and literacy in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 have written some imaginative letters about their findings during an imaginary dig for treasure as part of a history lesson. The vocabulary used is impressive, *decorated with intricate patterns* and *very decayed but still very incredible*. In the infants in religious education, pupils write about special places showing ability to express their feelings in words. The habit of reading to find information is established early so that older pupils read from books as a matter of course.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work in Years 2 and 6 are greatly improved.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

- All aspects of the curriculum are covered thoroughly and are consolidated well through links with other subjects and homework.
- The co-ordinators lead the subject very well.
- Computers in some classrooms are still underused during lessons.

Commentary

58. Overall standards in mathematics in Year 2 are above average. This group of pupils includes a wide spread of ability and overall achievement is good especially for the high number of pupils who are now exceeding the level expected for their age and the pupils in Year 2 with special educational needs including statements of special educational need. Standards in Year 6 are well above average. This is a significant improvement on the results obtained in the 2003 national tests and is due to better quality of teaching, especially for older pupils, and to the pupils' own sustained efforts to improve. There is no difference in achievement of pupils of different gender or ability and all pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard.
59. Pupils in Year 2 are confident in their number work, use their knowledge to solve simple problems and cover a wide range of work. During the inspection, they were observed accurately preparing graphs based on the number of children attending a range of after school activities. This captured the pupils' interest and they worked well, confidently discussing the problem with their partners.
60. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy very well and, by Year 6 every pupil, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Need, has reached the expected standard with a significant number exceeding this level. Year 6 pupils were observed accurately calculating the perimeter of compound shapes. The teacher created a very friendly ethos where all pupils worked extremely hard and many pupils produced work well above average. A good link was made with religious education as pupils constructed six pointed stars and created Islamic patterns, calculating the area between the stars as an extra challenge. For homework all pupils were challenged to find out why what they had done actually works. As pupils moved out to break they could be heard discussing the homework with their friends. This shows the high level of interest pupils have been inspired to reach during the year by very effective teaching.
61. Across the school the quality of teaching is good in mathematics. In some cases it is very good and in one lesson seen in Year 6 teaching was excellent. In this lesson tasks set were imaginative and constantly challenged pupils of all abilities to think carefully and apply their mathematical skills to solve the set problems. Throughout the school relationships between adults are very good and learning is a stimulating activity. In the most effective lessons, teachers have secure knowledge and understanding which is reflected in good pace, the level of challenging questioning and discussion and in the high expectations of the standards pupils are expected to achieve. Teachers engage the interest of their pupils through well-planned activities that are clearly matched to their levels of understanding. The partnership between the teachers and the classroom assistants and students in training is very good. A direct link with this is that planning always involves all adults and the purpose of activities is clear. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the classroom assistant took a group of pupils to the ICT suite to work on similar calculations using a computer program. Pupils and resources are organised and managed well so that everyone is included fully in the good-natured process of working towards shared objectives. Assessment procedures are good and in Years 5 and 6 pupils are making good use of individual targets although this good practice is less evident on other classes.
62. Leadership and management are very good and have brought about good improvement since the previous inspection. In a determined effort to raise standards the subject co-

ordinators had additional time to draw up an action plan to resolve identified weaknesses. The resulting plan is very good and identifies what the school should do to overcome them. Good use is made of performance data and work sampling to monitor pupils' achievement and focus actions to improve areas in need of development. For example, problem solving has been made a focus of attention and special short daily problem solving lessons have been introduced in all classes, which have led to significant improvements in pupils' understanding. Observations of teaching and feedback to staff have helped improve the quality of teaching.

Mathematics across the curriculum

The use of mathematics in other subjects is good. Links are well planned so that pupils have opportunities to consolidate skills by applying them in different subjects. For example, mathematics is used well when comparing historical periods in times past or mapping work in geography when co-ordinates are used to give directions.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards in Year 6 are well above average.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to challenge pupils to think for themselves.
- Assessment is not used consistently to monitor the school's performance and set targets.
- Not enough use is made of computers in class.

