

INSPECTION REPORT

WADDES DON VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Waddesdon, Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110376

Headteacher: Mrs Ruth McGill

Lead inspector: Mr Fred Riches

Dates of inspection: 15th - 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 258280

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:	189
School address:	School Lane Waddesdon Aylesbury Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP18 0LQ
Telephone number:	(01296) 651 237
Fax number:	(01296) 655 959
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Phil Conway
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Waddesdon Village Primary School takes boys and girls from age four to 11. Pupils come from Waddesdon and surrounding villages. There are currently 189 pupils on roll, with an even balance of boys and girls. There are 21 full-time pupils in the Reception Year. Their socio-economic background is broadly average, but includes a wide range. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals appears to be well below average, but this statistical information is not reliable, as no hot meals are served. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. It has been below average in the last three years. The pupil turnover is broadly average. Almost all pupils are of White UK heritage, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. Two pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Four have statements of special educational need, which represents an above-average proportion. The school won several national awards in 2003, including the Healthy Schools Award, the Swan Award, the Schools Achievement Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23235	Fred Riches	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Religious education English as an additional language
9748	Clifford Hayes	Lay inspector	
31233	Liz Slater	Team inspector	English Geography History Citizenship Special educational needs
24022	Julia Lawson	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art and design Design and technology Physical education Science

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Standards are above average by the age of 11. Good leadership and management, a well-organised curriculum and good assessment systems support good teaching. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards at age eleven in English, mathematics and science are above average.
- Teaching is good overall, and especially strong in Years 5 and 6, ensuring that pupils achieve well.
- The teaching of literacy includes much that is very good, promoting successful reading and writing.
- Thorough planning and assessment underpin teaching throughout the school.
- A well-developed curriculum and good teaching in Reception ensure a good start to school.
- The school has rightly identified a need to develop a wider range of teaching strategies for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and is already working on this.

The **school has made good improvement overall since the last inspection.** It has overcome weaknesses in planning and assessment, which are now strengths. The role of co-ordinators is clear and the school now fulfils all statutory requirements. Planning and teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are much improved and pupils now achieve well in these subjects. The school sets clear priorities for improvement and plans effectively to meet its targets. Standards at the age of eleven are higher. Standards at the age of seven have been improving, but remain broadly average overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; 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.*

Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, and from all ethnic backgrounds achieve well during their time at the school. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievement. Children in the Reception Class achieve well and most reach the goals expected by the end of the year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards in the main, though mathematics was below average in 2003. Pupils achieve well through Years 3 to 6, reaching standards above average overall by the age of eleven.

