

INSPECTION REPORT

TYLERS GREEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110303

Headteacher: Mr R Milne

Lead inspector: Mrs Stephanie Lacey

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th February 2004

Inspection number: 258252

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	260
School address:	Cock Lane Tylers Green High Wycombe Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP10 8DS
Telephone number:	(01494) 812 465
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Stidwell
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a large junior school. Since the last inspection the age of transfer has changed in Buckinghamshire and there is no longer a Year 7 at Tylers Green. There are three classes in Year 6 and two classes in all other year groups. There are lower numbers in Years 3 to 5 because the school's annual Year 3 intake is now limited to 60, to bring it into line with the first school in the village. Most pupils come from Tylers Green, which is an advantaged area. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is very low. About 11 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic families. A very small number of pupils do not have English as their mother tongue, but are fluent English speakers. There are also very few bilingual pupils. When children start school, their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide-ranging, but well above average for their age overall. Fifteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. These pupils have a range of learning difficulties and none has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time was below average last year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3764	Stephanie Lacey	Lead inspector	Science, Art and design, Geography, History and English as an additional language
14756	John Lovell	Lay inspector	
31233	Liz Slater	Team inspector	English, Music, Personal, social and health education and citizenship, Religious education and Special educational needs
30618	Paul Story	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Design and technology, French and Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Tylers Green is a good school with many strengths. Pupils enjoy learning and standards are high. Strong teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve well. Very clear leadership by the headteacher underpins the work of the school. The conscientious staff team work well together to improve standards and provision even further. Governors support the school effectively. The school is funded at a comparatively low level and, in view of the high standards that pupils reach and their good achievement, provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average.
- Pupils are very positive about learning and get on well with each other.
- Teaching is good, with some very strong features, and so pupils achieve well.
- The headteacher is a strong leader and works very well with staff and governors to improve provision and standards further.
- The school provides a very good range of interesting activities outside lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to work in classrooms.
- Governors work well in the best interests of the school.
- The accommodation and resources are very good.

The school has moved forward well since its last inspection in 1998 and has improved the quality of provision made at that time. Overall standards have risen in line with the national trend, with good improvement in mathematics and science in the last few years. Teaching has improved, with a higher proportion of very good teaching evident in the lessons seen. The school has successfully tackled the areas for improvement noted by the last inspection. These were related to assessing pupils' progress, promoting pupils' spiritual development, staff professional development and the governors' annual report to parents. Good progress has been made in improving most of these areas, with satisfactory progress in developing provision for pupils' spiritual development.

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	A	A
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A*
science	A	A	A*	A*

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.*

Similar schools are those in the same free school meals' band. Tylers Green is in the 0% to 8% band.

Pupils throughout the school achieve well and reach high standards. This table shows that standards have been consistently high in Year 6 national tests for several years. Last year, standards in mathematics and science were in the top five per cent of all schools, both in comparison with the national average and with schools in the same free school meals band. This is a notable achievement. When pupils begin in Year 3, their attainment is wide-ranging, but well above average overall. They make good progress through the school and by the time they leave, their attainment is very high in reading and mathematics. Last year, it was also very high in science. Standards in writing are a relative weakness, but still better than the national picture. The inspection found that pupils of all abilities achieve well and that there is no difference in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and

science and pupils generally do better than other children of their age in other subjects and very well in music. In work seen, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with those expected of pupils of this age by the time pupils leave the school. They achieve well, but standards are not as high as in all other subjects because pupils are catching up on earlier gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' personal development is good and supported by the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very keen to learn and most behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They get on well with other pupils and the staff. Attendance is well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality education. Teaching is good, with many strong features, and this ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve well. The curriculum is interesting and enhanced by a very good range of interesting activities outside lessons. The accommodation is very good, with designated classrooms for the teaching of ICT, science and practical subjects. Pupils are cared for well. Parents provide very good support for their children both in homework and in the help that many give to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides a very strong lead for staff and governors, with a very clear focus on maintaining high standards. The school is very well managed and runs very smoothly. The governors undertake their duties effectively and support the school well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents are pleased with all that the school does for their children. A minority feel that the school does not always seek their views sufficiently about changes affecting their children. The inspection finds that the school usually consults effectively with parents and is aware of the need to do so. Pupils are positive about their school and find the staff very supportive.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant issues for improvement. The inspection confirms that the areas identified for development by the school are appropriate. These include further improvement in the use of ICT across the curriculum, further improvements in standards of writing, further development of the work of subject co-ordinators and planned improvements to the swimming pool and lavatories.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

All pupils achieve well. This includes those with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils and pupils from minority ethnic groups. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. Pupils also reach above average standards in most other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests have been very high for many years.
- Pupils reach high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Recently standards in national tests have improved faster than the national trend in science and mathematics.
- Almost all pupils reach the levels expected for their age in other subjects, with many doing better.
- Standards in music are well above average.
- All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils and those from minority ethnic groups.
- Writing standards are not as high as in reading, but are still above average.
- Pupils' ICT skills are in line with expectations for their age, rather than any higher, but children make good progress.

Commentary

Starting school in Year 3

1. Most pupils transfer to Tylers Green Middle School from the first school in the village. Teachers' assessments, in the September when pupils start in Year 3, show that standards are well above average in English and mathematics.

School's results in national tests

2. This is a high-achieving school. Standards have been well above average or very high in Year 6 national tests for several years. Since the last inspection, standards have continued to rise in line with the national trend overall. Since 2000, improvement has been more rapid than this in mathematics and science. The table below shows that in 2003, standards were well above average in English and in the top five percent of all schools in mathematics and science. Standards were not quite as high in English in 2003, as in the other two subjects because some boys did not reach the expected Level 4 in writing. On average, over the last three years, girls have done better than boys in mathematics. In 2003, they also did better in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (30.1)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	30.7 (30.0)	27.0 (26.7)
science	31.8 (30.8)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 87 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards are high because:
 - Higher-attaining pupils do well in all subjects.

- The school sets challenging targets for pupils which they work hard to meet.
 - Pupils' attainment, when they start in Year 3, is well above average.
 - Strong teaching ensures that pupils achieve well.
4. Key factors in the good improvement in mathematics and science are:
- Very effective leadership by the mathematics co-ordinator.
 - 'Setting' in mathematics so that pupils of similar ability work together.
 - The excellent support of a classroom assistant with scientific expertise.
5. It is not possible, as it is in many schools, to compare progress made since the tests that this group took in Year 2. This is because less than 80 per cent of the Year 6 pupils at Tylers Green took the tests at the local first school. In comparison with schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards at Tylers Green in 2003 were very high in mathematics and science and well above average in English.

Inspection findings

Standards in English, mathematics and science

6. The inspection found that standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Pupils achieve well and make good progress.

Standards in other subjects

7. Standards in most other subjects are also above average in most of the work seen. Almost all pupils reach the levels expected for their age and many do better. They are well above average in music. In information and communication technology standards are average. Most pupils in Year 6 reach the level expected for their age, with a few exceeding this. Pupils achieve well in ICT, but do not do as well as in other subjects. This is because the school's provision for their learning was not as good in the past as it is now and so they have been working hard to catch up.

