

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE SWINESHEAD ST MARY'S CHURCH OF
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Boston

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120558

Headteacher: Mrs P K Priestnall

Lead inspector: Mrs H Evans

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 June 2004

Inspection number: 258167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	236
School address:	Abbey Road Swineshead Boston Lincolnshire
Postcode:	PE20 3EN
Telephone number:	01205 820356
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Blowers

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Mary's Church of England Primary School is about the same size as most other primary schools with 134 boys and 102 girls aged between 4 and 11. Currently about 5 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is lower than in many other schools. As there are no hot meals available many pupils who might well qualify for free meals bring a packed lunch from home like their friends. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about the same as that usually found and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the average national figure. The school has no pupils for whom English is not the language of the home although some do speak a second language. The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is very small. The movement of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is a factor that affects standards in some classes as the area around the school attracts families from other parts of the country, although much of the available work is seasonal. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are below those in many regions elsewhere. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school varies with each intake but with only limited nursery provision available, the results of the school's assessment procedures indicate that in most years attainment for most is below that usually expected for children of the same age. Since the last inspection there have been many changes at the school. This includes the establishment of the new headteacher and other teachers as well as considerable modification to the school building.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	Mrs Heather Evans	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Foundation Stage
9002	Mr Derek Ashton	Lay inspector	
11528	Mr Mike Wainwright	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History English as an additional language
3942	Mr Keith Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective and improving school. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well and make good progress. Teaching is predominantly good and, as a result, pupils learn well. The way that the subjects of the national curriculum are taught meets the needs of pupils of all ages and backgrounds with different attainment levels. Pupils develop as mature and confident individuals; they are keen to learn and are willing to demonstrate what they know. They make reasoned judgements about new experiences in the light of previously completed work. The school is at the heart of the community and it is superbly led and managed by a skilled headteacher supported by a team of people who are committed to seeking ways of finding excellence. Finances are managed well and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher, are excellent.
- The Foundation Stage is very well organised and enables all children to make a very good start.
- The provision for and leadership of special educational needs is very good.
- There is purposeful, well-targeted teaching across the school leading to good learning.
- The very good assessment procedures are used very well to inform planning.
- The subject leaders, with the senior management team provide strong support for their colleagues.
- A rich range of additional learning opportunities enhances the interesting curriculum.
- The dedication and skills shown by the teaching assistants are invaluable.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to work and learning and relationships with others are very good.

Since the previous inspection the school has been successful in addressing all of the identified weaknesses and overall the staff have made dramatic improvements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

The achievement of children and pupils across the school is good. In the present Reception classes most children are on course to attain all of the expected learning goals by the end of the year and a considerable number are likely to exceed them. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress and achieve their personal targets. The standards attained in statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below average when compared with all other schools in reading and close to average in writing and mathematics. By the end of Years 2 and 6 for the past four years standards have been maintained at a level close to that in most

other schools and the trend of improvement has been similar to that in most schools nationally. This year for the higher and average attaining pupils standards are good and the agreed targets for English and mathematics have been exceeded; a greater percentage of pupils have achieved the higher than expected levels. Standards in science exceed national expectations. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above the expected level by the end of Year 2 and meets expectations overall by Year 6. Attainments in art and design, history, geography, design and technology, music and physical education match national expectations and in religious education they meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. From the previously low levels improvement has been good and pupils' achievement is good.

Pupils personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils like school and respect the established values. They arrive regularly and early, have very positive attitudes to school and are eager to learn. In lessons and around the playing spaces pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils' respect for what the school is offering them is obvious in lessons and in the way they tell of learning experiences, and positive educational and social links with other schools. Pupils' very good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life is enriched by the wide variety of opportunities to celebrate them with talented visitors to the school, and through their sporting and musical activities. This church school is highly regarded by the local community and these elements play an essential part in achieving the harmonious and well-balanced atmosphere that reflects its strong Christian ethos.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good** as a result of the high level of **good and very good teaching**, using the well-organised curriculum. The care and guidance of children is **very good overall**. The quality of teaching is predominantly good and in one third of lessons was judged to be very good. Teachers use the many opportunities provided within the curriculum to reinforce the learning that has taken place in one subject to encourage pupils to practise the skills acquired in other subjects such as using literacy skills to extend learning in geography, history and science. The work of the teaching assistants provides help and encouragement to pupils of all levels of prior attainment. This promotes effective learning and good achievement. The school uses the rich learning environment within classrooms and in the very attractive grounds to good effect. As financial constraints allow, residential visits to places of educational interest are used to extend pupils' learning opportunities. These features all contribute positively to the way that pupils attain and achieve at increasingly good levels. The school maintains good links with parents. Pupils are cared for very well and are enabled to become independent learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership, management and governance of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school by example and demonstrates a clear and positive vision for the school's future. Her dedication and inspiration, with the equally strong support of the deputy headteacher, provide excellent and strong support and guidance for the teaching and support staff and for the governing body. With the keen and totally committed and strongly developed senior management team she works to ensure the continuing good of the school. Governors manage their areas of responsibility well. They actively pursue the priorities set out in the clear, straightforward and highly structured school improvement plan. Subject leaders are effective

when monitoring their colleagues' planning. Their support when monitoring colleagues in the classroom ensures that agreed policies and strategies are followed in all the mixed-age classes to good effect. The school uses the various talents of the teaching support staff and the administration team well. Everyone shares fully in the process of working to extend the already improved standards across the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the work of the school and many are actively involved in their children's learning. In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the replies in the questionnaires the majority of parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. Pupils have very positive views of the good things that the school offers them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

As a result of the consistent work that is already proving to be successful in raising standards no significant weaknesses remain but the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- remain vigilant in their determination to raise standards across the curriculum to a higher level by rigorously implementing the agreed subject action plans.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards attained by the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below the national average in reading but were at the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards in these subjects were close to the national averages. By the end of Year 6 in 2003 standards were below the national average in English about average in mathematics and well above the national average in science. When compared with the attainment of that group of pupils when in Year 2, pupils had made limited improvement in reading, steady progress in mathematics and very good gains in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the statutory tests in science in 2003 were well above national expectations.
- The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is very good and provides a very good springboard for improvement in the next classes.
- The achievements of pupils of all levels of prior attainment are good across the school.
- Pupils' achievement in information and communication across the school is good.
- Pupils' use of the skills learned in information and communication technology to enhance work in other subjects is developing well.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception classes with attainments that vary. Overall, however, records show that for the past three years children's attainment on entry has been assessed as being below that expected for children of the same age. From that level on entry, children in the Reception class have made very good progress and have achieved at a very good level. By the end of Reception, most are on course to achieve all of the expected learning goals and, except for those with identified special educational needs, (SEN) they will enter the Year 1 classes at and in some cases above the level expected for most children at the same age. Changes in teaching personnel and the curriculum have been managed very well and the secure structure based on a detailed set of assessment strategies plays a major part in this work. Children join the Reception class from a range of different pre-school providers, sometimes from as many as seven groups.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.1 (14.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.7 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Pupils in Year 2 are now on course to achieve the expected standards in reading, writing, and mathematics by the end of the year. In science, where all work is based on investigation, prediction and testing, work is exciting and purposeful. Pupils' attainment at

least matches and regularly exceeds national expectations. In the mixed age classes for pupils in Years 3 and 4, many of the pupils have special educational needs, and some others learn slowly but pupils are attaining the expected standards as a result of good teaching and the skilled support of the teaching assistants. The setting of pupils in literacy and mathematics into matched attainment groups and the concentration by the teachers on providing many opportunities for oral and practical work is showing very pleasing dividends. The strategies adopted by the school are working well.