Pupils develop positive personal qualities, showing increasing responsibility and a mature awareness of and respect for the outlooks and attitudes of others as they grow older. **This is a result of the school's good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Behaviour is good in the main, although pupils in Years 1 and 2 occasionally need reminders to settle and concentrate. Personal, social and emotional development among the youngest children and attitudes to work among the oldest are good. Attendance rates are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education offered by the school is good, as is the overall quality of teaching and learning. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Consistent strengths in teaching throughout the school include lesson planning, the sharing of objectives with pupils as lessons begin and the patterns of regular evaluation of learning, by pupils at the close of lessons and by teachers over each week. Teaching in the Reception Year is good, with a well-organised mix of direction by the teacher and structured choice for the children. Assessment procedures are also well developed and teachers use these well in the main to match tasks to pupils' abilities. Some less-able pupils in Years 1 and 2 find some recording tasks too difficult at times. Predominantly very good teaching in literacy lessons and additional daily reading sessions ensure that pupils learn to read and write successfully. The teaching of mathematics is good in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory in other years, with several good elements in Years 3 and 4. The curriculum is broad, balanced and well planned. Residential visits and some innovative elements stimulate pupils' interest. The school offers a satisfactory range of weekly additional activities. Administrative, caretaking and support staff contribute strongly to the school's ethos. The school's arrangements for pupils' care, support and guidance are good and promote good personal development. Partnership with parents and the community is also good, contributing effectively to pupils' learning. Very good links with other schools, particularly the neighbouring secondary school, broaden and enrich the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are good and the governing body gives good support, ensuring that the school meets statutory requirements. The headteacher and deputy form an effective management team, often incorporating the co-ordinators for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The deputy's effective leadership as a role model complements the headteacher's efficient management skills. Together they give the school a clear educational direction, monitoring pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching carefully. The appointment of a new Key Stage 1 co-ordinator is giving renewed focus to this part of the school, as stipulated in the current development plan. The governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses. It carries out its functions well, supporting and challenging effectively. The headteacher and governors keep a close watch on finances and are successful in applying best-value principles. Day-to-day administration is highly efficient.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The large majority of parents express positive views. A few have individual concerns, but the headteacher and staff are clearly approachable, as both questionnaires and the parents' meeting confirmed. A significant minority of parents (just over a fifth of questionnaire replies) feels the school does not provide clear enough information about children's progress. The inspection finds that the school's procedures for assessing and sharing information on pupils' progress are good, especially the use of personal target books and annotated progress books, which refer clearly to pupils' progress and are shared with parents at termly consultation sessions. Perhaps the minority view stems from annual pupil reports, which, although conscientiously composed, do not always show whether pupils are doing as well as expected for their age. The school is looking into this. The other area where roughly a fifth of questionnaire replies expressed some concern was bullying or harassment. This appears to relate to a few incidents from the previous term, which have been successfully dealt with. The school deals with isolated incidents of bullying very effectively, involving the parents concerned. Pupils aged seven and over are almost entirely positive about all aspects on the questionnaire. Some of those aged six and under who completed the form are not as enthusiastic about school as the older pupils. The school's focus on broadening the range of teaching strategies in Years 1 and 2 is clearly set to make lessons more interesting and relevant.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and make learning more relevant in Years 1 and 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good overall**. It is good in the Reception Class, satisfactory through Years 1 and 2 and good overall from Years 3 to 6. Boys and girls do equally well. Standards reached by pupils currently in Year 6 are above average, as they were in national tests in 2003.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science are above average.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well during Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in art and design are above those expected for older pupils.
- The school recognises that, while standards at the end of Year 2 have been rising over recent years, they have not always been as high as they could be.

Commentary

1. The school has made good improvement over recent years, with standards at the ages of seven and eleven in English, mathematics and science rising faster than the national trend. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, and from all ethnic backgrounds achieve well overall during their time at the school. Results from national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003 show pupils doing much better than their peers in similar schools (those where pupils scored similarly to Waddesdon in tests for seven-year-olds four years ago). Standards in English, mathematics and science were all above the national average. Standards in English and mathematics were well above those of similar schools and in science they were also higher.
2. Children in the Reception Class achieve well in communication, language, literacy, and mathematical, creative and physical development. They achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Almost all reach the Early Learning Goals expected for pupils nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage (the Reception Year).
3. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards in the main in English and science, although the overall standard reached in mathematics was below average in 2003. Pupils achieve well overall through Years 3 to 6, reaching standards above average overall by the age of 11 as a result of good teaching. In the current year standards in Year 2 are average in English, mathematics and science. In Year 6, standards are set to be above average in these subjects by the end of the year. Standards seen during the inspection are above average in English and science. They are currently average in mathematics, but the school's close assessment, target setting and booster procedures are set to meet the above average targets for each subject by May. These overall judgements mask a considerable spread of ability in each of the two year groups.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (28.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.1 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)

science	28.6 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)
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There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils apply literacy skills well across the curriculum, using ICT to develop their drafting, editing and research skills in all year groups. Older pupils apply numeracy skills well on occasion in other subjects, making good use of spreadsheets to support their understanding.
5. Pupils achieve well in art and design during Years 3 to 6, several reaching standards above those expected for their age by the time they transfer to secondary school. In all other National Curriculum subjects, pupils achieve satisfactorily from Years 1 to 6, reaching average standards at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils also achieve satisfactorily overall in religious education, with some achieving well during Years 3 to 6. Standards meet those required by the locally agreed syllabus at age 11. It was not possible to judge standards at the age of seven.
6. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. The higher attainers among them do as well as others in the same ability groups. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also do as well as those of similar ability whose mother tongue is English. Although the school has identified minor differences between the achievement of boys and girls in particular year groups and introduced strategies to address these, there is no significant difference overall between boys' and girls' achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall towards their specific targets, and achieve well in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 because they are well supported in lessons by teachers and learning support assistants with appropriate tasks or organisation. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils who are receiving additional mathematics and literacy support through catch-up programmes make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their social and moral development is also good and the improved provision for spiritual and cultural development makes these areas good also. Attendance is very good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made good improvements in the provision of spiritual and cultural development.
- Attendance is very good.
- Opportunities for promoting personal development and good relationships are well planned.
- The school has a consistent approach to managing behaviour, to which pupils respond well.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and are willing to learn. The few whose behaviour is not as good are well managed through a consistent use of rewards and sanctions. As a result, all pupils are aware of how the school expects them to behave and how they will be supported. This security helps these pupils to achieve as well as their peers.
8. Children start school in Reception with limited social skills but quickly adapt to their new setting, displaying good levels of confidence and independence. Young children respond positively to a range of well-planned and stimulating experiences by eagerly sharing their own ideas and sustaining good interest and concentration. As they get older, pupils develop good working habits: they willingly participate in discussions, answer questions and respond well to their work. Their positive attitudes result in improved achievement. Occasionally they lose interest and become restless, but this is usually a result of sitting for too long or of work that is