Higher-attaining pupils

8. Higher-attaining pupils do well. This is because they are effectively challenged. This was particularly evident in the very good progress that higher-attaining Year 6 pupils made in science in 2003 from their point of entry to the school.

Pupils with special educational needs

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their specific targets, achieving well. Pupils are well supported in lessons by teachers and learning support assistants and are set appropriate tasks.

Pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils learning English as an additional language.

10. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers. There are only two pupils learning English as an additional language and they are both fluent English speakers. Three other pupils are bilingual.

Boys and girls

11. In lessons seen there was no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This remains a strong area overall. Pupils are very positive about school and behave well. Pupils' personal development is good as a consequence of the good provision for their moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' attendance levels are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about school.

- Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is fostered effectively.
- Most pupils tackle work very confidently because staff are encouraging and supportive.
- Pupils make good use of the opportunities to take responsibility offered by the school, but in a few lessons do not have sufficient opportunity to develop responsibility and independence.
- The recent establishment of the school council gives pupils opportunities to show initiative.
- The school has identified the need to plan for spiritual development in lessons, but this is not yet an established feature in teachers' plans.

Pupils' attitudes

12. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school. Most pupils enjoy work in lessons because the school is good at stimulating a desire to learn. Most pupils have a very high level of confidence and self-esteem and find the staff very supportive and encouraging. This is especially true of pupils with special educational needs who value the help given by their classroom assistants.

Pupils' social development

13. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The very good range of clubs and activities, open to most pupils and more recently to Year 3, give pupils an opportunity to mix with pupils from different age groups. The annual residential visit contributes significantly to Year 6 pupils' social skills and sense of responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to care for others. Within the wider community, pupils have links with a local residential home for elderly residents, raise money for hearing dogs for the deaf and leukaemia research and support a child from Kenya.

Taking responsibility

14. The school offers a good range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. All pupils have responsibilities within the class, whilst pupils in Year 6 have additional duties and responsibilities around the school. These include running a stationery shop twice a week, and helping to organise assembly. The recently re-formed school council is a good opportunity for pupils to show initiative. In some lessons, opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are missed.

Relationships and behaviour

15. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school promotes good relationships well and has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff and pupils in the school work well together and pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and at playtimes. Just under half the pupils indicated some concern in the pupils' questionnaire about the behaviour of other children, and a few parents indicated concern about bullying. The inspection looked at this carefully and found no evidence of current bullying or harassment.
16. Responsible behaviour is promoted through assemblies and circle times and personal, social and health education. There are class targets for behaviour, and pupils negotiate rules for their own classes each year. The school's behaviour policy is clear and is followed by most staff. In a very few lessons, behaviour is not managed well and the unsatisfactory behaviour of one or two is highlighted, rather than drawing attention to the role models of good and very good behaviour provided by most of the class. There is little guidance in the behaviour policy on the use of these positive classroom strategies. A policy for racial equality is in place and there have been no racist incidents reported. As the table overleaf shows, there were no exclusions for inappropriate behaviour in the last year.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	232	0	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

17. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and fostered particularly by work in RE and assemblies. Planning for this aspect of personal development across the curriculum was a key issue in the last inspection and the school has worked on a policy and organised training for staff to tackle this. Teachers are not yet identifying opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness routinely in their planning, although sometimes good spiritual experiences occur.
18. Provision for pupils' cultural development is now good. The school has expanded its activities to include the development of pupils' awareness of being part of a multicultural society. Visitors to the school have included Asian and African dance, music and storytelling groups, a steel band and members of the Sikh and Hindu communities. Pupils' awareness of local culture is developed through local history and geography. Although the school, like most others, uses the nationally available planning outlines for most subjects, no use is made of the multicultural planning that is written to accompany this.

Attendance

19. This table shows that pupils' attendance is very good and very high in comparison with other schools. It has improved since the last inspection. One of the reasons for this is that procedures for authorising absences are very rigorous. Parents are provided with written confirmation of the headteacher's decision in response to any requests for authorised absence for annual holidays, for example. Most pupils are punctual and lessons begin on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.2	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good, with some very strong features. The curriculum is well planned, with a very good range of interesting activities outside lessons. Overall, the accommodation and learning resources are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall, with some very strong features. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieve well. Assessment of pupils' progress has improved and is now good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned and prepared very well, with interesting activities to capture pupils' interest and imagination. Consequently, pupils of all abilities are challenged effectively.
- Very good support from teaching assistants helps all pupils achieve well, but especially those with special educational needs. One classroom assistant makes an outstanding contribution to work in science.
- There is good teamwork, especially in planning lessons.
- In best lessons good use of questioning, very good pace and very good subject knowledge helped pupils to move forward quickly.
- There is very detailed, systematic and rigorous assessment of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science which is used well to track their progress.
- Pupils are not always clear about how they are doing or how to improve because of inconsistencies in marking and different approaches to use of individual targets.
- Teachers make good use of assessment to plan for next stages of learning.
- In a few lessons pupils were not given enough independence.

Commentary

20. The school has maintained good quality teaching since the last inspection and this is the key factor in pupils' good overall achievement. In the lessons seen, there was more very good teaching than there had been at the time of the last inspection and also more lessons that were sound. It was evident that some teachers were very nervous during the inspection week and this undoubtedly had a detrimental impact on their teaching. The table below shows the quality of the teaching in the lessons seen.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	10 (28%)	16 (44%)	10 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

Common strengths in the teaching and learning

21. There are some common strengths underpinning all of the teaching and learning. These reflect the commitment and hard work of both teachers and classroom assistants.

Very good planning and preparation

22. Teachers' planning is very thorough. It is firmly based on the school's agreed planning frameworks. This ensures consistency between parallel year groups and that pupils develop skills, knowledge and understanding year on year. Currently, the school is focusing on the planning of work to challenge pupils of all abilities in all subjects. This is to match the good practice established in English and mathematics particularly. The inspection found that in almost all lessons, teachers had carefully identified the different tasks that different groups of

pupils were to undertake or had identified the extra support needed so that all pupils could complete a similar task.

23. Lessons are also very well prepared. Resources are meticulously organised and readily available for pupils. This is particularly so in science, where a very well qualified assistant works closely with teachers to prepare lessons.

Challenge for pupils of all abilities

24. Within lessons, teachers successfully challenge pupils of all abilities. This is evident in the introductory part of the lessons, for example, where questioning is targeted appropriately for individual pupils. In the activity part of lessons, all pupils are also suitably challenged and consequently achieve well and make good progress.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

25. Teaching is very well planned for pupils with special educational needs, focusing on specific targets in individual education plans. Learning support assistants are very well deployed, liaising closely with classroom teachers. They note progress in lessons on recently introduced record sheets, which give very good immediate feedback. Their support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they monitor pupils' developing knowledge, skills and understanding very well.

Teaching of higher-attaining pupils

26. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged particularly well in English, mathematics and science.