3. The structured teaching and learning programme now being promoted is enabling pupils to achieve well. Work is organised well and is systematic and thorough. The progress made is always steady and is sometimes exciting when pupils make big jumps in their personal understanding. The standards in reading that were too low in previous years are much improved. Work to involve families to support reluctant readers is supported very well by volunteers coming into school to read with pupils who previously saw little value in the process. The texts are well-matched to pupils' personal interests. In all lessons the challenge for pupils of differing attainment levels is great. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported well and are encouraged to extend the scope of their work. In classes across the school the lower attaining pupils achieve their individual targets because of the meticulous match of work to the pupils' prior attainment. This modified work and the dedication of the young but very skilled teaching team with the classroom assistants are proving to be very successful.
4. Pupils know what their personal targets are and show how they have 'ticked off' earlier challenges. Most know how well they are succeeding and teachers take care to maintain the progress made by including previously accomplished goals in the next stage of the work. Pupils tell of how they enjoy coming to school but a few remember times when they learned less because the work then was not as interesting as it is now.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.2 (27.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. By the end of Year 6 standards overall are close to the expected levels in English and mathematics and exceed the expected levels in science. Indications are that all of the average attaining pupils and those capable of higher attainment are on course to reach, and some will probably exceed, the national expectations by the end of the year. Many of the below average attaining pupils, a few who have joined the school with learning or behavioural problems in the past two years, are likely to achieve very well and attain at levels close to those expected nationally in the statutory tests this year. There is an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and the standards of work that they achieve are very creditable. The school is on course to exceed the targets for English and mathematics agreed with the local educational authority.
6. In mathematics, pupils use their knowledge and understanding of number with growing confidence in oral and mental mathematics. Pupils have learned to manipulate numbers mentally using the rules of multiplication and division. Working in groups they are

encouraged to try several methods to check their results. By the end of Year 6 the average and above average attaining pupils select and use the most comfortable method for themselves to solve problems. They try to 'outdo' their friends as they describe the often complex processes chosen, explaining their reasoning to the teacher and the class. This oral work helps pupils to organise their ideas into sentences and to plan what they want to say. It is intended that such work will eventually help them to improve the quality of their writing. Pupils with special educational needs are growing in confidence and independence secure that the teacher will offer prompts as required. Sometimes this is little more than a smile or a nod of encouragement.

7. Standards in science have been greatly improved and exceed the national average. Pupils in classes across the school are confident when planning investigations. Their work shows how they are learning to be scientists rather than simply demonstrating which scientific facts they have learned. This was demonstrated in lessons from Year 1 to Year 6. The work in pupils' exercise books is neat, and is most frequently correct but even when predictions are not supported by the evidence, the process is always thorough and evaluations explaining why the initial prediction was mistaken are very interesting. Pupils demonstrate how they have evaluated mistakes and worked towards an acceptable and verifiable solution. The marked completed work shows good coverage of the curriculum for science.
8. As a direct result of the greatly improved facilities, pupils' work in information and communication technology (ICT) is interesting and challenging. The high skills of the young teachers and their imaginative use of the subject to support learning across the curriculum have enabled pupils of all ages to make good progress. In all classes pupils' skills and attainment levels are now in line with the expected levels. In every group there are some pupils who have skills that are better than those expected. Some of them have computers at home and have a capacity to work with great ease using 'short-cuts' and systems that are not part of the primary school curriculum. These pupils are greatly appreciated in lessons where they sometimes act as tutors for their less confident friends. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, to enhance work in subjects such as English, history and geography. They use their skills well to organise and review data in science and mathematics. Research work using the Internet enables them to send e-mails to friends in other classes and share work about linked subjects. Across the school, pupils' use of the well-established skills that have been learned in ICT is making a very impressive contribution to their achievements and attainments in other subjects. This is a developing area that is worthy of celebration when compared with the very limited situation at the time of the previous inspection.
9. Pupils' attainment overall is in line with expectations in other subjects of the curriculum as a result of practical work, role-play and activities involving oral work and 'hands on' experiences. In all classes and subjects there are examples of topics where much of the completed work exceeds the expected level. This work is considered to be enjoyable by the pupils who work hard with the ready encouragement and support of their teachers. A strength of the school is the way in which pupils of all attainment levels are very well supported in lessons and are helped to learn well by being constantly encouraged to pursue their own interests through independent research and personal study. The attainment of the pupils identified as having special educational needs often matches national expectations despite their learning difficulties. With the other pupils in their classes, their achievement is good overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and relationships with others are **very good**. Pupils are well behaved. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and other adults are very good; this is the result of the very caring ethos of the school and the very good example set by the staff.
- Pupils grow in confidence and are eager to take responsibility because they are given many opportunities from the moment they start school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good because the school takes very positive steps to ensure that pupils experience a wide range of activities.
- Further opportunities are being sought to develop multicultural awareness.

Commentary

11. Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning in most lessons. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and discipline and set challenging tasks that ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve well.
12. Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school. Pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. During the inspection no aggressive behaviour was observed and both parents and pupils confirmed that in the very few instances where bullying does occur, it is quickly resolved. There have been no exclusions.
13. From the day they start school, children are encouraged to become independent and willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. This contributes to the way that children achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception classes. Responsibilities range from helping with assemblies and equipment, to the caring for younger children by the prefects in Year 6. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously and achieve well, showing good levels of maturity as they move through the school.
14. Pupils play harmoniously together and work very well in groups. Older pupils organise the equipment for games and help to look after younger children at playtimes. Staff give a very positive lead in engendering excellent relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement whenever it is earned. All adults act as good role models.
15. The strong ethos of the school helps to promote spiritual development. Many opportunities exist for pupils to experience living things, for example through visits to a butterfly park and a sea life centre. They also take part in many sporting, drama and musical events. Cultural development is promoted well through music, art and geography. The school supports pupils' multicultural development through food

technology and religious education. Teachers have plans to extend this work in the next academic year by arranging visits to places of worship from other faiths.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.2%

Authorised absence	
School data	5.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

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

No of pupils on roll
231
1
1
2
1

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

16. This is a calm and productive school where the quality of teaching and learning are good and the opportunities provided to enhance the curriculum are very good. The school understands that whilst all of these elements are much improved since the last inspection and none give a cause for concern that now is the time to press on for excellence. Curricular provision is good. Across the school teachers provide a rich and interesting range of opportunities for reinforcing work learned in the classroom.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is predominantly **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers' high expectations challenge pupils to do their best across the school.
- Good use is made of time; learning is rapid and purposeful.
- Teachers select from a good range of methods, and plan their work carefully in the light of evaluations of previous lessons.
- The school has developed good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy.
- The procedures for and the use made of assessment information are very good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	8 (22%)	25 (69%)	2 (6%)	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.

