

INSPECTION REPORT

TURTON BELMONT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique reference number: 119201

Headteacher: Mr C Hoddle

Lead inspector: Mr G Alston

Dates of inspection: 14-16 June 2004

Inspection number: 258248

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	83
School address:	Ryecroft Lane Belmont Bolton Lancashire
Postcode:	BL7 8AH
Telephone number:	01204 811226
Fax number:	01204 811138
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Knight

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Belmont school is a primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It has one site and lies in the heart of Belmont, a small rural village community, five miles North of Bolton. The school is smaller than average, with 83 pupils on the roll of the main school: 34 boys and 49 girls. It has a Reception class that caters for 12 children. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels. Overall, based on the school's own testing of children, the standards that the children have reached in all areas of learning on entry to the Reception class are at the expected level for children of this age. Pupils are organised into four classes; three classes have mixed age groups. Housing is mainly owner occupied terraced and detached dwellings. It is an area of average mobility with pupils entering and leaving the school during the school year. All of the pupils are white and there are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. This figure is less than that found in most schools. There are six per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, (although a number of families who are entitled to free meals do not take up the offer), which as a percentage is below average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. Two of these pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These figures are about average. In 2003 the school gained a School's Achievement award. At present the school is in the process of building two additional classrooms.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	G Alston	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
19740	A Smith	Lay inspector	
23453	C Cressey	Team inspector	English Geography History Music Religious education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

When asked what he thought about his school a Year 6 pupil responded thoughtfully, 'Belmont is a small, caring school where you get lots of help and everyone gets on with each other'. He was right! Belmont Primary School is a very good school that provides a very good standard of education. Pupils achieve very well because year after year they are fortunate enough to receive very good teaching. They enjoy all that their school offers, have very good attitudes to work and behave very well. The headteacher, strongly supported by a conscientious deputy and an enthusiastic staff and governors, provides very effective leadership. The management is very good. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well partly because they are treated to very good teaching.
- Pupils are very happy at school and get on very well with each other and their teachers.
- Everyone who works at the school tries very hard to encourage every pupil's all-round development. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are valued and supported very effectively.
- A dedicated headteacher provides very effective leadership and manages the school very well.
- Curriculum provision overall is good. A very wide range of interesting activities, including many out-of-school clubs and a good range of visits out of school and visitors into school, enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to further use and develop their writing and information and communication technology skills (ICT) across all subjects.
- The procedures and systems for checking on and evaluating how well the school is doing, used by conscientious senior managers and the governors, are very good.
- There are few systems in place to check on and record what pupils know, understand or can do in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

The hard work of the headteacher and staff after the last inspection in 1999 has been central to the good improvement in the school since that time. The key area for improvement, the monitoring of how well the school is performing, has been tackled very successfully. Standards in English and mathematics have been generally maintained to be well above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching has improved as a consequence of all teachers being regularly observed and professional discussion following. Good progress has been made on other issues highlighted in the last inspection related to giving pupils more opportunities to write stories and poems and in analysing test results. There have also been improvements in tracking pupils' progress, especially in English, mathematics and science. The strengths identified in the last report have been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Due to small numbers of pupils taking the test it is not reliable to compare results in National tests (SATs) from year to year. **Overall, pupil achievement is very good.** The school's own testing procedures show that children enter the Reception class with levels of ability at the expected level for their age in all areas of learning. Very good achievement in the Foundation Stage ensures that almost all the children reach the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. They continue to achieve very well and, at the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science and average in writing. At the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at national expectations in ICT but no judgement on standards could be made in religious education (RE). Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well compared to their prior learning because they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is good. The school provides a good range of experiences for their spiritual, social and cultural development and very good for their moral development. As a result, relationships are very warm and caring, and the pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils enjoy their school, and attendance and punctuality are better than in most schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good education. Teaching is very good throughout. Pupils learn effectively and make very good progress because very good relationships, interesting activities and attention to making lessons fun, underpin their learning. English and mathematics are taught very well and pupils develop good basic skills. However, in lessons other than English and mathematics there are missed opportunities to make further use of pupils' literacy and ICT skills. The range of learning experiences is exciting and interesting for pupils. A range of short-term projects, lots of visits and visitors and good links with the community significantly enhance the work planned in lessons. Parents support the school well. Links with other schools are good. The accommodation and resources at present do not have a positive effect on learning. However, the school is in the process of adding two new classrooms that will improve this situation. Although there is a good pupil to computer ratio in classrooms there are not enough computer programs to support learning in most subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good. He encourages and supports staff very well and leads a very strong and united team very successfully. The management of the school is very good. It now has firmly established clear management systems in order to check effectively not only how well the school is performing but also the impact of any action plans that have been implemented to bring about identified improvements. The governing body is very good, especially in its role as a critical friend and in supporting the school. Governors use their expertise very well in shaping and checking on the development of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are very pleased with the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching and the caring atmosphere. **The pupils enjoy school very much,** like their teachers a lot and feel that their lessons are always very interesting with plenty of exciting things to do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- *Increase the range and number of opportunities for pupils to write and use computers across a subjects.
- *Spread the good practice of checking on, and recording what pupils know, understand or can do in English, mathematics and science to other subjects.

**The areas identified above are to receive attention as highlighted in the school development plan.*

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is very good. It is very good in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. The standards pupils attain in ICT are at the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get a very good start in the Foundation Stage and make very good progress in their learning.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills that are at the expected level, and by the time they enter Year 1 most will reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning.
- Throughout their time in Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to achieve well, at the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science.
- Limited opportunities for pupils to use their good writing and ICT skills in all subjects restricts the standards they achieve.
- Throughout their time in Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is very good and, at the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Commentary

1. Generally standards have been above average in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection where the improvement in results has been similar to the national trend. The school does well in meeting the targets it is set by the Local Authority.
2. The table below shows that in 2003 standards at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. When compared to those in similar schools they are well above average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. Standards rose dramatically in 2003, the exception was in writing. The school did well on pupils reaching the expected level in writing but not as well as it should have on pupils reaching the higher level. However, these fluctuations are very much related to the small cohorts of pupils in Year 2; as a result comparing results between years is not a reliable indicator of how well the school is performing. There is every indication that standards will fall again to be above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing in 2004 tests. Having said this the school is aware of standards in writing which are not as high as reading. As a result of analysis, several new initiatives have been introduced to raise standards especially at the end of Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.0 (15.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.0 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

3. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in Year 6 tests were close to the national average in English and well above in mathematics and above in science. In 2003, standards fell from previous years. This was linked to one pupil being absent and a greater number of pupils with special education needs in the class than is normal. However, the school did well on pupils reaching the expected level in writing but not as well as it should have on pupils reaching the higher level. These fluctuations are very much related to the small cohorts of pupils in Year 6; as a result comparing results between years is not a reliable indicator of how well the school is performing. There is every indication that standards will rise again to be well above average in English, mathematics and science in 2004 tests. However, writing results will not be as good as reading results. The school is aware of weaker standards in writing as compared to reading. As a result of analysis, several new initiatives have been introduced to raise standards further.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (30.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (29.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.3 (31.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. When children start school in the Reception class, test data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding are very variable. For the last few years the overall profile has been that most pupils enter school at the level expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. They get a very good start in the Foundation Stage classes that help them to achieve very well. As a result, by the time they reach Year 1, the attainment of the vast majority is likely to reach the national expectation in all areas of their learning.
5. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well because of the very good provision made for all areas of their development. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with severe learning difficulties, who are especially well supported by teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils also do well and respond well to challenges they are set. A knowledgeable teacher monitors the progress of both Years 1 and 2 well, ensuring there is continuity in practice and a high quality is maintained. The very good achievement is also linked to very good teaching. Well-planned lessons with interesting tasks that take account of pupils of all abilities are the secret. The very good relationships between staff and pupils makes pupils feel valued and cared for. As a result, they try very hard with all the tasks they are set and show great interest in all activities. This has produced standards at present that are above national expectations in reading, mathematics and science and average in writing.
6. Pupil achievement is very good in Years 3 to 6. This is closely linked to the monitoring and evaluation of individual pupils through target-setting and effective teaching that is present in all lessons. Staff support each other in planning well together at times, ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged, including those with special educational needs, lower and higher attaining pupils. Pupils receive high-quality teaching from enthusiastic teachers. Their lessons are made interesting and lively, and build well on past learning. The pupils respond with great enthusiasm, concentrate well on tasks and produce lots of work of very good quality. Humour is used well to develop warm

relationships that create an effective working environment. This has led to standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science.

7. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are close to national expectations in ICT but limited evidence makes the judgement on whether pupils reach the level expected of the Locally Agreed syllabus in religious education (RE) unreliable.
8. The rich curriculum impacts positively on pupils' achievement. The school is beginning to consider ways to link subjects to create interesting topics. Pupils apply their reading skills well in other areas of the curriculum. The skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are taught appropriately in literacy lessons, and pupils apply these skills to their written work. Achievement in writing is affected negatively because there is not a sufficiently strong focus on using and further developing pupils' good writing in all subjects.
9. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well. Class teachers assess their needs and progress, and discuss them with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who draws up and monitors the individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent reviews of their targets contribute significantly to the very good progress made by these pupils. The school's strategies for assessing and identifying targeted support are beginning to have an impact on the progress pupils make towards their targets. Overall, the progress of pupils who have severe learning difficulties (autism and dyslexia) is very good throughout the school. This is mainly because teachers are clear about what pupils know and understand, and plan their lessons well to consolidate and extend their learning. Teaching assistants provide strong support, and other pupils are always happy to help. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform similarly. Higher-attaining boys and girls do equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**, overall. Attendance is very good. These have been maintained very well since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' positive approach to learning results in high levels of interest and enthusiasm in lessons.
- The very strong relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to work hard.
- A very high standard of pupil behaviour makes learning most effective.
- The very good levels of attendance contribute positively to the standards of education pupils achieve.

Commentary

10. Pupils' very good attitudes make a considerable contribution to their attainment and levels of achievement. Children in the Foundation are on line to meet the expected level in their personal and social development. All pupils settle very quickly into classes and are enthusiastic to be included in all learning activities throughout the whole school. Pupils confidently share ideas and the responses they make are highly valued by staff,

which in turn promotes their self-esteem. This is a consistent approach across the whole school and includes pupils with special educational needs. Pupils take much pleasure in the challenging tasks put before them. For example:

- in a Year 3 / 4 history lesson, pupils became extremely absorbed investigating the different sports developed by the ancient Greeks for the Olympics.
- in a Year 1 / 2 religious education lesson, pupils worked extremely well together in pairs, showing high levels of concentration as they identified and named various parts of the local church.

11. Throughout the school, pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. They show a mature regard for the property of others and the environment, respecting school resources very well. Pupils react very well to school rules and are well aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Their understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour makes a major contribution to this very orderly community and the high quality of learning. The school places a high priority on moral development. There have been no temporary or permanent exclusions in recent years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance rates are currently well above the national average and the school is in the top 10 per cent of schools across the country for attendance. The school monitors attendance and punctuality well and attempts in many ways to make parents and pupils fully aware of the significance of full attendance and punctuality on pupils and the class. The strong family ethos within the school supports pupils effectively making them very happy to be there. All pupils arrive in time for a prompt start to the school day.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll
White – British	82
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	1

13. Relationships within the school are very good and this supports all pupils in learning and helps them achieve very effectively. They are typified by the mutual respect evident between pupils and the adults who work with them. Members of staff provide excellent role models in demonstrating how relationships are initiated and sustained. They show sensitivity and concern for feelings and values of others, for instance, when sharing their work in plenary sessions. Pupils also relate very well to unfamiliar visitors, showing a natural and genuine courtesy. No racist language was heard or incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. Pupils of all ages accept and enjoy responsibility, for example, when they are given the opportunity to help with school routines and practices. They exude lots of ideas for their school and have an active involvement in school

improvement. Although currently the school's intention for further development through a School's Council has not yet been initiated.