The support by classroom assistants

27. Classroom assistants know the pupils well and provide very good support for individuals and small groups. This year individual members of staff have been working more closely with particular year groups and this has enhanced the strength of the year group teams. Most assistants are very experienced. A few assistants have specialist expertise and use this very effectively in their work in classrooms. One, for example, frequently works with groups engaged in art and design work and enables them to reach high standards, particularly in clay work. Another very well qualified assistant manages the resources in the science block classroom and works with teachers in science lessons. Her contribution is excellent.

Example of outstanding practice

The school uses a classroom assistant with specialist expertise to support the work in science. Her contribution is excellent and provides extremely effective help for teachers.

One of the teaching assistants, who has a degree in science, manages the resources in the designated science room. The resources are very well organised and clearly labelled. In consultation with the teachers, the assistant prepares the equipment needed for investigational and experimental work. This frees up teachers' time and helps them to concentrate on teaching. Within lessons, the assistant plays an important role in moving the learning forward. She usually works with groups to challenge and interest pupils in the activity that they are undertaking. Sometimes she contributes to the whole-class discussion in collaboration with the teacher.

High expectations of pupils' hard work

28. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and their expectations are met. Pupils' work shows that they complete a good deal of recorded work in lessons to a high standard. In many lessons seen, pupils worked together well, either in pairs or small groups. They remained on task and concentrated well.

Classroom organisation

29. Classes are well organised and so pupils know where equipment and resources are stored. There are clear routines for the day-to-day running of individual classrooms and so teaching time is not wasted on routine matters. In many classes, the quality of displays is high and this helps pupils to appreciate that their work is valued.

Assessment

30. The school has good rigorous systems for assessing, recording and comparing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Good use is made of this information to set targets and ensure high standards are maintained by identifying any areas requiring attention. There is now a close correlation between test results and teacher assessments, addressing a weakness identified by the last inspection. Sound procedures have been developed to ensure the consistent assessment of standards in other subjects, addressing a further concern of the last inspection. Teachers use ongoing day-to-day assessments of pupils' learning effectively to plan the next steps in lessons.

Particular strengths

31. In some of the better lessons seen, there were particular strengths that contributed to pupils' good achievement. These include:

- Subject expertise: in some subjects, teachers' subject expertise had a very good impact on the overall quality of the lesson and pupils' learning. This was particularly evident in music teaching. Pupils' work in art and design in Years 3 and 4 also indicated good subject expertise.
- Challenging questioning: teachers' use of challenging questions extended pupils' understanding and helped them to move forward more quickly.

Areas for development

32. Within this strong picture, there are a few areas for development. These include:

- Classroom management: in a few lessons, teachers' management of the pupils meant that they were not as engaged and attentive as they should be. This was apparent in some of the satisfactory lessons. It was sometimes evident in changeover times from one part of the lesson to another. In one or two instances, pupils did not listen carefully to the teacher's instructions and in other lessons, the level of conversation in the activity part of the lesson was too high for easy concentration.
- Opportunities for pupils to plan work independently: there was not very much evidence of pupils being asked to work independently in the lessons seen, or in the work samples prepared for the inspection.
- Teaching of boys and girls: in quite a few lessons seen pupils opted, or were organised by teachers, to work in single-sex groups. As a result, pupils missed the challenge of working with people who might approach learning tasks differently.
- Marking: ongoing day-to-day assessments of pupils' learning are used well by teachers to plan the next steps in lessons. Various methods of involving pupils in setting and working towards individual targets are being tried but a consistent approach has not yet developed. Marking is not always consistently applied and does not always make clear to pupils how they are doing and how they could improve.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum, enhanced very well by a wide range of enrichment activities that include visits, clubs, productions, music and sporting fixtures. Overall, the accommodation and resources are very good, although the swimming pool and some of the lavatories need improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good curriculum, relevant to pupils' needs, is enlivened by visits, visitors and activities.
- There is a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy which fosters pupils' good progress.
- There is a very good range of clubs and opportunities for music, art and competitive sport.
- There is continued development and refinement of the curriculum, with constructive links made between subjects.
- The school is at the early stages of developing use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

- The accommodation is very good, with well-used practical areas, a library and a designated ICT suite.
- The lavatories and swimming pool need refurbishment.
- The resources are very good overall.

Commentary

Planning for work in Years 3 to 6

33. The curriculum has been developed well since the last inspection and is firmly rooted in the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for RE, with French taught in Year 6. Statutory requirements are met. Good emphasis is placed on English and mathematics. Teachers make good consistent use of the strategies for literacy and numeracy as the basis for their planning. This, and the good use made of catch-up programmes, ability grouping in lessons and setting in mathematics, has contributed to and supported the continued rise in attainment. Opportunities occur for pupils to use these skills in other subjects such as science, geography, history, art and design and design and technology, although they are not yet planned as part of a consistent overall approach. The school has appropriately identified writing skills as an area for focus to raise standards further.
34. Teachers are making good use of national guidelines to ensure pupils' learning develops progressively as they move through the school. The school has often adapted and modified this guidance to suit the needs of its pupils and enable relevant links to be made between subjects. In art and design, in particular, the curriculum has evolved in a way that has retained its school-specific individuality. Increasing use is being made of ICT to support learning in other subjects, with good examples seen of Year 4 pupils entering instructions to draw pentagons and hexagons and Year 6 pupils preparing multimedia presentations on High Wycombe. The school has correctly identified this as an area for focus and development.
35. A flexible approach to subject organisation, for example the 'carousel' approach to practical activities, means that good use is made of specialist areas, staff expertise and parent helpers to maximise learning opportunities.
36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as at the last inspection. Teachers are effectively supported in identifying pupils with special educational needs. Appropriate tasks and support are allocated in response to individual action plans to help pupils make progress, particularly in literacy and for behaviour. (Much support occurs within the classroom and the school makes good use of other available space for short periods when appropriate).

Personal, social and health education

37. Pupils of all abilities are fully included in the life of the school and provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), including sex education and drugs awareness, is good. The school has drawn together the good elements of its work already in place in this area and is now looking to produce an overarching approach.

Enrichment of the curriculum

38. The school provides a very wide range of out-of-class activities that are very well attended by boys and girls. They include opportunities to take part in coaching and competitive sport, music and instrumental tuition, art, chess and conservation work. Visits and visitors are well used to support and extend learning and include a residential visit for Year 6 pupils with opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities. The curriculum is enriched very well through these physical and creative activities, which contribute strongly to pupils' personal development.

Staffing, resources and accommodation

39. The school's experienced and dedicated teachers are well deployed to make best use of their relevant areas of expertise and deliver the planned curriculum. Very good use is made of the spacious building and grounds to support pupils' learning and provide specific support and enhancement of their learning through specialist facilities such as the heated swimming pool, ICT suite, music rooms and art, design and food technology areas. ICT resources have been developed and extended since the last inspection and are now very good, as they are in most other areas of the curriculum except RE where artefacts are largely borrowed from the local resource centre. Disabled access has been assessed but there are inherent difficulties in the building's design, with different internal levels and upstairs rooms. The school is planning to replace the swimming pool building and refurbish the lavatories. Storage of items around the edge of the hall restricts floor space for physical education (PE).