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the Foundation Stage, and in some classes for older pupils it is frequently very good. Teachers' work in the Reception classes, in lessons for English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology and in work with pupils with special educational needs is particularly good. As a result of the good quality teaching, pupils learn well and make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the work in lessons. There is a well-understood and consistent pattern of classroom management. This ensures that there is a very good atmosphere for successful learning. Pupils' behaviour in class is calm and settled but teachers need to be vigilant as the potential for mischief is very evident. The quality of teaching has been improved greatly across the school since the time of the last inspection. Teachers now use time very well.
18. In all lessons, teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is secure and the objectives set are clearly explained to pupils. Whenever possible teachers link their expectations to earlier work or to practical experiences that pupils remember. This is a particular strength of work in mathematics, science, and history. All work is linked to investigations and practical experiences and teachers provide many opportunities for reflection, revision and consolidation. Lessons are well organised and teachers' planning is good. The methods chosen and the available resources are always suitable. Teachers find innovative ways to engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons. The content of lessons is interesting and the pace of learning is brisk. Sometimes learning is exciting and dynamic and then time flies, as in one science lesson in a class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 about light and shadows. The very positive relationships create an environment where learning is very pleasurable and where pupils bubble with anticipation, as they recognise how well they are achieving and learning. The concept of standing on a snapping stone, in reality a turtle, created an air of exhilaration in a well chosen video recording during a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
19. Subject leaders offer good support for colleagues when preparing lessons and the procedures for assessing pupils' progress, attainment and achievement are clear and manageable. All teachers use the agreed marking policy well as part of the assessment process. The most effective examples show the class teacher sharing a dialogue with pupils. Praise is offered for effort and improvement and clues are provided as to where more thought and effort would improve the completed work.
20. Teachers make excellent use of the information gathered on a day-to-day basis to refine work for the next lesson. In this way work is invariably well matched to the prior attainment of the pupils. Since the last inspection, the use of assessment to promote work matched to pupils' earlier learning and to set achievable challenges has been greatly improved. The systems in place for longer-term assessment are very good and provide a very clear focus for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses and for setting

the next step in the ongoing drive for further improvement. These strategies are being used very well and are providing teachers and pupils with precise targets for group and individual planning.

21. Subject leaders monitor planning and the work of colleagues in the classroom well especially in the subjects that are tested each year. Most are very new to subject leadership and in other than the tested subjects they have only limited time to do more than monitor planning and completed work. They are eager to do more and the plans for the next academic year provide opportunities for the subject leaders to increase their personal experiences and expertise. The staff are clear what needs to be done next and action plans to extend this work are in place, linked to the most recently ratified school improvement plan.
22. Pupils with SEN are taught well. The school's policy is that pupils are supported in class except in very exceptional circumstances where they may occasionally be withdrawn for specialist support. This is working very well. Teachers work hard to provide appropriate starting points and teaching assistants support pupils' learning very skilfully. They know pupils very well and work hard to explain, discuss work and boost confidence. Teachers regularly set and review clear and appropriate targets and fully involve pupils and parents in the process. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their detailed and appropriate individual education plans and they achieve well.
23. The use of the trained classroom assistants as well as parent volunteers is invaluable in the work to maintain the improving rate of learning. Their skilled support when pupils show that they are not keeping up with the pace enables lessons to move briskly. In these sessions everyone builds on the sense of success. When working with the pupils capable of higher attainment, their skills and initiative enable imaginative and innovative experiences to be shared.
24. The very well developed partnership between the teachers, teaching assistants, parents and governors makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school and to the very effective working atmosphere in all classes. Homework is set at suitable levels each week with good time allocation before it is returned. During the inspection the review of marked homework showed it to be a positive aid to learning especially for those pupils who were regularly supported with their reading and spelling at home.

The curriculum

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The school provides a **good** curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 with **very good** opportunities for enrichment. There is very good accommodation and resources overall are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good match of teachers to subjects and they collaborate well together.
- The very good enrichment opportunities include a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are totally involved in all activities,
- The accommodation provides a very good learning environment.

Commentary

25. The curricular provision for children in the Reception classes is very good and provides a very secure structure for working towards the early learning goals. The National Curriculum is fully in place in Years 1 to 6 so that all pupils receive a broad education. It is, however, used very thoughtfully and is modified sensibly by the teachers, who are not rigid in its application. They use their knowledge and professional judgement in order to meet pupils' individual needs very well. This results in their good achievement. Aware of the priority to raise standards in writing, the planning of the literacy hour is amended to focus on what will most benefit the pupils. The practice of investigation in science and mathematics has spread to many other subjects. In subjects such as history and geography, pupils make good use of their skills in information and communication technology to undertake a great deal of personal research. Similarly in art and design, science and design and technology they investigate materials through observation and experimentation. Teachers are well supported by a good match of skilled classroom assistants who also share their talents as seen, for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were working with clay.
26. Planning is good, with many links made between subjects. This is very clear to see in history and geography, in the study of settlements, for example. Pupils can see and understand the relevance of their learning. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of prior attainment. Pupils' tasks are set at different levels and support is provided according to their individual needs.
27. This is a very inclusive school. The provision for SEN is very good overall and is very well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). This is especially creditable as the SENCO has full time class responsibilities, with just a few hours release time each week to fulfil her SEN responsibilities. Documentation is well organised, up to date and it reflects clearly the lengths the school, parents and support services go to in order to offer the full range of educational opportunities to pupils with a range of difficulties, physical, behavioural and in learning.
28. A wide range of additional experiences includes theme days on for example, the lives and traditions of the French, medieval castles and bugs. As one measure to stimulate pupils' interest in books, they dressed as characters from literature to promote 'World Book Day'. On 'Harry Potter Day' they baked Hogwart's feasts and created magic potions. The school has an air of enjoyment in learning. During the week pupils earn time through endeavour and good work to follow a range of personal interests and to learn other skills outside the National Curriculum. The Travel Buddy scheme in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to exchange experiences with pupils in the United States of America.
29. Teachers and a parent give generously of their time with a wide range of lunchtime and after school activities. There are various sports, computer, French, gardening, music and drama clubs. There are opportunities for pupils of all ages and a large proportion of them participate. In addition, a regular residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 provides further experiences in ICT and adventurous activities in the outdoors. It also provides opportunities to enhance their personal and social development.
30. The school buildings and grounds provide a very good learning environment. This includes a most attractive and stimulating area for pupils in the Foundation Stage that has just been completed. Good use is made of all areas, both inside the school and out

of doors. Everywhere is extremely clean and is very well maintained. The school is enhanced with some pertinent displays of pupils' work supported by teachers' captions and guidance. The library is set out tidily, pupils know how to use it and do so. The computer suite, although somewhat small, is used very effectively because teachers organise their work very well and pupils respond accordingly, sharing resources fairly and helpfully. Resources for learning are good overall, particularly so in the Foundation Stage, science and religious education.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with very good support and guidance. Staff know the pupils and their families well and relationships are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel secure and work in a pleasant, healthy and safe environment.
- They achieve well because their progress is closely monitored.
- Those pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.
- Induction and transition arrangements are well organised.
- Very good systems of pastoral care ensure the welfare of all pupils.
- Procedures to seek pupils' views through the introduction of a school council are still in the early stages of development.