14. Pupils' personal development is high on the school's list of priorities and as a result provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teachers make very good use of religious discussion to help pupils reflect on how best they can contribute to the community. Issues such as kindness to others or the injustice of bullying and dishonesty feature in class and school discussion. There is a very strong drive by all staff to promote pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are valued as individuals; their achievements are recognised and recorded. They are encouraged by this and strive always to do their best. They recognise and value what others do.
15. Social and moral development is promoted well. There is a clear code of conduct that is understood by all. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong and are encouraged in the principles of teamwork and fair play. Relationships between pupils are very good, reflecting the excellent role models presented by all staff. Provision for cultural development is good. It is well rooted in the school's ethos and sets out clearly the expectation that all people are to be treated with dignity and respect. The school has a clear policy on race equality that challenges racist perspectives and provides opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate the cultural values of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Strengths include the very good care shown to pupils and the consistently good teaching in all classes. Lots of interesting visits and visitors enrich class projects, helping to bring the curriculum alive for the pupils, and there are good links with the community. Overall, staff make best use of the limited accommodation and satisfactory levels of resources to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, a lack of ICT programs to support learning in different subjects restricts the use that can be made of the good levels of computers in the classrooms.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A further strength is the good procedures in place for checking on what pupils know, understand or can do in English, mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching is very good and the needs of all pupils are very well met. In all of the 21 lessons seen the teaching was at least satisfactory, and it was very good or better in 43 per cent. Indeed, in one lesson the teaching was judged to be excellent. The quality of teaching is consistent across the school and eight out of ten lessons are good or better. As a result, pupils achieve very well throughout the school. What they know, understand and can do is checked thoroughly in English, mathematics and science. Not enough use is made of pupils' good writing and ICT skills across all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are evident between staff, and pupils are given a firm foundation for learning.
- Teachers react well to pupils' answers, often supporting or challenging well with questions, and have carefully-targeted work ready to provide.
- Lessons are clearly planned and members of the support staff are closely involved, contributing well to the very good learning of the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Basic skills of writing and ICT are effectively taught, but pupils' skills are not further used and developed sufficiently well in supporting learning in all subjects.
- Assessment information is used effectively to move pupils of all abilities forward in English, mathematics and science. This good practice is not consistently found in other subjects.
- All teachers have an enthusiastic and imaginative approach and classrooms are well organised. Teachers provide a range of hands-on practical activities and good quality resources to aid pupils' learning.
- The accommodation is limited at present and there is a shortage of computer programmes.

Commentary

The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	8	10	2	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.

16. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, when the majority of lessons were satisfactory and six per cent were not good enough. Most of the particular

weaknesses; for example, planning work to meet pupils' needs, have been addressed very well. Records show that the improvement has been closely associated with feedback given from the headteacher's monitoring, whether to individuals or as a stimulus for discussion in staff meetings. There is now an appropriate agreed statement about what constitutes good teaching and learning. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils like and trust their teachers and teaching assistants, and this helps them to tackle work with confidence. They agree strongly that they learn new things in lessons and that they have to work hard, and all find lessons very interesting and fun. Homework is given regularly and aids pupils' learning.

17. Lessons are planned clearly and pupils are told what they are going to learn, which involves them well. Teaching assistants are well aware of the aims of lessons and the activities that will take place. Throughout the school teaching assistants are active and use their time wisely; for example, supporting an autistic pupil by encouraging him to respond to the teacher's questions in the introductory session of the lesson. They take a small group of pupils during lessons, or work with individual pupils to support them. Small group sessions for pupils in need of extra support were effective whether taught by teachers or support staff. In one very-well-taught small group lesson for Year 6 the key strength was in the questioning that encouraged the pupils to work out for themselves how to improve. This was highly motivating for them and raised their self-esteem. The school made a decision to maintain comparatively high levels of teaching assistants, and they make a very effective contribution to pupils' achievement.
18. Classrooms are very well organised, with equipment and books neatly stored so that they are easily accessible to pupils. This encourages pupils to move quickly onto the tasks they have been set and no time is lost. A good range of resources are provided and used well, and particularly well in a good Year 5 / 6 science lesson, which provided a very good opportunity for pupils to learn about the parts of a flower using a colourful range of fresh, scented lilies. In the Foundation Stage, practical activities stimulate the children and support their learning well. In mathematics, too, the emphasis on well-devised practical activities helps pupils to keep their interest and concentration and take an active part in the lesson. In a Year 3 / 4 mathematics lesson, the 21 pupils in the class moved from group to group as they divided themselves into groups of two, three, four, five and six. Pupils gained a clear understanding of division with remainders. In a Year 2 history lesson, the local church was effectively used as a resource. The pupils' interest had already been stimulated as many attended the wedding of one of the staff at the weekend. The school has good numbers of computers to pupils (1:4) in classrooms and some good use is made of them at times. However, there is a lack of adequate programs to further use and develop pupils' ICT skills in all subjects. There is a similar picture in the use of pupils' good writing skills where opportunities are missed to make further use of these skills across all subjects.
19. There is a strong belief in ensuring that the needs of all pupils are equally met whether a pupil with special educational needs or a higher- and lower-attaining pupil. All are given the support that they need. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in class in small groups from teaching assistants to enable them to understand and complete the tasks set, and make very good progress. Teachers set tasks to match their needs in literacy and numeracy lessons, and individual targets on individual action plans are precise. The teaching of pupils with severe learning difficulties, such as autism or dyslexia is effective because there is a strong emphasis on ensuring they are well supported and fully included in all aspects of the lesson.

20. In the best lessons, good subject knowledge by teachers ensures interesting activities and a lively approach that grips pupils enthusiasm and helps them to progress quickly. Very good questioning enables them to think carefully and develop understanding. Pupils are encouraged by all teachers to explain their responses further when they are not clear. This helps develop language and encourages pupils to express their ideas clearly and confidently to others.
21. Where teaching is less effective in a small number of lessons there is a tendency to over-direct pupils, or the introduction lasts too long. In one lesson, as pupils worked on the tasks they had been given, there was too much direction by the teacher. This resulted in missed opportunities for pupils to think for themselves or learn from their own mistakes. As a result, in these lessons higher attaining pupils are often not fully stretched and pupils are unaware of how they can improve their work.
22. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science and have improved since the last inspection, when they were an area for improvement. In English, mathematics and science teachers assess their pupils well in all activities to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty. This information is then used well to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are tested frequently in English and mathematics. This information is also used as a means of checking their learning. Tracking systems are in place and show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. These targets are reviewed to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Reasons why these pupils are underachieving and ways forward for them are then discussed. This ensures that they all do as well as they should. This good practice is not in evidence in other subjects and does not help staff securely plan lessons that build well on past learning. All staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work, and the marking of work is always helpful. It gives pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended. Another strength is the opportunity for pupils to assess themselves. Good practice was seen in a Year 1 / 2 mathematics lesson as pupils had to decide which basket to put their work in based on 'I found it easy', 'I found it hard' or 'I found it just right'.

The curriculum

The provision of learning experiences for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is **good**. Extra-curricular provision is good. The accommodation is limited, and the overall quality of the learning resources is generally satisfactory. The curriculum has improved since the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision made for English, mathematics and science is good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to use their own initiative in undertaking practical and problem-solving activities in mathematics and science.
- The accommodation at present impacts on the curriculum adversely.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Limited use is made of writing and ICT to support work in other subjects.
- The enrichment produced through extra-curricular activities and educational visits and visitors to the school is good.

- There are good levels of teachers and teaching assistants, and they complement each other well in supporting pupils.
- The curriculum meets all statutory requirements.