Care, guidance and support

This remains a strong area of the school's work. The overall provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Pupils are given good individual guidance and support. The school effectively involves pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very positive about the good care and support that they are given.
- First aid provision is very good.
- Child protection procedures and arrangements are good.
- The school's arrangements for seeking and valuing the views of pupils are good.

Commentary

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety

40. There are some significant strengths in the provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. These include the very good provision for dealing with minor accidents and the good procedures in place to deal with any child protection issues. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are also good, with regular checks and a developing portfolio of risk assessments. In practice, staff generally promote an awareness of health and safety issues. However, in hall PE lessons, an assortment of furniture arranged at the edge of the hall poses a potential hazard for pupils. Some of the lavatories are in need of refurbishment and at the moment do not reflect the care for pupils' welfare evident in most of the school's work.

Support and guidance for pupils

41. Staff know the pupils well and provide good advice and support on a day-to-day basis. Both parents and their children are very complimentary about the support and guidance provided by class teachers especially. Pupils clearly feel that they can seek and will receive support from adults working in the school.
42. Induction arrangements are well established and provide sound support overall for pupils. When pupils start at the school in Year 3, they are already familiar with the building and the staff. They meet their new teachers at the end of the summer term before transfer and visit the school. A particular strength in the transfer arrangements is the good relationship that is quickly established between individual pupils and their new teachers.

Involving pupils in the school's work

43. The school involves pupils well in discussions about what is good about the school and what needs to be improved. Pupils express their views formally through the school council, which is an elected body of Year 6 pupils. Recently, these pupils have been consulted about the lunchtime arrangements operating at the time of the inspection. Many pupils were not happy about eating their lunches on their laps and so these arrangements are being changed. This

helps pupils to appreciate that their views are valued. A suggestion box is also used well by pupils to express their views. Informal discussions also take place during PSHE sessions from time to time, although this was not observed during the inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a strong partnership with parents, which effectively supports pupils' learning and achievement. Good links with other schools and the community enhance pupils' experiences at school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school and the education which it provides.
- The 'Friends of Tylers Green' provide very good support for the work of the school.
- Parents provide very good support in classrooms.
- The school's partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school does not hold regular curriculum meetings to inform parents of what is being provided and how to support their children, but keeps them informed by letter.
- There are generally good arrangements to seek parents' views on future planning and issues that directly affect their children, although they were not formally advised and involved in alterations to dining arrangements.

Commentary

The school's links with parents

44. The school keeps parents well informed. There is a clearly laid out prospectus and regular newsletters. In the past, there have been curriculum evenings to explain what is being provided and how parents can support their children at home. There have not been any recently, although a meeting to explain statutory tests is planned. Reports about pupils' progress are good and provide parents with information about what their children need to know to move to the next stage in their learning. They are computer-generated and have the overall appearance of often being very similar. They are, however, written with care. It is the preamble that is common. This is followed by comments that reflect the achievement of the individual child. Parents of pupils with special educational needs meet their children's teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator regularly to review progress and adjust targets. Parents are advised about the nature of the support that they can offer at home.
45. Parents are very involved in the school and provide very good support. Many parents help regularly in classrooms with activities such as reading, cooking, art and helping in the library. The 'Friends of Tylers Green' also support the school very well. They have a strong committee and raise significant sums of money to enhance the school's provision. Parents provide very good encouragement to their children, especially in relation to the work that they are expected to do at home.

Parents' views

46. Parents are generally pleased with all that the school does for their children. Responses drawn from the questionnaire and the meeting held for parents before the inspection indicate that they feel that their children achieve well and that overall the quality of education is good. A significant minority did not feel that the school sought parents' views and took account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection looked into this carefully and found that the procedures for seeking parents' views were good. The school sends out questionnaires from time to time and, through the newsletter, invited parents to voice their opinion on a range of issues. This particular concern appears to stem from an alteration in lunchtime arrangements. Since September, pupils have been eating their packed lunches on their laps rather than at tables. This new arrangement was not in consultation with parents initially and many are unhappy with it. The inspection found that it did not enhance pupils' social skills. The school

has consulted the pupils about this arrangement and as a consequence, is moving back to using tables.

Links with the local community

47. There are good links with the local community. These include regular contact with the village church and contact with older residents at Harvest time. Local history studies help the pupils to be aware of the past on their doorstep and these are enhanced by contact with the local history society. The school publishes a regular feature in the village magazine.

The school's links with other schools

48. The school has effective links with other schools. These enhance both the provision for pupils and further training for staff. These include regular contact with the village first school. Transfer arrangements to a range of secondary schools are sound and involve a visit to the receiving secondary school. The school is developing links with a nearby upper school for pupils to benefit from their specialist art and design facilities. Pupils from several local secondary schools are welcomed on work experience.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the school is led and managed very well. The school is governed well, with more experienced governors making a significant contribution. The headteacher provides a very clear direction for the school, with good support overall from senior staff. The school is very well managed, particularly in relation to financial management. The school does well in spite of low funding in relation to similar schools nationally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a very clear lead for all aspects of the school's work.
- Staff and governors are very clear about the strengths of the school and the areas needing development.
- Financial management is very good and ensures that the school focuses very effectively on its priorities for improvement.
- There are very good procedures for checking how well the school is doing, which feed into plans for improvement.
- There is careful analysis and comparison of school and national data and test results which is used to compare performance of different groups and identify areas for development.
- The very good leadership of the mathematics co-ordinator has been a key factor in raising standards further.
- The role of foundation subject leaders is under developed in relation to monitoring and evaluating work in classrooms and planning for improvement. This has already been highlighted by the school.

Commentary

The leadership of the headteacher

49. The headteacher provides a very clear educational direction for the school, epitomised in the school's motto 'Happy, healthy, hard working, high achieving'. He keeps a close eye on every part of the school's work. He leads by example and expects staff to have high expectations of children's achievement.

The senior management team

50. The deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator work with the headteacher on the senior management team. They meet regularly to discuss school issues. The deputy headteacher has some specified areas of responsibility. These include the co-ordination of work in English and PE, the co-ordination of assessment, the monitoring of teachers' planning and responsibility as a team leader for performance management. This is an onerous workload, but release time is provided to enable him to undertake these duties. He

provides sound support for the headteacher. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs very effectively. She leads a team of experienced and enthusiastic learning support assistants well. They liaise closely with teachers so that pupils' progress is carefully monitored and supported. The co-ordinator manages the contacts with a range of appropriate external agencies very well, including the fortnightly visits of a support teacher from the Local Education Authority Cognition and Learning Team.