Commentary

31. The school provides a happy and friendly environment that is conducive to learning. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues and risk assessments, particularly when walking to the nearby village and planning visits to places of educational interest. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the personal, social and health education programme, which is enhanced by the skills and involvement of various guest speakers. First aid provision and arrangements for caring for children who become unwell are good. Child protection procedures are good and there is good liaison with other agencies.
32. Teachers and support staff are very sensitive to the needs of the pupils and they provide very good support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing they will be listened to and their concerns dealt with sympathetically. Teachers diligently track the progress and personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The use made of this knowledge contributes to the standards attained. Significant events and achievements made by pupils during the school year in school or in the community are recorded in a special book. Each week awards are presented in celebration assemblies.
33. Induction arrangements are good and enable children to settle happily into school life. These include visits to nurseries and playgroups and home visits where appropriate. Many parents work alongside their children for a short time at the start of school each day. There are a number of structured opportunities for parents to visit the school to learn about the curriculum and how subjects are taught. To aid parents wishing to help

their children at home, an informative booklet is supplied. Pupils are similarly well prepared for transfer to secondary education.

34. The school has recognised that there is room for development in more formal and structured consultations with pupils. Procedures have been set in place therefore with the intention of setting up a school council. This new development is in its very early stages and is being carried out with strong collaboration with the local cluster of schools. Pupils clearly take their responsibilities very seriously and enthusiastically await the introduction of the new school council. They have already drawn up impressive lists of ideas with new and deeper personal trays at the top of their agenda.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Relationships between the school and the parents are **good**. There are **good links** with other schools and colleges and the school is well regarded within the local and wider community. The Parent, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) supports the school well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are well informed about the school and the standards, achievements and progress of their children.
- The achievements made by children are greatly enhanced by the good contribution made by their parents.
- The good links with the local churches and the village community help to enrich the curriculum.
- The good links with other schools ensure that pupils happily transfer to the next stage of their education.
- The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association provides valuable support.

Commentary

35. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and other correspondence. They are also well informed about their children's progress through consultation evenings, open days and annual reports. Parents are welcome to discuss concerns at any time. Home school agreements are in place and reading records are used effectively to enable parents and teachers to monitor progress. Inspection findings support the parents who find the format of the school reports too impersonal and who would welcome clearer advice as to how to help their children at home. The school acknowledges this difficulty and is currently reviewing its arrangements.
36. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel comfortable in approaching all of the teachers with any concerns. They feel that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible and they appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The parents of children entering Reception class indicate that they welcome the very good advice provided about how to help their child to cope with school life.
37. Many parents make a good contribution to their children's learning by providing assistance in the classroom and on outings and visits. They also raise significant funds for the school through the PTFA. Many, but not all, parents provide good support for their children with their homework.

38. The good links with the community include the local Parish and Methodist Churches. Festivals linked to the Christian faith are celebrated in both churches. The school invites elderly people and other villagers to music and drama events. Pupils take part in local sporting activities and in charity fund raising. Members of the community visit the school to share their interests and talents. These have included representatives from the churches, members of the local police, poets and authors as well as a local agriculturist.
39. There are good and purposeful working relationships with other local schools. Shared ideas and the collaboration between staff, sometimes helping one another with resources, enhance the teaching and learning of all pupils. The school provides many opportunities for work experience for students from the local secondary schools as well as teachers in training. All of these initiatives contribute positively to the progress and achievements of the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is good.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher are excellent.
- The ethos of the school is both inclusive and supportive.
- The headteacher and governing body have been very successful in addressing all the issues raised during the previous inspection.
- The financial planning and working to principles of best value are structured and effective.
- Subject leaders have established clear and purposeful strategies for monitoring pupils' work and achievement.

Commentary

40. The headteacher, senior management team and governing body have been clear headed, rigorous and successful in ensuring very high levels of improvement since the last inspection. They have developed a school where pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and where behaviour is good. Finances are well managed. The headteacher has been extremely successful in establishing links with parents and building good partnerships within the community.
41. The programme of regular and purposeful appraisal of all staff has enabled teachers to refine their needs and strengths and to share their considerable talents under the supportive leadership of the more experienced staff members. The headteacher and the senior management team are eager to build on the gains already made in order to strive for even higher levels of academic achievement.
42. The very good example set by the headteacher through the excellent relationships established with pupils, their parents and carers and with every member of staff is an extremely positive model for all pupils. The staff has created a high quality nurturing

environment for all pupils. The shared commitment to developing pupils' personal and social development, ensuring equal opportunities for all is tangible and is obvious within minutes of entering the school. The headteacher has been very successful in promoting an ethos of social inclusion and very high expectations of pupils' behaviour that are reflected in their positive attitudes. Pupils of all backgrounds and with a wide range of prior attainment levels bubble with enthusiasm about what they are doing in school. The very positive responses of parents and pupils through their questionnaires echo this feeling of a school moving in the right direction. All of the work of the school reflects its ambitious aims very well.

43. Performance management has been well established over recent years. All subject leaders have detailed job descriptions and the roles of the headteacher and senior management team are detailed and specific. The headteacher and senior management team are addressing all of the priorities in the school improvement plan with considerable success but some of the listed areas need more time before the tasks can be considered complete. The skills of the young subject leaders in managing initiatives and developments has enabled the school to move forward successfully across a number of fronts during the past year because they are such a strong and dedicated team.
44. The priorities identified in the school improvement plan and the linked action plans are highly appropriate. The headteacher and senior management team share a clear vision for the direction of the school. The subject leaders have successfully addressed areas of curricular planning and resources are well organised to meet the needs of their subjects. A few outstanding items to support teaching have been provided for in the most recent budget allocation. The monitoring role of subject leaders in English, mathematics and science has established a very good pattern that will be extended to other subjects in turn. The roles and skills of the teaching assistants have been developed very well and this talented team now makes an extremely valuable contribution that has a very positive effect on classroom management and on pupils' learning and achievement.
45. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The teachers' personal knowledge and skills are exemplary. This includes the way in which they monitor and track children's progress through strong teamwork with the teaching assistants. The leader and the newly qualified teacher work together very well. They share their skills and very good subject knowledge with the experienced teaching assistants very effectively. Increasing numbers of parents are now involved in their children's learning.
46. The leadership and management of work to support pupils with special educational needs are very good. The SENCO supports class teachers in writing individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with identified needs. These are used very well and contain clear and very focused 'small step' targets for individual pupils. Pupils respond well to the support offered and movement off the register is not uncommon.
47. The governing body provides good support for the work of the school. They work together well to fulfil their statutory duties. They have come a long way since the previous inspection and both the experienced and new members support the headteacher in developing the caring ethos of the school. Members of the governing body bring a range of experiences to the task in hand and they work well together to

maintain the high quality provision. There is a firm and positive relationship between the governing body and the school. In their committees governors have learned to challenge the headteacher and senior management team when they are unsure about their intentions but are always ready to support them in their initiatives. Some governors support teachers and pupils by making time to help or observe in classes. Others bring their professional expertise to leading the work of committees. The governors are actively involved in the life of the school and make rigorous checks to ensure that spending decisions are reflected in practice. The new chair of the finance committee is rapidly developing a clear understanding of school finance. With other, more experienced, governors he is committed to ensure that the school's financial management will continue to be based on the present sound practice.