Commentary

23. The range of learning experiences provided for children in Reception is good. Detailed plans are in place, which most successfully incorporate all the areas of learning that should be taught to children before they enter Year 1. Lesson planning is comprehensive, and the children have access to a wide range of interesting activities and experiences in the classroom and at times, in the hall and playground. There is no outdoor play area but staff compensate well for this by using the hall and playground for planned lessons aimed at children's physical and creative development. Work has just begun in building a new classroom with an outdoor area for the Foundation Stage. The classroom is adequately resourced, outings are arranged and the children are very well supported and encouraged by the teacher and teaching assistant. A rich, stimulating and varied curriculum is the result.
24. The range of learning experiences provided ensures the curriculum is broad and balanced for Years 1 to 6. All subjects are now carefully planned, and there is no movement between classes to cause disruption or loss of continuity. The school has a good overview of its curriculum and improvements have been made since the last inspection in the provision for science and especially ICT, and in the planning for nearly all subjects. The school is beginning to look at developing links between subjects. However, there are weaknesses in the planning for ICT across classes, where regular ICT lessons are not planned as such. However, skills based lessons are taught as pupils need the skills in other subjects, such as word-processing in their literacy. This works well but younger pupils tend to forget the skills they have learnt. The school currently makes good overall provision for the development of English in the school, and this has contributed to the higher than expected standards now being produced. At present, however, limited use is being made of writing, as well as ICT, to support work in other subjects. Pupils throughout the school tackle practical and problem-solving activities in mathematics and science well, and good opportunities are provided for them to use their own initiative to plan and organise their own work. The good opportunities for more personal responsibility in these activities strengthens pupils' overall subject knowledge. The school makes every effort to involve pupils in the full range of schoolwork and activities. Overall, the school makes good provision for the equality of opportunity for all pupils, and in so doing allows them to achieve as well as they can. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of drugs and sex education forms a part of their health education programmes of study.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school puts a high priority on providing well for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers and all teaching assistants are dedicated to the wellbeing and best interests of the pupils with special educational needs, and teaching has improved. Pupils receive a good curriculum, which is carefully adapted by staff to meet particular needs. Pupils have informative individual education plans, and along with the clear, relevant and achievable targets, they make very good progress towards achieving them. Although their standards are below the national expectation, they achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment, as do the gifted and talented pupils, because of highly effective support.

26. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, including a band, recorders, football, netball, drama and the very popular science club. The range of activities for sport is very good. The school welcomes many visitors, including writers, storytellers, local clergy, police, drum and dance performers and road safety, as well as drama and music groups. A wide range of educational visits is arranged to places such as the water treatment plant, Witton Park and Octagon theatre, and a visit to the science museum are features for classes throughout the school. The school also makes good use of the local area of Belmont for various studies. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as well as enhancing their understanding and skills in different curriculum subjects. Pupils readily talk enthusiastically about their 'Book Day' in March when staff dressed up and acted out 'the Wizard of Oz'. The day was further enhanced by a visit and talk from Cath Price.
27. The school's accommodation, overall, is inadequate, but there are significant improvements being made with the ongoing building, especially for children in the Year 1 / 2 and the Reception class. Classrooms are generally adequate in size, but there are no extra work areas available for use by small groups. The hall is used as a Year1 / 2 classroom, which restricts its use for physical education and pupils have to be taught in the entrance for a short period each day due to lunchtime preparation. The school has cleverly overcome this by timetabling all physical education sessions for one day to reduce disruption. Outside play-areas are adequate. Another problem with the accommodation is the lack of storage space. However, members of staff overcome this well, managing to keep the school neat and tidy, and still making items readily available when they are needed. Rooms are clean and well maintained, and displays of pupils' work greatly enhance the learning environment. The additional building should answer these prayers and improve the facilities immensely. Resources are generally satisfactory in number and are of good quality. However, programs for ICT that can support learning across subjects are limited which restricts the impact of computers as an aid to learning (tool) across the curriculum. The school is well staffed by a dedicated and well-informed group of teachers and teaching assistants. They complement each other well in providing for their pupils. The Reception children are very fortunate to be in a small class of 12. This was a conscious decision the school made and has proved to be very successful in helping the children to get a very good start to their educational life.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are **good**. The school's support and guidance of pupils is **very good**. Pupils' views are highly valued and they make a good contribution to the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' progress and personal development are well supported by teacher's individual knowledge of their progress, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils settle in very well when they start school and are well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- Pupils work in a safe and healthy environment.

Commentary

28. All staff place a very high priority on pupils' welfare and well being. Pupils' personal development is supported very well. Pupils form trusting relationships with staff and feel very well looked after. They feel highly valued because their views are accepted and acted upon. The school's plans to introduce a School's Council will encourage further avenues for pupils to represent their feelings and ideas of others more effectively.
29. Children's introduction to school is very well planned and includes the support of parents, carers and all school staff. Children quickly settle into routines, enabling staff to begin to assess their individual needs. Transfer procedures to the High School are good and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Staff respond well to the individual needs of those pupils with special educational needs and they make very good progress as a result.
30. Good attention is paid to health and safety and the frequent use of the local authority experts supports the school efforts well. They have taken on board the Local Education Authority's procedures with the governors customising them for their own school. Talks to the pupils by representatives of the police and other emergency services provide effectively for pupils' personal safety. First-aid provision is good. Child protection procedures are well known by all staff and they have had suitable training.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with its parents is **good**. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are **good**, and have all improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the school and support their children well.
- Information for parents is good and keeps them aware of how well pupils are performing.
- The Parent Teacher Association supports the school well, providing valuable resources.
- Links with community and other schools enrich pupils' learning experiences and enhance opportunities for social development.

Commentary

31. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They describe it as a very happy place in which strong relationships exist between pupils, teachers and parents. There is nothing significant that causes them concern or worry. They believe that the school is very fair to all and that all children are encouraged to be considerate and develop a mature viewpoint. The inspection team agrees with these judgements and these areas are strengths of the school.
32. There are regular and informative newsletters that keep them aware of the day-to-day procedures, expectations and events of the school. Pupils' annual reports are sufficiently detailed and consistent across the classes. Where there is a concern or complaint, the school is quick to inform and consult parents. At consultative meetings there are opportunities for parents to discuss individual pupils' plans for learning and the progress they are making towards achieving their targets. Information on what is to be taught in each subject is currently not provided for parents at the start of each term.

As this is valuable for those who wish to assist with their children's learning at home, the school is considering the value of re-introducing this to further support parents working with their children at home.