The leadership of work in subject areas

51. Overall, staff with subject responsibilities provide effective leadership. There are some very clear strengths. The work of the mathematics co-ordinator, for example, has had a significant impact on both the quality of the provision and the improved standards. She is knowledgeable, enthusiastic, innovative and clear about what needs to be improved. She has encouraged and supported staff in moving forward. Co-ordinators for the foundation subjects are similarly enthusiastic and many have made a good start on relatively new responsibilities. The school has highlighted appropriately the need to develop the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' written work and lessons in order to tease out what needs further improvement.

Evaluating how well the school is doing

52. The school has some very good procedures in place to evaluate how well it is doing. These include:
- Analysing test information:
Pupils' performance in national tests is carefully analysed and areas for development are fed into plans for improvement. Currently, the development of pupils' writing skills has been appropriately identified as an area to work on.
 - Observing work in classrooms:
There is a comprehensive programme of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning linked to the school's performance management strategy. The main focus of this in recent years has been on work in English, mathematics and science. Evaluations of performance have also been used to improve practice and this has had a positive impact on standards. Subject co-ordinators for the foundation subjects are beginning to monitor pupils' work and teaching and learning, but this is not so well established. Governors make visits to the school during the day to see how it functions. Many governors have been recently appointed and so are new to this aspect of their work.
 - Evaluating the school improvement plan. Both staff and governors are involved in discussions about the impact of new initiatives on the work of the school. These discussions feed into plans for the subsequent year.

Planning for improvement

53. Staff and governors are involved in discussions about planning for the development of the school's work. Pupils are consulted about areas that they would like to see improved. Parents' views are not sought formally, but the school takes account of ideas put forward through the Friends' Association and the governors. Planning for improvement is clear and is currently focused on very appropriate priorities. These include the further development of ICT, further improvements in the teaching of writing, further developing the role of subject co-ordinators, planning work in lessons to challenge pupils of all abilities and improving the swimming pool and lavatories.
54. Alongside the planning to tackle the schools' priorities, there is also a framework for the routine review of work in different subjects and for policy review. In addition, subject co-ordinators also put together action plans to outline the areas that need work on year by year. Some of these plans are not sufficiently focused on raising standards and are more a list of tasks to be undertaken than a clear improvement plan for the year.

The contribution of governors

55. Governors undertake their responsibilities well. Some have special expertise and use this very effectively in the best interests of the school. One governor, for example, designed the original school web site and has a financial background, an asset in his role as chair of the finance committee. Governors offer good levels of challenge, especially in relation to maintaining high standards in English, mathematics and science. The chair of governors is new to her post, although an experienced governor, and is already providing a clear lead for the governing body. Some governors are very new and are being inducted effectively. They already have a clear picture of the strengths of the school and what needs improving. The governors have ensured that all statutory requirements are met.

The management of the school

56. The school is very well organised and there are clear procedures in place to monitor both pupil and staff performance. Teaching staff are deployed well across the year groups to provide a good balance of experience and expertise. Classroom assistants are working well to support teachers by undertaking routine tasks like photocopying for a short time each day. This year, assistants have been assigned to year groups and all staff find this arrangement successful. In conversations with staff, it is evident that they enjoy working at Tylers Green and feel that they are valued.

Financial management

57. Financial planning is very good. The school has a low funding allocation, both in comparison with the national picture and in relation to other Buckinghamshire schools. In spite of this, by prudent financial planning, the school not only balances the budget year on year but also manages to target areas needing improvement. The table below shows the budget figures for the last financial year, which reflect a healthy carry forward of four per cent.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	615,167	Balance from previous year	14,311
Total expenditure	606,400	Balance carried forward to the next	23,438
Expenditure per pupil	2054.37		

58. The headteacher, together with the members of the governors' finance committee, prepares the draft budget. This takes into account the priorities for school development. This planning is soundly based on the principles of best value. The headteacher's expertise in the area of finance has been recognised by his election to the County Forum on finance.
59. Day-to-day financial control and administration are very good. The office staff are quietly efficient and provide a warm welcome to visitors and very good support for the headteacher and staff.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and speaking and listening are well above average.
- Standards in writing are above average.
- Teaching is good and this ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Planning is good and follows the National Literacy Strategy guidance.
- Assessment is good overall but opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility for evaluating their own work vary significantly and there is a lack of consistency in teachers' approaches to marking pupils' written work.
- Management of English is good and includes detailed analyses of national test results.
- Resources are good overall, but in the library, some information books need updating.

Commentary

60. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Standards have been consistently high for many years. Standards are currently above average in Year 6, with reading well above average and writing above average. The school is focusing particularly on improving pupils' writing and standards are rising. Improvement was evident in the 2003 national test results in writing for Year 6, with more pupils attaining higher levels (Level 5) than previously. Writing is still a weakness for some boys who nevertheless reach national expectations in English successfully because their reading attainment is very high.
61. All groups of pupils, including boys, girls, pupils from minority ethnic groups, pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for in English, and every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned work and good support. Good planning and careful deployment of teaching assistants helps pupils to do well.
62. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are well above average throughout the school. Pupils are articulate and confident. Most of the speaking and listening work is undertaken in the introductory part of the lesson, with some paired work seen in some lessons. At present, there is no policy or planning for speaking and listening but the co-ordinator plans to use the national materials sent to schools very recently to support the development of talk for learning. Some pupils attend a drama club, although this was not observed during the inspection week, and many pupils take part in the annual production, with Year 6 pupils involved in a leaver's production as well.
63. Pupils are very enthusiastic about books. They talk knowledgeably about a wide range of favourite authors and achieve very well in reading. Pupils in Year 3 work through a published scheme, reading individually. They also have regular access to fiction from the school library and class collections as well as other graded books. Teachers strongly encourage pupils throughout the school to read with parents and carers at home as part of regular homework and this supports pupils' reading development very well. Group reading has recently been introduced in Years 3 and 4. The school has a good purpose built well-organised library where books are displayed well with a wide range of fiction to select from. Stock is checked every

two years. Non-fiction and reference books are well organised and Dewey-referenced. Some subject areas, such as RE and geography, need supplementing or replacing.

64. The school is working well to raise standards in writing further and there has been a sustained focus on improving this aspect of English. Pupils' writing is often extended and interesting. Factors that have been significantly instrumental in raising standards so far include:
- Regular assessment and the identification of needs through monitoring of pupils' work and lessons.
 - A systematic approach to developing certain types of writing.
 - Close analysis of Year 6 statutory tests.
 - Very well deployed learning support assistants.
 - Good planning for pupils of different abilities.
 - Teachers' good subject knowledge.
 - Clear targets for pupils, reviewed twice a year.
 - Opportunities to use different types of writing in other subjects.

In some lessons where pupils achieved particularly well, there were some good strategies used. These included good modelling of writing, a clear purpose and audience for the writing required, and opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate their work.

65. Overall, teaching is good and this has been a key factor in maintaining high standards. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy, and planning is very thorough. Within this strong picture, there are a few areas for development. These include more consistent marking to let pupils know whether they have grasped the objective for the lesson and less dependence on worksheets. A range of approaches is used for spelling. The co-ordinator has identified the need for a spelling review in the current school improvement plan.
66. Overall, the co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. He has undertaken a good deal of work on assessment and analysing data, which has helped him to target what needs improving.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects, and there are good examples of different types of writing in other subjects, but currently, the explicit teaching of literacy skills is not planned across other areas of the curriculum.