48. Overall the governing body has a thorough working knowledge of the school. This informs their decision making in practical ways. They have shared training for long-term strategic planning and this now reflects their commitment to improvement. They are now in a position to build on what is already good. Governors seek good value for money and their success in this endeavour is reflected in the attractive internal and outdoor accommodation and in the improvements that have been made since the previous inspection and the appointment of the present headteacher. All aspects of the governors' work are now good.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	529287	Balance from previous year	35,600
Total expenditure	487116	Balance carried forward to the next financial year	32,860
Expenditure per pupil	2,330		

49. The administrative staff is welcoming and efficient. The day-to-day management of finance is good and is the result of the effective partnership between the governing body and the school. All systems involving money are tight and effective. The administrative staff provides regular, accurate budgetary information to governors. This enables the management team to make sensible, well-founded decisions secure in the knowledge that their intentions are affordable. Good use is made of specific allocations such as special educational needs and pupils achieve well between entry in to the Reception classes and leaving for the secondary school. The indication of a relatively high carry over figure is a result of changes in the accounting system at the end of the previous financial year.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage, in this case the Reception group, often working with pupils in Year 1, is **very good** overall and is better than at the time of the last inspection.

50. Children are very well prepared for work with the National Curriculum. Children join the Reception classes in the September before they are five. Before starting at the school the children have had a wide range of pre-school experiences. Very few come straight from home without any previous formalised learning experiences and some have attended private day nurseries or had a few hours each week at various pre-school groups. Assessment shows that the attainment on entry of the present group was below that usually found for children of the same age. These children, some of whom are in a class with the younger pupils already in Year 1, have achieved very well. This is because of the very good teaching and the help and guidance from the skilled classroom support staff.
51. Since the last inspection the curriculum and the facilities for all children in the Foundation Stage has been revised completely. It was judged to be satisfactory in 1998 but it is now very well planned. There is an exceedingly wide range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities. All adults are very good role models for the children and establish very good relationships with them. Care is taken to see that the requirements of individuals with very different experiences and needs are met. Staff monitor work very well and maintain detailed records of all aspects of children's learning and their personal and social development. The indoor spaces and the out-of-doors accommodation are spacious and very appealing. They are used very well to enhance children's learning. Children have continuous access to a dedicated and superbly equipped separate outside area that was completed just before the inspection. There is an exciting range of equipment for all of the required range of outdoor activities. The sheltered area enables access in all but the worst of weathers.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the very good teaching and high expectations shared by all of the staff.
- There are very supportive relationships and most children are confident learners.
- Work alongside older pupils is managed well and this enables pupils to move on in their social development.

Commentary

52. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the rich learning opportunities and the very good teaching and the contributions made by the experienced teaching assistants. The children in this Reception class group are all on

course to attain the expected goals by the end of the year and a considerable number, about a third, will exceed them. The children learn what is fair and acceptable behaviour because of the consistency of the routines and the caring attitudes shown to them. They also learn the pattern of work and play from the older pupils who share some of their learning with them. Children experience many interesting activities and stories and listen well. They are learning to speak clearly and confidently although some find speaking in sentences very difficult. They are continually encouraged to recognise their own achievements and celebrate those of others. They learn to comply with the high standards of behaviour that are expected. They are usually good at taking turns and putting up their hands before answering questions. Children share resources sensibly and particularly like the resources in the book bags where puppets and other objects help them to re-tell stories with actions. They do this very confidently, with great glee, enjoying the role-play and repetition. Children take turns when using computers and record when they have completed a game or finished a picture. They share the construction equipment very well. There is a very caring atmosphere where children grow in confidence and develop a sense of personal worth.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and the staff members create many varied opportunities to develop children's skills in speaking and listening.
- Children's achievement in writing is being carefully developed alongside their speaking.
- Children enjoy role-play and sharing favourite well-known stories and books.
- Reading with staff and parent volunteers makes a valuable contribution to learning.

Commentary

53. Discussions with children and the analysis of completed work show that most of the children are on course to achieve the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children make very good progress in speaking and their skills in listening are good. They like to share in the rich opportunities of whole class and group discussions. The staff plan many activities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions. Children are encouraged to take turns and listen to one another. All of the children recognise their own names from print as well as those of many of their friends. The average attaining children read most of the high frequency words and they remember and sequence events very well. The lower attaining children use pictures and context to provide clues and they recognise many simple words. Higher attaining and most average attaining children read accurately with good understanding. The books that teachers help them to choose are well-matched to their abilities and interests.
54. Superb relationships between adults and children enable even the most timid to gain the confidence to speak because all the adults always listen to them. Teachers use a recognised commercial programme for learning letter sounds, linking them to writing patterns. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with the correct grip. The analysis of writing shows that most children form letters accurately and have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns. A few know how to form their letters very well but slip into a lazy formation if they are not being watched. They smile when

checked and return to the approved system. Assessment records show a very good level of improvement from their attainment on entry.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children attain and many exceed the expected learning goals.
- Teaching strategies and therefore children's learning are very good.
- Children participate in a wide range of planned and very structured activities to ensure that they can apply their understanding of number to other areas of learning.

Commentary

55. As a result of the very good teaching and the structured activities that they experience children's attainment levels in mathematics exceed the expected levels. The children achieve very well because of very good teaching and rigorous assessment. Staff members share very good subject knowledge and use assessment very effectively to guide planning. All work is based on children's prior learning. Their knowledge and understanding are very good in the areas of number, shape and space. Most children add and subtract using numbers to ten. The group of children capable of higher attainment readily count to 20 and some to numbers beyond this with a high level of accuracy. Children showed their skills when accurately ordering numbers. Most of the children recognise and accurately name two-dimensional shapes and the familiar three-dimensional shapes 'cube' 'cuboid' and 'cylinder'. They make good relationships between these solid shapes and the plane shapes they are linked with. Children create interesting mathematical patterns in art, showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. Most children are confident in this area of learning, enjoy the activities and work and collaborate with one another very well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of interesting activities that enhance children's knowledge and achievements.
- Teachers plan very good opportunities for speaking and listening, role-play and construction activities.
- Children have good opportunities for using computers and microscopes.
- Imaginative work in the 'castle' and 'pirate ship' is very well organised.
- There are many rich opportunities to investigate scientific developments in the garden areas.