not appropriately matched to their needs. In these situations pupils' achievement is not as good as it could be.

9. Teachers offer a range of opportunities for pupils to work together with partners and in larger groups, and most pupils manage this well. They are generally keen to share their ideas, but some rely too much on the contributions of others and offer little in group discussions when not supported by an adult.
10. Most pupils with special educational needs are able to focus on their work well because teachers provide appropriate support overall, through adapting the tasks, or through additional adult support or group organisation. Overall, pupils who have behavioural problems are well managed by teachers and assistants and do not affect the learning of others.
11. Relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils, are good and the majority are happy to come to school, although some younger pupils' survey returns show less enthusiasm for school than those of older pupils, which are very largely positive. Adults provide good role models and help pupils to feel valued. They regularly praise and reward their contributions. The school has good systems in place for motivating pupils such as merits, team points and 'good citizen' awards, and pupils respond well to these. Older pupils become increasingly aware of the needs of others when they act as buddies for younger children waiting at the 'friendship stop'.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	171	1	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0

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

12. The school supports the small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs well. It works closely with support agencies, including a local pupil referral unit. The one exclusion during the last academic year and one in the current year were appropriate sanctions that helped resolve difficult situations.
13. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. The oldest pupils take pride in their position within the school. They take their responsibilities seriously and welcome the privileges that come with being the oldest, such as sitting on benches in assembly and having a range of jobs throughout the school. Children in Reception learn the benefits of helping one another through well-planned activities. As they get older, pupils are provided with positive experiences that help them to become socially aware. They take part in residential visits, participate in school productions and compete against other schools in team sporting activities. The school

council meets regularly and involves representatives from all classes who talk proudly about their role, but it is not yet a decision-making body.

14. The school is working hard to improve the provision for cultural development. Pupils study the work of African/American artists, learn about other countries in geography and celebrate festivals of various religions. In music lessons, pupils listen to a range of styles from around the world. They recently benefited from a well-organised 'One World Week', which enabled them to learn about other cultures from visitors who shared their expertise in music, dance and art. As a result of these experiences pupils have produced a range of displays that indicate their growing appreciation of cultural diversity. The school is starting to use 'circle time' to challenge racism, but this is in the early stages and the school has identified the need for further training and development in this area.
15. There have been very good improvements in the provision for spiritual development since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The good use of 'circle time' helps pupils express their own views and to listen to those of others. A well-planned programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) provides opportunities for pupils to understand their own feelings and emotions in an environment that respects all contributions. In religious education, pupils have opportunities to explore different religions and beliefs, and support for charities helps them to consider the feelings and needs of others. During assemblies pupils are willing to share their ideas, but not all of them understand the need to be quiet and calm at these times.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

16. Attendance is very good. It is well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good quality of education for its pupils**. Good teaching, curriculum planning and assessment ensure that pupils achieve well. Good arrangements for pupils' care, support and guidance, together with good links with parents, ensure that pupils feel secure and supported in their learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers use assessment information well to set targets and match tasks to pupils' abilities. Some aspects of learning are not as well developed in Years 1 and 2 as in other year groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in English, including several very good lessons observed, promotes very successful and enjoyable learning.
- Thorough assessment procedures are used well to match tasks to pupils' abilities.
- Consistently-good teaching in the Reception Class gives children a good start and, in Years 5 and 6, ensures that pupils do as well as they can by the time they move on to secondary school.
- Lesson planning is strong throughout the school, ensuring a clear learning focus.