FRENCH

68. Work in French was sampled. It is taught in Year 6. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen. From this lesson, teachers' planning, pupils' written work and work on display it is clear that pupils are being effectively introduced to the language. Weekly sessions that are largely oral are developing their knowledge and understanding of everyday vocabulary such as numbers, days of the week, months of the year, colours and items of clothing. Pupils are encouraged to respond in sentences to their teacher's questions, using recall of previous vocabulary. Work is planned from national guidance and supplemented by commercial schemes. Class displays and work in folders illustrates how pupils are being taught the correct spelling of common words and how to build phrases and sentences by combining these and beginning, for example, 'il' or 'elle porte'. Pupils clearly enjoy these sessions and they provide good preparation for the next stage of their education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve high standards because of good teaching and learning.
- The subject is led very effectively.
- There is a very rigorous systems for assessing, recording and comparing pupils' progress.
- The greater use of ICT to support learning in the subject is an area for development.
- There is an increasing use of numeracy skills in other subjects, but no planning framework to help teachers.

Commentary

69. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above the expected level. The school's current targets and predictions confirm this judgement. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs who are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
70. Since the last inspection, the school has carefully analysed assessment results and used them to identify areas for further development. It has placed a strong focus on mental strategies and techniques suitable for solving problems, often applying these to practical activities. Staff training and adoption of the Numeracy Strategy, particularly the Unit plans in Years 4, 5 and 6, as the basis for planning lessons has led to a progressive development of pupils' mathematical understanding. The use of Year 6 Booster classes and Springboard sessions in Years 3 and 5 have extended pupils who require additional support. These factors have been reflected in the high levels of attainment achieved by all pupils.
71. In Year 3, pupils develop and extend the good levels of mathematical understanding that most have when they enter the school. They make good progress, gain increasing knowledge and understanding of basic number facts and apply these to work on shape and measurement. Good progress continues in Years 4 and 5 so that by Year 6, almost all pupils confidently carry out written and mental calculations involving large numbers. In Years 5 and 6 there is a strong focus on the development of mental strategies during the oral starter to lessons. By Year 6, most pupils have a strong grasp of place value and number facts and use this to mentally multiply and divide numbers including decimals. There are good examples of numeracy skills being applied to practical activities and of investigations increasingly used to solve problems.
72. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are consistently well planned, prepared and resourced, matching activities to the needs of pupils. Ability setting in Years 4, 5 and 6 helps ensure good levels of support and challenge for all abilities. In Year 3 classes, the broader range of ability means teachers need to ensure suitable tasks are planned for each ability group. Pupils are given clear explanations to enable them to complete tasks and good use is made of the well-briefed teaching assistants where they are available. However, teachers do not always share the next steps in learning with pupils in the review stage of the lesson, which is sometimes too brief. In more successful lessons, there is a brisk pace to learning, a wide variety of approaches and resources, and correct usage, repetition and encouragement of subject-specific vocabulary. Probing questioning challenges and extends pupils' thinking. Pupils are then encouraged to discuss and share the strategies they used with the rest of the class.
73. There are rigorous and well established systems in place to assess, check and record pupils' progress. These are used well to set challenging targets for improvement, monitor learning and identify areas possibly requiring action. Marking does not always indicate to pupils how they could improve and pupils are often not sufficiently involved in self-assessment to have a clear view of how they are doing. Increasing use is being made of ICT to support work in the

subject. Good examples were seen in Years 3 and 4 that captured pupils' interest and developed learning. Higher-ability Year 6 pupils made good use of calculators to confirm increasingly complex decimal calculations.

74. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. With the support of her colleagues and good input from the local authority, the co-ordinator carries out a regular pattern of monitoring that includes lesson observations, sampling pupils' work and checking planning. Her detailed analysis of annual test results has been used to identify areas such as problem-solving and written calculations, as requiring improvement. There is a clear focus on raising standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Opportunities arise for pupils to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. Pupils develop awareness and understanding of pattern in art, use measurement in design and technology and use data handling in work in science and geography. Examples of this include work in Year 6 on the Chess valley, Year 5 on desert temperatures and in Year 3 on co-ordinates. However, there is not yet a planned overview to ensure systematic coverage and maximise the opportunities to practise, consolidate and validate mathematical skills and understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve high standards.
- One of the teaching assistants makes an excellent contribution to experimental and investigational work.
- Good teaching with some strong features ensures that pupils achieve well.
- There is a good emphasis on investigative and experimental work.
- The accommodation and resources are very good.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills.
- There is scope for pupils to plan their own investigations and experiments more frequently.

Commentary

76. Standards have risen since the last inspection and are well above average throughout the school. Pupils achieve well and make good progress because the teaching is strong, with many very good features. Standards were very high in national tests last year because higher attainers did particularly well.
77. There are several factors that have contributed to the very good improvement since the last inspection. These include:
- Improved planning based on national guidelines.
 - Strong teaching, with good levels of challenge for higher-attaining pupils.
 - The excellent support provided by a very well qualified classroom assistant.
 - Interesting activities, with an emphasis on investigational and experimental work, which captures pupils' interest.
78. Overall, pupils achieved well in the lessons seen. Most listened well to their teacher and worked hard. They organised themselves well and collaborated sensibly with the other pupils in their group. All were clearly interested in what they were doing and moved ahead well in their learning because they wanted to find out more. This was because the investigations

planned were interesting. One, related to filtering dirty water, had everyone sitting on the edge of their seats to see which method was most effective. They recorded their work neatly, and in several lessons pupils used their numerical skills effectively in compiling tables of results.

79. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Overall, science is taught well. In this subject, planning and preparation are particularly strong. Teachers are very clear about what they are trying to achieve in the lessons and convey this effectively to the pupils. Resources and materials are very well prepared before the lesson begins, with the classroom assistant making a superb contribution to this aspect. Groups are briefed well and so little time is wasted in organisation and pupils get to work quickly. During the activity part of the lesson, both the teacher and the assistant support pupils well. All pupils are challenged effectively by the tasks set. In some of the lessons seen pupils were organised in single sex groups. Pupils' work shows that investigations and experiments are a regular feature of work in science and that pupils clearly understand the principles of fair testing. There is less evidence of pupils planning their own investigations and experiments, which would enhance the level of challenge even further.
80. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for two years, is very enthusiastic and provides a good lead. This year, science is a 'focus' subject in the school improvement plan and so more opportunities to monitor and evaluate work in classrooms are planned. This will enable the co-ordinator to have an even clearer view of provision across the school. She already analyses the statutory tests in order to highlight areas needing more attention. This strategy has been successful in raising standards. Current plans include introducing a more advanced curriculum for higher-attaining older pupils. The accommodation and resources for science are very good. There is a designated science area in the 'block' and very good levels of resources, which are extremely well organised. The school borrows additional, specialist resources from a local company on a regular basis and this greatly enhances the work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been improvements in resources since the last inspection.
- Teachers have increased their confidence and expertise.
- Pupils are very positive about and interested in the subject.
- The increasing use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is being developed well.