Commentary

56. Few sessions were directly observed in this area of learning but indications are that the quality of teaching is at least good. From the very imaginative planning and discussions

with children it is evident that achievement is at least as good as could be expected and as a result many children are well placed to exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. This represents very good levels of achievement from being below the expected level on entry. In the time since they started school the high quality of provision and teaching has helped them to become confident and interested learners. They organise their own play experiences well. During the inspection children worked around their topic of caring for animals and worked in the 'vets' surgery dealing with broken beaks, sick puppies and cats needing many injections.

57. Children describing how a caterpillar changes into a butterfly or a tadpole into a frog delighted in hearing the word metamorphosis. They attempted to say this word with varying degrees of success. Observing mini-beasts through a microscope linked to the computer caused them to show amazement at the complex joints on the legs of ants. Some drew pictures to represent just small parts of tiny creatures made to look like monsters. Most children know the correct names of different parts of the body especially the organs of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. They have been taught well and they know why they need to run and jump as they exercise and can tell which foods help to make them strong. They know that to use machines such as the computers, washing machines and video recorders, they need electricity that is controlled using switches.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff and children make very effective use of the accommodation in the hall and the soft-play areas outside.
- The large equipment for outdoor play provides many very good opportunities for climbing, jumping and running as well as equipment to pedal and push.

Commentary

58. In physical education no lessons were observed although children's involvement in a dance demonstration and observation of them using the large climbing equipment showed that they have been taught well. Teachers' planning and assessment are both very good. Children playing in the newly developed area are clearly reaching the expected learning goals. They use a wide range of movements when creating sequences of shapes at different levels. They listen to music and interpret its changes in mood, modifying their speed and direction showing good use of space. Children working with construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils show confidence and dexterity and achieve their goals very well. Most children hold pencils and pens correctly and their writing is developing well. Children of all attainment levels are given very good support and encouragement with extra help on offer as required. In this way both higher attainers and those who find learning more difficult achieve well alongside other children in the class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's completed paintings, print patterns and work with dough and clay are good.
- This area of learning makes a very good contribution to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Children have very positive attitudes.

Commentary

59. Insufficient lessons were observed in order to make a judgement on the teaching and learning of all elements of this area for learning but in those seen it was very good. Displays and discussions with children show that they are well placed to reach the expected levels by the end of the term. Teachers' records show that children have a wide range of creative opportunities. They are encouraged to experiment when mixing paint and using modelling materials. Children are proud to show the designs and symmetrical patterns that they have created on the computer. Many activities extend their imaginative and collaborative activities well. Children enjoy singing and know a lot of familiar songs and tunes. They have access to a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and copy and repeat rhythms when playing alongside other pupils. The selection of musical instruments from other than western cultures is helping to promote their understanding of music making across the world.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is high quality teaching across the school.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Pupils' learning is assessed very well and they know what they need to do to improve.
- Insufficient opportunities are exploited to enable all pupils to write at length.

Commentary

60. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations and they are close to the national average at the end of Year 6. Significant improvement has been noted in reading and 30 per cent of Year 2 pupils now attain at an above average level in this part of the subject. Writing has been identified as a weaker aspect and close attention is being given to this. Although in some year groups pupils' handwriting lacks neatness, by the time they are in Year 6 many pupils show a well-formed style. Spelling remains an area for improvement. Pupils listen attentively and speak with increasing confidence. Overall achievement is good throughout the school and there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

61. The teaching of English is consistently good. A number of very good lessons were seen. Teachers understand the purpose of the literacy strategy and interpret the guidance sensitively to meet the different needs of the pupils. This results in high quality teaching and learning. Lessons are planned effectively. Tasks range in difficulty, challenging pupils of all levels of attainment and providing ways for all to achieve success. Good oral work enables pupils to be well involved. They are expected to listen very carefully and teachers check that they understand instructions. Pupils are required to explain their answers. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 the teacher used skilful questioning to draw out pupils' awareness of rhyme patterns and alliterative phrases. When a pupil identified pronouns another was asked to provide a general definition and example of one. There is a quiet but determined urgency about the teaching so that pupils behave well and apply themselves to tasks very well. Lessons are interesting; in one particular lesson pupils were stimulated by the teacher's use of technology to display poetry with some visual effects. Pupils were then challenged to check and reinforce their learning using the computers. They did so at speed, collaborating well and enjoying their achievement.
62. Enjoyment is often evident. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class were excited to play 'word bingo', and they collaborated well. The books on hedgehogs and butterflies also captured their interest so that they gave full attention to using the contents and index pages. A pupil from Year 1 knew that the index is arranged alphabetically. Language is studied well. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 write about school in the style of Rudyard Kipling's 'If'. They also write limericks and riddles, and their version of what they call 'Jabbermockery'. When they write river poems they use phrases such as 'Rivers clear as glass' and 'Fish shining like ice'.
63. The subject leader has identified the need to improve the quality of pupils' writing and has taken steps to implement appropriate action that is beginning to bring about the desired results. There is an awareness of the need for pupils to enjoy and appreciate language as a first step. In addition to considering the work of a wide range of poets and authors, there has been an emphasis on drama and role-play to increase pupils' ability to express themselves. A drama club has been formed and pupils have been working on and presenting various Shakespeare plays. No literacy lessons showing this work were seen during the inspection although there is good photographic evidence and recordings on videotape. During one assembly pupils in the mixed age Reception and Year 1 class moved to the music of the seashore, testing the water, building sandcastles and eating ice cream. The subject leader provides a good role model. Her lesson in personal, social and health education involved pupils preparing their views for and against vegetarianism. When a pupil was selected to walk between two rows of the rest of the class they voiced their opinion, in turn, each one stating a view and providing a clear reason for their opinion. Pupils responded seriously and spoke out well, in some cases emphatically. Opportunities such as these prepare pupils for writing, as do the many opportunities for drafting and re-drafting work. As yet there are too few opportunities grasped for all pupils to write pieces of extended work.
64. Pupils' attainment, progress and achievement are being tracked well. A recently introduced system listing the criteria for different levels of attainment in reading and writing is in each pupil's file. As each step is achieved it is highlighted. Pupils see their successes and willingly share them with their parents and interested adults. They also have clear targets that inform them what they need to do to improve. This process of