33. Parents support the school very well. They know the school routines and expectations, including those for attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Significant numbers of parents attend the events the school provides to assist them in their knowledge of its teaching methods. The Parent Teacher Association raises valuable funds that are very carefully targeted and thus used beneficially to support pupils' learning.
34. There are good links with other schools in the area, especially with the High School to which most pupils transfer. Links with the community and a wide range of visitors provide good enrichment for the curriculum. These links also support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers is very good, and the leadership of other key staff is **very good**. Governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher strongly supported by the deputy promotes a very positive ethos for learning and ensures the school runs smoothly and efficiently.
- Monitoring of the teaching and learning and analysis of data on pupil attainment and progress are very good.
- The school's commitment to inclusion, equal opportunities and the needs of individuals is very good.
- The school development plan has clear priorities and is a very good management tool.
- Governors are fully supportive of the school and have a major role in shaping the work of the school.

Commentary

35. The leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has implemented a range of strategies, including the creation of a deputy headteacher, to create an effective leadership and management system that meets the particular needs of a small semi-rural school. The headteacher and deputy now provide very effective leadership and manage the school very well. The headteacher's major strength is his ability to combine his heavy teaching role with that of headteacher. He has the confidence of staff, pupils, parents and governors, is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and strives for improvements. There is a strong commitment to ensuring all pupils achieve well and reach the highest standards they are capable of. This is apparent in the overall high standards pupils have achieved in recent years and awareness that in some subjects, such as writing and information communication technology, standards could be even better.
36. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure an efficient work force and performance management is used well to bring about improvement. Individual skills and specialisms

are used to ensure all pupils receive the maximum support and that staff have quality time to manage their subjects and fulfil their responsibilities. For example, the Reception class teacher teaches reading and music in other classes and part time teachers release the headteacher and deputy head to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively.

37. The school development plan is a very good concise document that states clear relevant objectives and how they will be achieved. These objectives stem from rigorous evaluation of the school by staff, governors, parents and pupils. Consideration is given to any idea which may bring about further improvement. It is also based on very detailed analysis of how individual pupils are performing. There are effective and manageable systems in place to monitor teaching and learning. Data analysis, assessments and tracking procedures for the core subjects are used well by staff and class teachers as an effective tool to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they can. The management of English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Stage has been very effective in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning, rigorously analysing test results and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. As a result teaching is of a very high quality and pupils are eager, enthusiastic learners who achieve well and reach higher than expected standards.
38. The headteacher shows a concern for the needs of individual pupils and has ensured that the personal help and educational support given to pupils is effective. This is especially noticeable in the support given to pupils with special educational needs. It is also apparent in the promotion of good behaviour and very positive attitudes. Management of special educational needs is effective. Records are well maintained. All teachers and teaching assistants understand the difficulties faced by pupils with special educational needs and are providing sensitive, effective support.
39. Governors have a very strong commitment to, and vision for, the school and are proud of its achievements whilst recognising that there are areas which require further improvement. They ensure all statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. Individual skills are used well to support aspects of school life. For example, one member of the governing body provides advice on the school development plan and as a result the document is a very useful tool for school improvement. Governors have a very good insight into the education that the school provides. They are challenging in holding the school to account for the quality of the education it provides and take an active part in developing, monitoring and evaluating the long-term plans for the school. The school has very good systems to monitor and evaluate spending and is financially secure. Considerations of best value are always taken into account when purchasing goods and services. Surplus funds are appropriately allocated to improving the accommodation and preserving small classes.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	257,494
Total expenditure	255,572
Expenditure per pupil (140 pupils)	1,839

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	78,135
Balance carried forward to the next	72,732

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and has improved since the last inspection. The overall attainment level of children entering the Reception class varies from year to year but at the time of the inspection it was typical of that found in other schools, with a broad spread of attainment and pre-school experiences. The children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the school's decision to maintain a small Reception class that is taught separately from children in the infant class. As a result of this and the very good provision and the consistently high quality of teaching, the children make rapid progress. They achieve well and make significant gains in their learning. This leads to nearly all of the children meeting the level expected in all areas of learning before they enter Year 1. Over half the children are working appropriately within the Key Stage 1 national curriculum for literacy and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently very good resulting in confident, well motivated and successful learners.
- The nursery nurse provides very good support to enhance learning.
- Activities and tasks are very well planned to enable children to make rapid progress in learning to be highly successful writers, readers and mathematicians.
- Provision for outdoor play and physical development is restricted at present by the accommodation and building works.

Commentary

40. All staff have a very secure understanding of how young children learn and ensure that school is an enjoyable experience and promotes a love of learning. This enables children to become highly successful learners who achieve very well. Tasks and activities are very well planned. Sessions provide a very good balance of teacher directed activities and those children can choose for themselves. Staff plan well together to meet the needs of the different ages and attainment levels enabling all children to achieve as well as they can. Particular attention is paid to meeting the needs of the youngest children in the class. This is successful in enabling these children to make good progress and achieve well. Challenging tasks are available for older children and those who learn at a faster rate. Staff provide clear, precise instructions and support which builds up children's confidence and skills. Children are clear about what they are expected to learn, how they should behave and how they can be successful. Staff know the children well and set different tasks and challenges to enable all children to achieve the highest standards they can. The class teacher uses the interactive white board imaginatively to promote children's learning, particularly in literacy and mathematics. All activities have clear learning intentions for different attainment levels and ages and the staff keep a watchful eye on children's progress towards them.
41. The Foundation Stage profile is used very effectively to check on what children know, understand or can do in relation to national expectations. Children's achievements are observed carefully and the information is used to plan the next activity and record their

progress. They use their knowledge of children's progress to plan the next step in the teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident, independent, secure and eager learners who behave very well.

Commentary

42. The very good teaching results in very good achievement. The majority of the children reach the national goals for early learning well before the end of the Reception year, several exceeding expectations. Relationships are very good and as a result children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour while at the same time being sensitive to those children who are immature. As a result behaviour is very good and children show concern and displeasure when other children on rare occasions do not share resources or take turns. Generally, children share resources and work together in a variety of situations, such as role-play, construction toys and games. Higher attaining children work independently for sustained periods of time and take pride in their reading and writing successes. All children work hard at challenging tasks, such as writing stories about 'Sea creatures' or weeding the school garden.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very confident readers and writers.

Commentary

43. The very good teaching results in very good achievement. Over 50 percent of children exceed national expectations and are already working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The remaining children are on target to reach the level expected for their age by the end of their Reception year. The teaching of literacy skills is given a high priority and is a feature of most of the children's activities in other areas of learning. As a result, children are becoming successful readers and writers for a wide range of purposes and contexts. Well-planned games and activities promote children's understanding of letters and sounds. Higher attaining children use their increasing knowledge of sounds to write complete and extended sentences which tell a story in sequence and include appropriately placed capital letters and full stops. Simple words are spelt correctly and more complex ones are phonetically justified. All children are reading independently using their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words. Children who learn at a faster rate can locate information in topic books and can use simple dictionaries to explain words or help them spell unfamiliar words. Younger

children are provided with additional support to help them learn new skills, such as building up words or improving their handwriting skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic number skills and mathematical vocabulary are reinforced at every opportunity.