Commentary

81. Examples of pupils' work and the three lessons seen show that pupils make good progress, achieve well and by Year 6, most attain at least the expected levels. They are not doing any better than this because provision for ICT was not as good in the past and so pupils could not move forward so quickly. Following the last inspection's identified weakness in resources, the school made good use of private funds to create and equip an ICT suite, recently updating it using national funds. Recent national training has increased teachers' expertise, with several teachers undertaking additional training. The school now rightly identifies the need to focus on the use made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. Very recent acquisition of a digital projector and interactive whiteboard, establishment of an Internet link, the classroom computers and ICT work areas will all support this well. Pupils confirm computers outside the suite are used for research and presentation of work although no examples were observed. Many pupils have access to computers at home, using them to develop skills and undertake tasks that support schoolwork.

82. Adoption of national guidance as the basis for planning in the subject ensures that skills are introduced, developed and consolidated as pupils move through the school. Teachers build well on previous work and pupils experience all the expected strands of the subject. Word-processing skills are developed as pupils learn to save, retrieve and amend work, change fonts and insert images. In Year 3, pupils use repeat functions to create patterns and manipulate images or use spray effects to create pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Matisse. They use control to enter the instructions needed to move the screen turtle along a shown route. Year 4 pupils enter precise directions to draw pentagons and hexagons on the screen and learn to communicate via the Internet with pupils in a Bangalore school. In Year 5, pupils have made good use of spreadsheets to record, compare and present information about water usage and rainfall in desert regions. By Year 6, pupils are aware of the wider uses of ICT and can use it to control events and communicate information, such as creating a multimedia presentation about High Wycombe.
83. Teaching and learning is consistently good and in two of the lessons seen was very good. Teachers have worked hard to make good use of the suite since it has been updated. They plan lessons well and make full use of brisk introductions to demonstrate and introduce techniques, explaining tasks carefully so pupils can successfully complete them. Teachers, teaching assistants and parent helpers support individual pupils well. This enables all, including those with special educational needs or who are less skilled, to achieve well and allows more confident pupils to experiment with new techniques. Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is reflected in their high levels of concentration, determination to succeed and collaborative work with partners. Good use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress, with younger pupils already evaluating their own work.
84. Interim leadership by the headteacher has ensured that the pace of development has not faltered and has been supported by input from the previous co-ordinator and recent links with a local Beacon school. A carefully constructed action plan is in place to ensure that the focus on using ICT to support learning in other subjects is developed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. ICT is being used with increasing effect to support learning in other subjects. Word-processing skills are well used to present literacy work and CD-ROMs used to carry out historical and geographical research. Data-handling is used to record and present work in both geography and science. Recent improvements in resources, particularly the interactive whiteboard and the school's focus on increasing use of ICT in lessons, will all support learning well.

HUMANITIES

86. In the humanities, work in history and religious education was sampled, with two lessons seen in each. Four lessons were seen in geography, which is reported more fully. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in these subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well.
- Good planning, with good progression of skills identified.
- Some of the books in the library are rather dated.

Commentary

87. The good provision noted at the time of the last inspection has been maintained successfully. Pupils achieve well because work is carefully planned and the teaching is good. Most pupils achieve standards that are higher than expected for their age.
88. In the lessons seen, pupils worked hard and made clear gains in understanding and knowledge. They were interested in what they were doing because the work was relevant and purposeful. This enthusiasm obviously spills over at home, because parents commented on the interesting work undertaken. During the inspection week, pupils worked on a variety of topics including comparisons between life in India and Tylers Green, how climate affects people, the school's water supply and contour lines.
89. Teaching is consistently good and so pupils move forward well. As in other subjects, planning is very thorough. It clearly outlines the development of pupils' geographical skills. Good links are made with other subjects. Interesting resources are used and good use is made of fieldwork to enhance pupils' understanding. Pupils have been involved in an interesting study of the River Chess, for example.
90. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership. She has a sound view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has identified some sensible areas for development, including the increased use of ICT. Resources are generally good, but some library books need updating.
91. Work in **history** was sampled. It is evident from teachers' plans and pupils' work that the subject is well planned, with some interesting features. Staff take every opportunity to bring the past alive for pupils and this engages their interest and imagination. In many study units, for example, visits or 'special days' are organised. The trip to Hughendon Manor in connection with the Victorians and the 'Tudor day' are good examples of this. There are good cross-curricular links. These include work on Greek mathematicians, opportunities to develop literacy skills through writing for a range of purposes and good use of art techniques to enhance learning.
92. Pupils' work shows that they achieve well, particularly in relation to building up a bank of knowledge about the past. Older pupils, especially, present and organise their work in a variety of ways. In the session seen, for example, pupils worked in groups to tell famous Greek stories through drama. All found this enjoyable and clearly understood the main features of Greek theatre. In some classes there is an emphasis on the use of worksheets to the detriment of independent work. In the lesson seen, the teacher helped pupils to consolidate their understanding of chronology by the use of a very effective time line to remind pupils of the sequence of world history.
93. The co-ordinator provides sound and conscientious leadership. There have been limited opportunities so far to monitor work in classrooms in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.
94. Work in **religious education** was also sampled. In the work seen, it was evident that pupils make good progress and achieve well. By Year 6, standards are slightly above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism and this contributes to pupils' understanding of the cultures with which these faiths are associated. Overall, work in this subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, cultural and moral development.
95. Teaching was sound in the lessons seen, but pupils' good progress indicates that it is good overall. Teaching, display of pupils' work and samples of work indicate that there are opportunities for reflection, which contribute well to spiritual development. Pupils have

opportunities to write thoughtfully, for example. Within this positive picture, there remains some use of unchallenging worksheets, which was an area highlighted for development at the time of the last inspection. In the lessons seen, teachers' subject knowledge was not as secure as it could have been.

96. The school makes efforts to bring the subject alive by the use of visits and visitors. These include visits to local Christian churches and a Hindu temple. Pupils share their own experiences of a range of different faiths. Resources are satisfactory and information sheets are used from time to time to summarise quickly the main features of different faiths. The school has no collection of artefacts for staff to use regularly, but is able to borrow them from a local resources centre.
97. The headteacher is caretaking this subject temporarily whilst the co-ordinator is on maternity leave. There is no action plan for the current year.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. Four lessons were seen in both music and PE and one lesson was seen in both design and technology and art and design. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and spoke to them about what they had learnt.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Very good teaching overall ensures that pupils achieve very well.
- There are good opportunities for some pupils to take their interest further through very good specialist peripatetic teaching, and a choir and orchestra.
- There are very good resources.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject.
- Work in the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development, although this is not yet in the planning.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

99. Most pupils' attainment is well above average by the end of Year 6, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are very enthusiastic and benefit considerably from the wide range of activities and opportunities the school provides.
100. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Strengths observed in lessons by both non-specialist and specialist teachers were:
- Very good planning, challenge and pace.
 - Good use of whiteboards to check and assess pupils' understanding.
 - Very high expectations of behaviour and musical achievement.
 - Constant support and encouragement.
 - Time well planned to practise, perform, listen and reflect.
 - Opportunities for pupils to evaluate each other's performances.
 - Pupils of very different musical abilities and experience were well provided for.
 - Skilled questioning which enabled pupils to achieve very well.
 - Assessment was an integral part of the lesson so pupils' skills were built on carefully.