target setting is supported well by good quality marking of work in their books. Not only do teachers commend the pupils but also give frequent guidance as to how to make further progress.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects, reading and interpreting texts as well as writing in different genres. In history, pupils in the classes for Years 3 and 4 write about the Viking raids from their point of view as well as that of the Anglo-Saxons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 empathise with prisoners of war and, in geography, they have produced some well-written projects about 'Water'. This work was part of a set of lessons about how charities are beginning to provide clean water for some of the countries in Africa.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and helps pupils achieve well over time.
 - Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards the subject.
 - Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical, problem solving situations.
 - The subject is led and managed well.
66. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with those expected for pupils of that age nationally. Standards are rising and overall the school does well for its pupils, with all groups achieving well. The introduction of setting in Years 3 to 6 has proved to be successful. The matched sets provide well for pupils with different levels of prior attainment and enables teachers to increase the challenges for those pupils capable of higher attainment as well as offering additional support for those who have difficulty with the subject. Pupils achieve well, most reach, and an increasing number now exceed, the individual targets set for them by the school. These challenging but realistic targets are securely based on the good assessment information gathered by teachers. Pupils with special educational needs, very well supported by teachers and support staff, achieve as well as their peers.
67. In every lesson observed teaching was good, and this consistent high quality is helping pupils to make good progress. There is a consistency of approach and methodology across all classes that support pupils well. Support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and for those who find mathematics difficult, is particularly effective. Teachers and classroom support staff work very hard to find carefully matched starting points for work, to make sure that these pupils are fully involved during teacher led sessions so that they are able to following the learning objectives during the introduction to the lesson. They are included well. Opportunities for other pupils, particularly the higher attainers, to use the skills they have learned in solving 'real life' problems are being developed very well. As some of the older pupils remarked in discussions "*We enjoy problem solving because it is challenging*".
68. Pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics largely because they are well motivated. Teachers plan carefully with clear objectives. There is good progression

through the lesson as teachers successfully address the needs of different groups. They know their pupils well. They also demonstrate the confidence to adjust or modify the intended work should their planned activities not work as they anticipated. This is very good practice and significantly contributes to pupils' good achievements.

69. Work is well led and managed and the subject leader has a good understanding of the issues involved in the successful development of mathematics within the school. She is regularly able to monitor planning and teaching and has carried out a recent audit of teaching resources to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant to the developing curriculum. The breadth of curriculum provision is good overall. There has been good improvement since the last inspection as teaching is consistently good, the subject is well led and pupils are achieving well. Consequently the school is well placed to continue to develop its curriculum and to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Mathematics is used effectively across the curriculum. The recently installed computer suite and the use of ICT in the classrooms enhance pupils' understanding in many areas of numeracy. They apply mathematics very creatively when designing symmetrical patterns in art and design and for accurate measurements and predictions in science and design and technology. They use their mathematical skills to compare the heights of mountains in geography and the passage of time in history. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematics confidently as part of their work in problem solving in other subjects. Through this carefully planned work they consequently, develop an appreciation of its practical use in their day-to-day lives.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and are attaining above the expected level at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are consistently very good throughout the school.
- The method of working through investigation is producing very good dividends.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

71. Very good teaching enables pupils to achieve standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The standards at the end of Year 6 are as high as they are because the school concentrates on pupils being scientists and conducting interesting experiments and investigations. This process, begun in the Foundation Stage, is built on systematically across the school. Pupils of all prior attainments get a fair deal as work is matched very closely to their earlier experiences. Those with special educational needs succeed because, besides having specially tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and well-informed classroom assistants. The many pupils who are now capable of working independently are provided with many opportunities to go beyond the level of the work planned for the class to discover for

themselves the next steps in the process being studied. This means that time is used well and all pupils are encouraged to work to their personal capacity.

72. Teaching and learning are very good in all classes. The very good relationships enable teachers and pupils to work well in a calm and purposeful way. They make time to share times for reflection and fun. Lessons are very well planned often including options for individual development. Planned activities provide strong links between topics and other subjects that make knowledge secure through revisiting a variety of experiences. Resources and pupils are managed well and, in lessons, the different approaches regularly make learning brisk and time flies. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, causing them to think of answers to solve problems and to demonstrate their understanding of complex issues.
73. When working on a topic about light, in a lesson in a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils readily incorporated their new experience of the 'transit of Venus' into their work about shadows and the translucent and opaque qualities of materials. One boy explained in a clear but totally personal way his own understanding of how an overhead projector worked. This was not a planned part of the lesson but the other pupils were entranced and the teacher wisely and gently supported his complex but accurate reasoning.
74. Assessment procedures are very good. They are built into lessons in the planning stage and possible alternative strategies are listed to engage pupils' imagination and to extend their thinking should the first approach fail to capture their interest. Teachers use these processes very skilfully to adapt their work within lessons and to inform the next steps in planning. Marking is thorough, in books and often takes place beside pupils, where a comment or a word is enough to refocus pupils' thinking. The subject leader has set in place very good systems. She has benefited from having time allocated to monitor planning and to observe and support colleagues in the classroom. The range and quality of resources are very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership has had a very positive impact on improving the quality of provision.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well and standards are now close to the expected levels and for some more confident pupils they are above expectations.
- Teaching is good overall and is very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The use of the subject to promote and extend learning in other subjects is very well developed.

Commentary

75. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The improvements in this subject have been impressive. Pupils across the school attain at the expected levels and in most classes a small group achieve at the level above that expected for their age. The most confident pupils are working at levels expected for the next phase of education, in part because their understanding of investigation and personal endeavour are so good. There is now a

small but well equipped computer suite, all of the teachers and support staff have undertaken training and the scheme of work ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught.

76. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand the various forms of communication such as CD- ROMs, tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computer for word processing, using the mouse confidently, and are beginning to find their way around the keyboard and icons. They confidently log on, edit text, save their work and log off. By Year 6 many pupils are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. For example, pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets and graphs. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are equally strong, as the school has good access to an interesting and up-to-date range of relevant software.
77. Teaching is good overall. This has a positive effect on raising standards. All teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the purpose of all work to pupils very well. Lessons are planned well and the learning objectives are made very clear. Emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary and very often the skills learned in ICT are used to support work in other subjects. Teachers achieve a good balance between formal instruction and the time allowed for pupils to get on with their independent work. This results in good learning. In all lessons, the pace is brisk and all of the activities used are broken down into manageable steps. Skilful questioning fully involves pupils in their own learning and support is well targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are important factors in pupils' achievement in lessons.
78. The leadership of the subject is good and strategies to raise attainment levels have been very well managed. The subject leader has undertaken a comprehensive whole-school audit to evaluate the best ways to use and extend the existing skill base. As a result, teachers have a very good understanding of what pupils do well and where more support is needed. Very good assessment systems are used to chart pupils' work and progress and to enable teachers to provide relevant follow up work. The resources are good but the need for additional computers has been identified so that more work in groups supporting investigation and enquiry in other subjects might be carried out in those classrooms that are a long way from the computer suite.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. The use of ICT across the curriculum is purposeful and effective. Teachers' planning for other subjects always identifies opportunities for its use. Sometimes, however, the distance from the computer suite means that plans are set on hold until the next scheduled lesson. In ICT lessons teachers and pupils often use work from other subjects as the means to develop computer skills. Developing skills and confidence in mathematics help pupils to develop more advanced skills in the subject. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and by the use of programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Pupils use software programs and the Internet regularly for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography, and art and design. Data handling in science and mathematics using computer skills is another good development.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop an understanding of the purpose of geography.
- Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to link the subject with other work.
- Good attention is paid to the wider world.
- There are insufficient practical opportunities to apply skills, such as in local fieldwork.