Commentary

64. Standards in Year 6 are well above average. They reflect the high standards reached in national tests over the last three years. In Year 2, standards are above those of most schools. They are not quite as high as the exceptional results of the statutory teacher assessments last year. Pupils achieve well. Higher attainers are suitably challenged and an above average percentage of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are working at the higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs do well overall because they are very effectively supported in class. In the juniors, their progress is very good. As a result, pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 are working at the level expected nationally for their age.
65. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Strong leadership and management have led the school in implementing a suitable scheme of work which provides for the step-by-step development of skills. The focus on scientific investigations is particularly effective in deepening pupils' understanding of the subject and raising overall standards. The curriculum co-ordinator has a good overview through monitoring teaching and learning and clear vision for the future. However, detailed subject improvement plans are not sufficiently formalised and do not reflect the effective action being taken to raise standards.
66. Teaching and learning are consistently good with some very good teaching in the upper juniors. Teachers provide good opportunities for independent learning. Through carefully directed questions, they help pupils extend their own ideas, consider options and plan their work purposefully. Group work is usually carefully organised to meet the needs of the range of abilities in each class. As a result, pupils are confident of success and take on tasks with enthusiasm. Teachers thoughtfully prepare a variety of resources. This gives pupils the opportunity to make choices appropriate to the task in hand. Relationships are very good and adults use praise effectively to encourage effort. Occasionally, when tasks, such as checking words in a thesaurus, are not interesting, pupils they work at a leisurely pace and progress slows. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and provide high quality support for individuals and groups. This

contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement. In the very good teaching, the teacher's high expectations led pupils to ask and investigate relevant questions of their own and the clear and direct emphasis on promoting independent skills was pursued at a brisk pace.

67. Assessment systems are fairly recently in place. There are examples of the teacher's good evaluation of a lesson's success, and of pupils evaluating their own work purposefully. However, in general, insufficient use is made of assessment data to set individual or group targets and to check progress over time.

68. The subject contributes successfully to pupils' social development in the many very good opportunities for pupils to collaborate with a partner or in a group. Literacy and numeracy links are good. Insufficient use is made of computers in class to support learning in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall achievement is good.
- Strong leadership has had a positive impact on improving the quality of provision.
- Teachers are now more confident in the areas of ICT they need to teach.
- Resources have been improved but computers in class are not yet used to their full capacity during lessons in some classes.

Commentary

69. Pupils in Year 6 reach the standard expected for their age. Overall achievement is good and many pupils are confident users of ICT. From examples of work available it is clear pupils in Years 5 and 6 are challenged and experience a stimulating range of tasks. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 regularly prepare Power Point presentations to support learning and present them to each other or to the whole school in assemblies. This also gives pupils confidence in speaking, making a valuable contribution to their literacy development. Tasks are exciting and pupils in Year 6 have made short films of high quality about the weather adding animation and sound. Some pupils still find some aspects of ICT difficult because of lack of opportunity to practise their skills regularly in class. In Year 2, standards are satisfactory and achievement is satisfactory. A small group of higher attaining Year 2 pupils were observed working independently in the ICT suite. Using the Internet confidently, they found information about clothes worn by a variety of people today. They intended to use the results of their research in their history lesson and compare them with those worn by the Romans in Britain. Evidence in books show pupils use other programs to control a programmable toy and research for information.
70. Teaching seen during the inspection was mainly in small groups. During the inspection it was not possible to see specific ICT lessons being taught. However, in the small groups led by teaching assistants, the teaching seen was good and led to effective learning. Evidence in pupils' work suggests that this good teaching is more widespread and teachers are more confident than at the time of the previous inspection. Praise and encouragement are used well and boost pupils' self-esteem; pupils show great enthusiasm when working with computers. Staff show enthusiasm and good subject knowledge and support pupils confidently. A particular success of the school is its creative approach to work across the full range of National Curriculum. For example, there is very good use of digital cameras to record work on visits or around the school. In Year 5, effective teaching and the use of laptop computers extended pupils' word processing skills in a literacy lesson but this good practice was not seen in other classes. Members of the ICT club extend their computer skills as they produce a school newspaper.