Commentary

44. The very good teaching results in very good achievement. Over 50 per cent of children are already working appropriately within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The remaining children are on target to reach the level expected for their age by the end of their Reception year. The staff have a very good understanding of how to develop early mathematical skills. They include a wide range of activities to promote successful learning. The adults encourage counting, matching objects and number recognition as children play independently, in teacher directed group times and through class routines. Number lines, displays, pictures, ICT, books and good quality counting and sorting objects are all used to extend children's understanding of number to ten and beyond. Younger children count to 20 confidently and recognise numerals. Teachers set challenging tasks that extend learning well. As a result, older and higher attaining children confidently count to 40, recognise and sequence numbers, and show an understanding of 'more than and less than' and simple addition and subtraction. Children are learning to use correct mathematical vocabulary to solve problems of size, shape and position as they play with two and three-dimensional shapes and small world toys. In their water and sand play they talk with confidence about the different sizes of containers. They are encouraged to use correct mathematical vocabulary to describe their tasks.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OR THE WORLD, CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Due to having insufficient evidence it was not possible to form judgements about the standards and teaching in these areas of learning.

Commentary

45. The teacher's planning, displays and record keeping indicate very good opportunities **for creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.** Role-play activities, visits and visitors promote an understanding of children's place in the family and community. Scientific skills are promoted as children consider the changes that occur as they make jellies and ice-lollies. They explore the natural world as they observe the life cycle and habitats of snails and frogs in their school ponds. The children have well planned opportunities to use technology as they operate floor robots and use computer programs to support their learning in mathematics and literacy. Through the celebration of major festivals and visits from people from other countries and cultures children learn to respect the faiths and customs of others.

46. Imaginative play has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now a central part of the curriculum. Children enjoy taking part in the many very good role-play situations that the exciting resources promote. During the inspection children developed their imagination and extended their language skills well, as they became the characters in the story of the 'Lighthouse Keepers' Lunch'. Adults engaged in the children's play very effectively, providing new vocabulary and modelling language structures. As a result children made very good progress in this aspect of their creative development.
47. **Provision for physical development** was restricted during the inspection because a new building was in process. However, children's natural exuberance and energy is promoted through limited but well planned physical education and dance lessons. Children show considerable dexterity and confidence when handling pencils, scissors, brushes, construction toys and jigsaws. Teachers are always on hand to encourage children to improve their movements and provide good instructions and demonstrations to help them achieve success.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** overall.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards overall at the end of Year 6 are well above average and pupils achieve well.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are not as high as Year 6, pupils achieve well.
- Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve particularly well in reading but this is less so in writing.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use and further develop their good writing skills in other subjects.
- Teaching is consistently good ensuring good achievement.

Commentary

48. At the end of Year 2 standards in reading are above average and in writing they are broadly average. The majority of pupils achieve well in relation to what they know and understand when they first enter the school. Inspection evidence and the school's own tracking of pupils progress shows that over three quarters of the pupils make rapid gains in their reading and writing skills and they make better than the expected progress. This is clear from the high number of pupils who achieve the expected Level 2 at the end of Year 2. The number of pupils reaching the higher level is good in reading but this is less so in writing. All pupils in Year 2 are well launched into reading, which is the expectation for their age. Most pupils have a good vocabulary of words they recognise and can identify letters and sounds in words to a level consistent with expectations. The higher attaining pupils have good skills for predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words and are developing their knowledge of the more complex spelling patterns. Almost all pupils in Year 2 can already write a simple short story or an account that is logically organised. They are increasingly confident in using grammar, punctuation, spelling, and handwriting that is consistent with national expectations for their age. Pupils' are beginning to use their writing skills in other subjects but this is an area for further development.
49. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well and reach standards which are well above those found typically in other schools and better than those seen in similar schools. The school has very successfully addressed all weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading with over 90 per cent of pupils achieving the expected level and almost 40 per cent reaching the higher level at the end of Year 6. This is well above the national average and that of similar schools. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils are eager, fluent readers of a wide range of texts. As a result standards in reading are very high. A significant number of pupils express a preference for non-fiction texts and are very good at reading in order to extract information using a range of skills and strategies. Pupils who learn at a slower rate or have special educational needs receive very effective support. This enables them to take a full part in lessons as well as those school activities that demand competencies in reading, such as the Christmas production. As a result, they achieve well and are close to reaching the standard expected for their ages.

50. In writing the school is very successful in enabling well over 80 percent of the pupils to reach the expected Level 4 at the end of Year 6. This is well above the national average and that of similar schools. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels is average but should be higher. Pupils of all attainment levels write imaginative, thoughtful and sensitive stories, poems and accounts within their literacy lessons. Their basic literacy skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation are good and are used accurately. However, the higher attaining pupils should do better. There are not enough planned writing tasks in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education to challenge higher attaining pupils sufficiently well. This limits the standards they could achieve in writing. The school is aware of this and is now developing ideas aimed at bringing about the necessary change.
51. Standards in speaking and listening are very good across the school. Most pupils have broad vocabularies and can develop and explain their ideas with confidence and clarity. They enjoy conversations with adults and show a mature understanding of the humour and nuances of the spoken word. Nearly all demonstrate careful listening and make appropriate responses to instructions from the teacher.
52. Teaching is consistently good across the school and this makes a significant contribution to the pupils' good achievement and progress. Basic literacy skills of phonics, grammar spelling and punctuation are well taught. Teachers model new learning well to build up skills, engender confidence and an enthusiasm to succeed. Lower attaining pupils respond well to individual support and work to capacity and achieve well. Teaching assistants provide very good support for children with special educational needs enabling them to reach the targets set in their individual education plans.
53. The teaching of reading is particularly good and results in high standards. The choice of reading material is carefully selected enabling all pupils to be successful and to enjoy reading. Books are of a good quality and chosen well to engage the interests of young readers and support their learning in other subjects. Very regular group and individual reading sessions, along with the very good assessments which accompany these activities, enable teachers to accurately identify what is needed to help pupils make progress and achieve well. Marking is good and there is specific guidance to help pupils improve.
54. The subject manager is a skilled practitioner and has a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of standards and teaching and learning in all classes. There is a regular monitoring of work and use of data to set targets. Test results are carefully analysed and areas of improvement identified.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The application of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum is limited. Although pupils use a variety of methods to record their ideas in other subjects there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is very good, promoting standards that are better than average for pupils' ages.
- Teaching is consistently good and frequently very good.
- All pupils have equal access to the opportunities provided.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

56. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and standards are rising. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Standards in the work seen are similar to those in the most recent national tests in Year 2 but better in Year 6. However, the work of the current groups in Year 2 suggests standards above average rather than well above average. This is because there are lower proportions of higher attaining pupils in the class. At the end of Year 2, pupils have good quick recall of basic facts. They compute efficiently. At the end of Year 6, pupils become confident working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils measure accurately. They have a good range of strategies to solve mental problems. One Year 6 pupil explained how he calculated $8 \times 7 \times 6$. He confidently explained 'I multiplied seven by six to get forty-two, doubled it to get 84, doubled again to get 168 and doubled it again to get 336. Although pupils are frequently challenged to explain their thinking strategies when solving mental problems, a minority find the thinking process more difficult when faced with a written problem. They have the computational skills but are less adept at applying their thinking.
57. Learning and achievement are very well promoted by:
- pupils' keen interest and very good behaviour;
 - the way they work well together, discussing their work as it progresses and talking to each other about the strategies they are using to solve the everyday mathematical problems they encounter;
 - the clarity of their thinking when they explain to the whole class the processes and methods they are using;
 - the quick pace that they settle to written work and get through a good volume of work.
58. Many of the strong features of learning stem from the good qualities found in the teaching. Teachers know the subject area well and use their own knowledge of mathematical processes to good effect in lessons. Teachers' planning is clear and crisp. As a result, lessons go briskly and confidently, giving pupils the confidence to 'have a go'. Teachers make very good use of their knowledge of how pupils learn and their knowledge of pupils' individual needs to plan tasks that match their prior achievement. Good use is made of a wide range of resources, including interesting teacher-produced worksheets and practical equipment to keep pupils focused and engaged in the lesson. Owing to teachers' awareness of the different learning needs of different pupils, work is well matched to pupils' prior attainment. For example, extension tasks are prepared for those who learn and work more rapidly and need a further challenge.
59. There is good support for those who find learning more difficult. These pupils have well planned tasks that support their learning needs. They get good attention from the teacher or from teaching assistants. This is a good and effective method of making sure

that they continue to make progress. Teachers have very good marking strategies that make sure pupils understand what they are learning and what they need to improve to achieve better standards. Also, they use very good questioning strategies, that check up on what pupils know and that are well structured to ensure that all pupils are kept motivated and challenged, including higher attaining pupils and those finding the work difficult. Additionally, there are good strategies for involving pupils with severe learning difficulties such as autism or dyslexia.

60. The subject manager plays a full role and gives a strong sense of direction for the subject. Particularly strong are the very effective self-evaluation measures that include annual reviews and careful checking on academic standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The main focus for improvement in the school action plan is to purchase ICT programs to support the learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Skills, knowledge and understanding are used well in other subjects. For example:
- in science, Year 2 pupils draw graphs to show their findings and Year 6 pupils' measure and record heart rate;
 - in design and technology, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use their understanding of shape and measures to make a net for their packaging project.

There is little evidence of ICT being used to support pupils' learning in mathematics. However, some good practice was seen as when Year 2 pupils used their knowledge of angles to give instructions to a floor robot.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall with good opportunities for pupils to investigate.
- Assessment information is used very effectively to guide planning.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

62. The school has fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. Infant pupils now make good progress and the teaching is good.
63. Standards in science are above average at the end of Year 2. In the 2003 teacher assessment of science for last year's Year 2 pupils, standards were judged as lower because nearly all of the pupils attained the level expected but none attained above average levels. This year, the attainment profile of the year group indicates that more pupils are likely to attain above average standards and none are unlikely to meet the expected targets. Having said this there are only small numbers (12) in the cohorts and comparing year-on-year National test results is unreliable.

64. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. This is up on the 2003 results when standards were above average. Approximately half of the pupils are well placed to attain above the expected level, and nearly all pupils will reach the expected level apart from some of the pupils who have special educational needs.
65. Evidence in books indicates that pupils achieve well. By the time they leave the school, the current Year 6 pupils will have achieved very well. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because they are consistently well supported and provided with the right amount of challenge. A major improvement has been in the school's determination to ensure that pupils' develop good scientific enquiry skills. This has been very successfully achieved with much evidence seen in pupils' workbooks and in the three lessons observed.
66. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching seen in the upper junior class during the inspection. Planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered and that pupils have many opportunities to think scientifically and work independently to solve problems. In the Year 2 lesson seen, pupils were fully engrossed as they investigated the sounds they could make with everyday objects. Good opportunities are also provided for the pupils to record their findings as was seen in a teacher produced workbook as pupils investigated germination. In the very good Year 6 lesson, the pupils' responses to questions showed clearly that they are developing a good understanding of the conditions necessary for germination. The class worked very productively in small groups to investigate and explain their findings. Throughout the lesson, the teacher's very skilful use of explanation and questioning effectively built on what had been learned in the previous lesson. As a result, all of the pupils achieved very well.
67. The subject is very well led and managed. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the work they produce during the year are carefully assessed. Areas for development in the subject are identified through the regular monitoring of teaching and planning and through the analysis of pupils' work. This ensures that the co-ordinator has a very secure understanding of what is done well and a secure evidence base to set priorities for continuing improvement. There is a lack of computer programs to support the teaching of the subject and little use is made of pupils' ICT skills. Pupils do use ICT to find information. However, the school is aware of this and has identified in its action plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has risen considerably since the last inspection in terms of an increase in the numbers of computers; this has impacted positively.
- There is a lack of software, which restricts opportunities to further develop pupils' ICT skills through all subjects.
- There are not regular ICT lessons resulting in pupils forgetting the skills they were taught at times.
- Progress of pupils is not effectively recorded in all classes.

68. Achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with national expectations. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of many of the uses of the computer and show a confident use of the keyboard and mouse. They are able to use word-processing programs to type words and sentences. They are beginning to collect data and present the information in charts and understand that a CD-ROM stores information. By the time pupils leave the school, many can use a control program to make repeating patterns on the computer screen, are familiar with art packages to make illustrations and have experience of a digital camera. They can produce power point presentations, use a data-handling program to produce graphs and have experienced use of the Internet to search for information.
69. This represents sound progress made by the school from the last inspection when the standards achieved by the pupils were meeting expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. The improvement to provision has been brought about mainly through the increase in computers. However, there is limited software to support learning across all subjects.
70. The school uses a national scheme of work that provides an effective, basic structure for teaching. Using this scheme as reference, and working with the teaching assistant, teachers plan well with lessons centred upon what the pupils are required to learn during each lesson. Planning, however, is not linked to a weekly ICT lesson and is often linked to an ICT skill pupils need in a subject. As a result, pupils do not have regular lessons and find it difficult to remember past learning and this has a negative effect upon the pupils' achievement. For example, in Year 2 although pupils had good word processing skills, a number found it difficult to save or retrieve their work without prompting. Similarly, some teachers record very well what individual pupils have learned and, therefore, can make accurate decisions about what pupils need to be provided with during the next lesson. This does not occur in all classes and, again, this hinders pupils' progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. ICT is sometimes used to support the learning of pupils in a variety of subjects and is occasionally used very well. In a Year 5/6 class, pupils used a computer effectively to research their science topic. Pupils use computers regularly to word-process their work. Computers are, however, not used consistently in all classes to support learning in a variety of subjects. This is an area to be developed.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

Provision is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses relevant to both subjects

- Teaching is good overall.
 - There is good use of resources, including visits and visitors.
 - There are no formal written recording systems to track pupils' progress.
 - There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to record their work independently.
72. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 the majority of pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages in both subjects. Most pupils achieve well. This is due to good teaching and an interesting and well-planned curriculum. This engages pupils' interests in people, places, events and happenings through the ages and across the world. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to enable them to take full part in the lessons and achieve well. In both subjects pupils have good opportunities to build up a good knowledge base and to develop sound geographical and historical skills.
73. In **history**, as pupils move through the school they are encouraged to think of themselves as historians. They consider the authenticity of evidence and use a range of books, video materials, artefacts, photographs, the Internet and visits and visitors to gain knowledge and understanding of past times and characters. The pupils' factual knowledge and ability to recall dates, places, people, events and periods of history in order, is sound.
74. In **geography**, at the end of Year 2, pupils know that maps and plans represent a locality. At the end of Year 6, pupils use their geographical knowledge to compare and contrast their own locality and that of distant ones. They can name significant countries of the world, identifying mountain ranges, rivers and capital cities. Pupils develop their ideas of sustainable development and their responsibility to the environment.
75. Teaching of history and geography is good overall. The effective use of a variety of artefacts, maps, photographs, the Internet, CD ROMS, field trips, visits, visitors and quality books bring the subject alive for the pupils. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to organise their own work and record their findings in their own words using a range of styles. Limited opportunities to explore these techniques reduce pupils' interest in their work and restrict the further development of their good writing skills. The school is just beginning to assess and record pupils' progress in these subjects but as yet there are no consistent systems in place.

Religious Education

76. Only one lesson seen in an infant class. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. A scrutiny of work indicates that all aspects of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are covered. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition and other major world faiths are extended and deepen as they move through the school.

77. Pupils' learn about the customs, symbols, festivals, holy books and buildings of major religions. This helps pupils' to develop a respect and deeper understanding of the many ways people express their religion. Difficult religious ideas are put in the context of pupils' own experiences. This is effective in helping pupils learn about how religion can affect the way people conduct their lives, devise codes of behaviour and learn to value each other and the world they live in.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. One lesson was seen in **art and design**, none in **design and technology**, one in **music**, and none in **physical education**. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education.
79. Through **art and design**, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials and are taught the basic skills well. Six-year-old pupils study the patterns on buildings and seven-year-olds use their observational skills well in drawing fruit and vegetables. By the time pupils are nine years of age, many have learned how to mix colours and use good brush technique to paint their pictures. Year 6 pupils have developed good observational skills and have produced some good sketches of the landscape around Belmont. They have a knowledge of painters such as Monet, Lowry and Van Gogh and show their understanding of perspective through their pictures. Discussion with pupils shows that they enjoy their art and design and are proud to show their work.
80. In **design and technology** projects there is a strong focus on the three key areas of design, making and evaluation in the teaching and learning. A strength is the way that pupils are focused on design and technology in the everyday world at the beginning of a topic. By the time the pupils reach the end of Year 2, they have experienced working with a variety of materials, measuring, marking and cutting paper, card and fabrics. Pupils in Year 3/4 can evaluate packaging and design and make their own package for a purpose. In Year 6, they investigate different types of biscuits, design and make their own biscuits and evaluate the outcomes.
81. **Music** makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to the quality of assemblies and worship. The playing of an appropriate piece of music creates a quiet and reverent atmosphere for reflection and worship, has a calming effect on pupils and introduces them to music from other cultures. The school has a well-attended and enthusiastic orchestra who perform at a range of school events. Singing is well taught and pupils are encouraged to sing with accuracy, expression and articulation as they learn and rehearse new hymns. There are opportunities for some pupils to learn to play instruments; currently there is a school band. The co-ordinator has successfully maintained the profile of music in the school. School assemblies and productions provide opportunities for both instrumental and choral performance. The school choir entertains community groups.
82. In **physical education**, it was not possible to observe any lessons. This is because due to a class being in the hall, no lessons were planned for the days of the inspection. Normal practice is for all PE lessons to take place on one day to save disruption to the class in the hall. Nevertheless discussions were held with pupils and all aspects are covered. The co-ordinator for physical education is a specialist and has brought a wealth of initiatives into school; pupils are involved in many community activities, including links with local primary schools. In the curricular planning girls and boys of all abilities are given good opportunities to participate in an extremely wide variety of activities, more varied than is found in most schools. Activities are arranged both in and out of the school day. The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal development, especially their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education in school is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a clearly planned programme of work.
- There is a strong emphasis on safety, care and understanding towards pupils.
- The planned introduction of a School's Council to involve pupils more in the life of the school.

Commentary

83. The school plans for this area of learning to be one of the major building blocks towards the positive outcomes in the life and work of the school. For example, there are lessons that deal with bullying, how to cope with difficulties and the broader issues of citizenship, such as caring for the needy. Great importance is placed on visiting places to broaden social experiences. The school makes good use of visitors to school. The road safety officer and school nurse have made plans to visit, for instance, to give safety and health talks and practical advice and guidance on safe road use. Within the programme there are good and timely references to sex, drugs and relationships education.
84. The school is pursuing a healthy eating policy. It has introduced water and fruit for pupils, including snacks at morning break. The very good conduct of pupils throughout the school day owes much to the impact and worth of personal, social and health education and citizenship on the work of the school. It plays a very beneficial part in the positive attitudes of pupils in lessons and in their developing understanding of the notion of right and wrong. This is a school where 'family care' succeeds, but only as a result of much hard work and effort.
85. All of this is handled with insight and determination by the headteacher and staff. The primary belief is that personal, social and health education is an area that is, and should be, at the core of all that goes on in the school. This approach provides a shared and strong focus for all staff members, going beyond class lessons and across the whole school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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