Commentary

80. Only one lesson was seen but discussion with a group of pupils from Year 6 was illuminating. They have a good awareness of what studying geography is concerned with. They talk about how climate and terrain affect people's way of life and are also aware of the human effect on the environment. Pupils express some knowledge of using maps and apply this, for example, when giving reasons for sites selected for settlements. One pupil knew the origins of the Ordnance Survey.
81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use sketch maps to identify a site for a castle. They also enjoy the opportunity to write about castles; good links are made with history. Pupils follow the travels of Barnaby Bear, and this gives them some insight into other parts of the world. This work is developed further in the classes for pupils in Years 5 and 6 through their 'Travel Buddies' programme. They extend their knowledge of other places in the world whilst using skills developed in English and ICT to undertake personal research and to communicate with and learn more about their American friends.
82. Studies of other places in the world are good. Pupils are able to compare their lives with life in modern and ancient Mexico. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced some very good research projects on 'Water'. These involve comparing their own good fortune with that of people in many African and other Third World countries. Opportunities in the local area are insufficient for them to work on practical projects to develop their skills and knowledge to the full.

HISTORY

Work in history was sampled, with insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about provision, teaching standards and progress.

83. One lesson only was seen, in which the pupils in Years 5 and 6 used books and the Internet to research information about aspects of British life since 1948. Pupils make good use of their skills developed in reading, making notes and ICT. Discussion with some of them showed their very positive views about the subject, particularly in the way that they are currently taught. Pupils expressed the opinion that 'The teacher makes it

fun'. They learn skills that they then apply to tasks continued at home. They enjoy this and were very proud to show individually selected projects on Churchill, Florence Nightingale and Kellogg. Pupils have enjoyed the experiences of several educational visits to places such as Eden Camp and Jorvik. Pupils recall these outings beyond their locality with great pleasure. Their knowledge of sources of evidence, and how much reliability can be placed on it, is good.

84. Displays around the school and pupils' recorded work shows good use of role-play. Pupils consider the poetry of Brooke and Sassoon; empathising with soldiers of the 1914-18 war. Pupils in Year 2 compare aspects of the seaside 'then and now' and place a series of photographs in time order with a good level of accuracy. Timelines are used well to give very clear views of the sequence of events. These are enhanced with photographs and other objects of interest. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 compare older objects with more recent ones.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and promote a strong interest in the faiths and traditions of others.
- The school is alert to the opportunities to learn from experts in their own faith and to use the skills available to increase the pupils' knowledge.
- The location of the school means that pupils have few opportunities to visit places of worship from other than the Christian tradition.

Commentary

85. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve well. They learn about the Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, and Sikh faiths but the lack of other than Christian churches in the neighbourhood makes visits to places of worship very difficult. Work in pupils' exercise books shows that they are developing an understanding of the traditions, customs and dress of different cultures and faiths. They have compared the similarities and differences between the major world faiths. Teachers draw out the similarities between Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism carefully with regard to the sacred texts and prophets of each tradition.
86. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was good. Teachers use work in the subject very sensitively to contribute to pupils' personal as well as academic development. The designs and colours of a Christian priest's vestments were examined and were linked to the colours representing different periods in the religious life of the Christian church and in other cultures. Pupils know many stories from the Old and New Testaments and from the sacred books of traditions from other than the Christian faith. Work about celebrating talents and not hiding them away so that they are not used was very well illustrated and this encouraged pupils to share the things that they do well.
87. Teachers' files show that lessons are carefully planned. The subject leader manages the subject very well and the resources available are plentiful and of good quality. Steps have been taken to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational

needs, have full access to the scheme of work developed from the agreed syllabus. Assessment opportunities are simple, effective and practical. Religious education makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. It was only possible to observe a few lessons in art and design, music and design and technology, so overall judgements about provision and teaching have not been made. During the inspection there were a number of discussions with subject leaders about their work, inspectors scrutinised teachers' planning and assessment files as well as talking with pupils and analysing the content and quality of pupils' completed work.

ART AND DESIGN

Work in the subject was only sampled so it was not possible to make secure judgements about provision, standards, teaching and progress.

Commentary

89. The range of displays around the school suggests that there is a suitable coverage of the curriculum. Pupils experience a variety of media and techniques. This is seen in a series of portraits by pupils of all ages that show good progression in their skills as they get older. A brief view of some pupils in Year 6 saw them making interesting and detailed observational drawings of seedpods and walnuts. They discussed their reasons for selecting different media as they investigated various textures. The completed clay containers of those who had already applied these skills showed great care and attention to detail.
90. Good links are made with other subjects. Pupils in the classes for Years 3 and 4 have designed 'wanted' posters for characters relating to the story of The Three Little Pigs. They use viewfinders to capture unusual images, which they sketch and then use in drama, as a basis for creating a dream scene. Their work is recorded using a digital camera.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. The analysis of pupils' completed work and the observations of work displayed around the school, as well as the teachers' photographic records, indicates that pupils' attainments in design and technology are in line with those expected. A range of 'containers', made by older pupils, showed sensible and considered use of materials, accurate construction, a good finish and pertinent evaluation of the finished products. The work on 'Bread Products' revealed considerable, detailed analysis and evaluations. The school has firm plans to develop a newly created area of the school into a dedicated facility to develop food technology in order to enhance provision for the subject.

MUSIC

92. The subject leader for music has recently introduced a new scheme of work that offers very good support for non-specialist teachers of the subject. The range and quantity of

good quality resources have recently been improved and the school is making a determined effort to overcome the lack of specialist music expertise. Parents help teach guitar and recorder, visiting instrumental teachers provide tuition for brass instruments and key board skills and a number of pupils play recorders. The subject leader has established a school choir where pupils enjoy performing to the school and for people in and around the village.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and promotes good learning.
- Work in dance in classes for younger pupils is good.
- In gymnastics pupils collaborate well and evaluate the work of their peers sensibly.

Commentary

93. Formal lessons were only seen involving older pupils but pupils in Year 1 demonstrated their skills in modern dance during a session of collective worship. The evidence indicates that attainment levels are in line with those expected.
94. The agreed scheme of work for older pupils covers all of the required elements to maintain a full programme of activities. The plans to support teaching and learning for the younger pupils are new. The recently introduced scheme has been welcomed enthusiastically by the pupils and teachers. Following a full evaluation of its effectiveness it is planned to extend this to meet the needs of older pupils. Pupils go to the nearest town for swimming lessons when they are in Year 3. A recent audit showed that by the time they leave the school nine out of ten pupils are able to swim the required distance, with many attaining longer distances and additional certificates of achievement. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of sporting activities such as football, netball and tennis. They take part in competitions and tournaments with other schools. Good use is made of the well-equipped hall and extensive hard surfaced and grassed play areas.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

95. Few lessons were observed in this area of the school's work but those that were observed indicate that this aspect of the work of the school is seen to be important. Pupils' attitudes, achievements and self-worth are valued highly and are promoted very well. The overall good quality of teaching and very good curricular enrichment, including visits to places of educational interest and visitors to the school, contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how important elements of the community and society work. Circle time is used to give pupils opportunities for voicing their opinions and concerns. During school collective worship the atmosphere created supports the concept of the school family and is caring and supportive. The headteacher and staff listen to pupils and respond to their opinions. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of how a fair society works. All aspects of a healthy lifestyle are very well covered in the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	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	1
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).