71. The good leadership of the subject has contributed well to improvements in ICT. Immediately following the last inspection, all staff attended training and resources were improved to ensure all aspects of ICT were taught. However, resources still have shortcomings. The small size of the computer suite which makes it impossible for staff to teach the whole class and computers in class are not always of a good quality. As a result, pupils do not get enough practice to fully extend their learning. The school intends to upgrade the computers in some classrooms so that teachers can make greater use of ICT in all lessons. Assessment is in the early stages of development with the introduction of a skills checklist so that progress can now be recorded and used in future planning for the development of the subject.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

72. Geography and history were not a focus of the inspection. No overall judgement on provision is possible. Two lessons were seen in history and no lessons in geography. Much of the work on display and in pupils' books is of a good standard. Pupils are given many opportunities to engage in independent research either in school or as part of their homework. During the inspection pupils talked very enthusiastically about their work. For example, Year 6 pupils are well informed about aspects of life in North America because they had made effective use of their ICT skills to research information. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 have a good knowledge of the Anglo-Saxons because they have conscientiously completed their half term homework projects on this era. The school makes good use of the local area for geography and history. For example, after their visit to a local recycling center Year 5 pupils presented their work to the rest of the class which showed a good understanding of conservation and pollution. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 draw accurate plans of the village and this is linked with history as they discover how the village has changed over time.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are being developed as is the co-ordinator's role in monitoring and drawing up plans for future development.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning includes a good emphasis on world religions.
- Lessons pay good attention to supporting pupils' personal development and this aspect of the subject permeates the whole school.
- Teaching and learning are good and teachers are skilled in making links with pupils' everyday lives and in explaining difficult concepts.
- Pupils' understanding of Christianity is developed well because of the school's close ties with the church.

Commentary

74. In response to effective teaching, achievement is good and standards in Years 2 and 6 are above those of the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
75. During the inspection, the teaching in the Year 6 class was very good. Small groups of pupils were challenged to prepare short plays based on the Bible story of Elisha and Elijah and perform them for their friends at the end of the lesson. All pupils, including those with special educational needs were included. Pupils worked hard and enjoyed the challenge. The plays were performed to a high standard. The sensitive theme of being unsure of the future in times of change was entirely appropriate as Year 6 pupils prepare for their move to new secondary schools. This lesson demonstrated pupils' real awareness of God and how this affects the way they live their lives.

76. Pupils in Year 2 visited the local church during the inspection. They showed great respect during the visit and appreciated the purpose of the different features. Across the age groups pupils have a good understanding of the Bible and older pupils understand that religious belief often influences peoples' way of life. Pupils are extending their knowledge of major world religions and pupils are knowledgeable about sacred texts. Religious education includes a good element of personal education, when moral and social issues are discussed.

77. Religious education provides pupils with many links to other subjects. For example, the school makes good use of ICT on visits to places of worship; digital photographs are taken and shown effectively when pupils return to school. Pupils use these photographs to help them write about their experiences, thus developing their literacy skills.
78. The subject is well led and managed. The work of the Christian club provides exciting opportunities for pupils to broaden their knowledge of Bible stories, compose prayers for use in school and discuss a variety of moral issues. During the inspection, pupils in the club were organising a collection of clothing to send to Uganda through a local charity. This is a positive example of the effect of religious education which contributes significantly to the whole ethos of the school. Resources are satisfactory but are due to be reviewed and improved now that the new Locally Agreed Syllabus has been published. Assessment is underdeveloped and is due to be adjusted to be more in line with the new Locally Agreed Syllabus. This makes it difficult for the co-ordinator to have an informed view of standards in school or to draw up an action plan for improvements.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

79. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Only one lesson was seen in art and design, design and technology and no lessons were seen in music. In physical education, two lessons were seen one in dance and one games lesson. Evidence from teachers' planning and from work on display indicates that statutory requirements are met. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted national guidance. Planning for the systematic development of skills and knowledge over time is now securely in place. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Through careful audits, the co-ordinators have a good overview of the school's performance. However, their roles in preparing detailed subject action plans are not sufficiently developed to establish priorities in the school's improvement plan. Assessment systems are newly in place but do not as yet provide data with which to adjust the curriculum.
80. In **art and design** the work on display is of a good standard. There is a wide variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, collaborative and individual efforts using a range of interesting media. Pupils are familiar with the works of a diverse set of artists. The curriculum is considerably enhanced by the annual contribution of an artist in residence. In the only lesson observed, teaching and learning were good and children achieved well in investigating pottery styles from Roman times. The teacher gave clear demonstrations and used exemplars effectively so that pupils had a sound base on which to build their own ideas. Pupils and resources were well organised with teaching assistants providing good support for groups. However, insufficient time was allowed to enable pupils to evaluate their work.
81. Work seen in **design and technology** is of a satisfactory standard and reflects the interesting and varied curriculum. Well-directed training has improved teachers' expertise since the previous inspection so that skills are now taught soundly from year to year. Good use is made of design challenges and of homework. For instance, following group work in class on designing and making a log flume ride, pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically completed a holiday project to make their own fairground ride to particular specifications. In the lesson seen in Year 6, teaching was satisfactory. Exciting resources were well organised to support pupils in making kites. Whist good

questioning helped pupils to talk about their ideas there was some over-direction by the teacher in setting about the task and not enough opportunities were created for independent learning. Pupils' making skills were below average as the enthusiasm to finish and fly their kites took over and insufficient attention was given to the making process.

82. Although **music** is an obvious strength in the school's curriculum limited evidence was available to make any judgements about the teaching of music. However, many pupils take advantage of the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument or play in the school orchestra. Music is often heard in the corridors as pupils practise and play together. Spirituality is enhanced in assemblies as pupils play steel pans and other instruments to set the scene for the day. During the inspection pupils in Years 5 and 6 were practising their musical production for the end of term. This performance was of a high standard with pupils confidently singing solos and others joining in to sing in rounds and unison. The teacher's skills, high expectations and enthusiasm were very evident during this rehearsal, not least the fact that the teacher had written the music being performed.
83. Pupils experience a wide range of activities in **physical education** including the opportunity to learn to swim. In the lessons seen teaching and learning were satisfactory. In the dance lesson seen in Year 3 pupils enjoyed learning a new country dance. They quickly grasped the different patterns and formations but the finesse of their steps was lacking. The games lesson in Year 1 was disrupted by rain but pupils showed confidence in catching and throwing although insufficient attention was given to developing these skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. No lessons were seen during the inspection and so it would be inappropriate to make an overall judgement on provision. Nevertheless, it is very clear that the school puts significant emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. The school has implemented national planning guidelines to help teachers. Pupils have a lesson devoted to pupils' personal, social and health education and there are effective links to religious education which has a strong component on personal development. These start in the reception class with Circle Time⁶ and progressing to serious debate in lessons in Year 6. Themes in assemblies include friendship and as the school draws to the end of the year the focus is on supporting each other as they change classes or move to a new school. Pupils appreciate their role in supporting the environment and helping others less fortunate than themselves. An assembly topic is *looking after our world* and pupils support both local and national charities.
85. The success of the school's attention to pupils' personal development is very evident in Year 6. These pupils are mature, confident, willingly accept responsibility, carry out many duties diligently and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

⁶ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease from any interruption from other children.

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 | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 3 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

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