Several specialist peripatetic teachers teaches some pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 a range of instruments very well.

101. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 also have the opportunity to join the choir, while older pupils in Years 5 and 6 may join the orchestra, wind band or brass ensemble. The choir and pupils in Year 6 sing in two parts, holding their parts well. The wind players play well together, listening to each other well. Instrumentalists play in assembly from time to time. The orchestra, choir and music ensembles perform at concerts and productions and take part in a local music festival. Music is very well led and managed. Resources and accommodation are very good.
102. A commercial scheme supports non-specialist teachers very well and the music co-ordinator offers good support in planning where necessary. There is a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion, representing a range of cultures, and also access to keyboards. Music makes a very significant contribution to spiritual development for many pupils because of the spontaneity, creativity and reflective listening involved, although spiritual development is not yet planned for. There are very good opportunities to appreciate and perform music from a wide range of cultures, and to listen to and watch visiting African and Asian music and dance groups.
103. Work in **art and design** and **design and technology** was sampled. It is not possible to reach a firm judgement about provision. Talking to pupils and teachers, viewing planning, displays and examples of pupils' work all show that pupils are gaining good experience of the expected subject skills through a range of well-chosen activities.
104. In **art and design**, there is every indication that strengths in the subject have been maintained well since the last inspection. There is some work of high quality, particularly in Year 3, where teachers have particular skills and expertise. Pupils have experience of working with a broad range of media and there is good attention to work with fabric and clay. The contribution of a classroom assistant to the clay work has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements.
105. Good planning ensures that pupils develop their skills year on year in drawing, painting, collage, three-dimensional work, printing and fabric work. By the time that they reach Year 6, for example, pupils produce careful sketches using a viewfinder, which are of high quality. There is scope for more attention to work in sketchbooks, particularly in Year 5. Pupils study the work of famous artists in order to emulate their style and techniques. This was evident in work seen in Year 3 in the style of Kandinsky. There are good cross-curricular links, particularly with history. In Year 4, for example, pupils had based some paintings on the style of ancient Egyptian works, capturing the images very effectively. The subject is led and managed well. A designated art room and a kiln enhance the provision.
106. In **design and technology** pupils work with a broad range of materials and techniques to design and produce a wide variety of products. All show a strong focus on the design process and those produced by older pupils incorporate mechanisms, as in the Year 6 motorised buggies.
107. As at the time of the last inspection, good use is made of the food technology area and pupils excitedly describe the biscuits, sandwiches and bread they have made. Their work and the group session seen show a good emphasis on hygiene and safety rules, careful measurement of ingredients and interpretation of recipes to achieve good results. Year 5 pupils knew why they had needed to let the dough prove, explained their choice of flavouring and carefully recorded the steps in the process. Work on display shows how pupils are taught to consider and examine examples of products before producing a design, then to plan the making process and at all stages explain and record their methods. Good examples in the corridor show how pupils followed these steps in Year 3 to make photograph frames, in Year 4 money holders and in Year 5 musical instruments. Their well-finished examples had been personalised and refined and pupils had considered how they might be improved. The weekly

'Tex Techno' club enhances work in this area and pupils produce work of very high quality, such as the quilt in the entrance hall.

108. The subject is well planned and enthusiastically led by the co-ordinator. Although no examples were seen of pupils using ICT as part of the design process or to control their products, this has been identified as an area for development in the subject action plan.
109. It is not possible to reach an overall judgement in **physical education** as only a few lessons were seen. Until recent problems with the roof, all pupils benefited from regular sessions in the school's heated pool. This resulted in standards above those usually found with all pupils able to swim and many going well beyond the expected 25 metres. A broad and well-balanced subject curriculum includes outdoor and adventurous activities as part of the Year 6 residential visit and provides all pupils with a wide variety of experiences. A wide range of additional opportunities offered through clubs, competitive sport and coaching sessions with outside providers extends and supports the curriculum very well.
110. Teachers ensure all pupils are fully involved in lessons. Boys and girls respond with equal enthusiasm and those with special educational needs are supported and able to achieve equally well. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 6 built well on previously learnt skills to develop a sequence of rolls and balances and in Year 5, having learnt the 'Dorset Ring' dance, pupils began to devise their own group dance. In Year 4, good use was made of previous work on rugby skills to develop and extend pupils' ability to pass and receive the ball and develop tactics for blocking and retaining.
111. Teaching and learning are good overall. In the three lessons seen, they varied from satisfactory to good, largely dependent on the pace of learning and quality of pupils' response. Teachers have good expectations of pupils and manage them well although in some instances, immature behaviour of older pupils necessitated correction and occasionally impeded progress. In all three lessons, although suitable coaching points were made, opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their performance were not always exploited. In all lessons, pupils are suitably attired and often work barefoot in hall activities.
112. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has ensured that subject guidance has been developed since the last inspection and identified areas for further development. He is aware of the need to develop assessment and has recently introduced a whole-school approach to this. The very good range of extra-curricular activities allows boys and girls to follow their own interests and the subject is very well supported by the facilities, accommodation and resources. However, safe working space in the large hall is somewhat restricted by the large number of items stored around its edge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

113. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning from specific PSHE taught sessions or work. Assemblies and circle times contribute well to this subject. Classroom display gives some indication that pupils reflect on their attitudes and develop class rules together. Pupils' social development is very good, with many opportunities to foster this through a range of activities and visits. In one short lesson seen the teacher used drama techniques very well indeed to involve pupils in thinking about their attitudes to others. This was a departure from the plan in response to a need identified by the teacher.
114. The school promotes responsibility well and most pupils demonstrate a very high level of self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils offer their own views and opinions readily. Overall, pupils demonstrate very good attitudes and good behaviour and indications are that they achieve well overall in this subject. Lack of planned group work means that opportunities are limited for the development of social skills in lessons.
115. There is evidence that some aspects of citizenship are being developed. Pupils' concept of a democratic process is developed well through their taking part in the recent campaign and

elections for the school council and raising issues to be discussed. As yet, this is in its early stages. Media reporting through newspapers is also studied in Years 5 and 6. This is a challenging activity and is particularly successful where the support given in Year 6 enables pupils to annotate newspaper articles in order to see how a report is structured. This helps them in their critical reading and their recognition of the way the media reports facts and views, thus influencing opinion.

116. A drugs and sex education programme is in place, meeting statutory requirements. There is appropriate liaison with the local police and the school is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.
117. Leadership and management by the new subject co-ordinator are currently satisfactory. There is a clear subject action plan in the school improvement plan.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).