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make average rather than good progress because teachers do not consistently ensure that they are settled and motivated.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (13%)	17 (45%)	16 (42%)	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.

- Teaching and learning are good. They are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 overall. In Years 1 and 2 they are satisfactory overall, though including a few lessons with good and very good features. This picture shows good improvement since the last inspection, when 15 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the school has rightly chosen the development of a broader range of teaching strategies in Years 1 and 2 as its top priority for development. The inspection confirms this as the most important area for the school's focus, as pupils in these years are not as consistently involved in and enthusiastic about their learning as they should be, with the result that their learning and achievement are satisfactory overall, rather than good.
- The strongest teaching is in English. Teachers use time well in both the literacy hour and daily reading lessons, both of which are very carefully planned. Pupils learn particularly successfully in this subject because tasks are matched to their abilities and they recognise teachers' expectations.
- Consistent strengths in teaching throughout the school include lesson planning, the sharing of objectives with pupils as lessons begin and the regular evaluation of learning, by pupils at the close of lessons and by teachers over each week. Assessment procedures are also well developed and teachers use them well in the main to match tasks to pupils' abilities. Some less-able pupils in Years 1 and 2 find some recording tasks too demanding and difficult, however. Teaching in the Reception Year is good, with a well-organised mix of direction by the teacher and structured choice for the children. Good, and often very good, teaching in literacy lessons and additional daily reading sessions ensures that pupils learn to read and write successfully. The teaching of mathematics is good in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory in other years, with several good elements in Years 3 and 4. Not all teachers ensure a brisk pace to mental work and pupils do not begin developing the skills of explaining their calculations early enough.
- Occasionally in Years 1 and 2 class control is not tight enough, allowing some pupils to work too noisily, thereby distracting others. Work set for some pupils of lower ability is too difficult, with not enough support for them in recording. Staffing changes in these year groups have resulted in pupils not appearing as settled in their working patterns as in the rest of the school. The school improvement plan rightly shows the development of a broader range of teaching approaches in Years 1 and 2 as the top priority.
- Teaching is well planned for pupils with special educational needs, focusing on specific targets in individual education plans. Learning support assistants work well with pupils, both within the classroom and in withdrawn groups. Pupils' learning is good where classroom organisation of tasks is carefully adapted to pupils' needs. Pupils' developing knowledge, skills and understanding are monitored well, and targets are adjusted as necessary. Pupils who are identified for behavioural support are well managed by teachers and learning support

assistants and usually do not affect the learning of others, although their difficulties may affect their own learning capabilities.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by additional activities that stimulate pupils' interest well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong curriculum-planning framework supports teaching and learning in all subjects
- Various external initiatives are supporting the school's curriculum development well.
- The curriculum is enriched effectively by visits and visitors as well as clubs and activities.
- A series of sedentary morning lessons sometimes affects younger pupils' concentration detrimentally.

Commentary

22. National guidelines are used well to provide children in the Foundation Stage with a good range of learning activities that prepare them well for the next stage of learning. The creation of a secure outdoor area and the provision of appropriate resources have widened the range of opportunities available, resulting in improved achievement, successfully addressing concerns of the last inspection.
23. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is securely based on the National Curriculum and the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education. The school's curriculum framework effectively supports a coherent approach to assessment, planning, teaching and learning, promoting good achievement, especially in Years 5 and 6. The school uses initiatives such as 'Healthy Schools' and the Visual Arts link with the adjacent secondary school to support curriculum development. Visitors to the school and local and residential visits enrich the curriculum and make it relevant. A wide range of sporting activities and events, and clubs, including science and dance, extend this further. Annual residential visits in Years 4 and 6 provide good opportunities for pupils' personal and social development. Whole-school theme weeks such as last term's 'One World Week' provide good opportunities for the development and application of subject skills in an interesting context.
24. Since the last inspection the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and now places good emphasis on English and mathematics. Teachers regularly evaluate their planning for their classes, groups of pupils and individuals (particularly for English and mathematics) and link changes effectively with assessment. This, together with the use of catch-up programmes and ability grouping for English and mathematics, meets the needs of pupils of all abilities well in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. This includes pupils who are gifted and talented, and those with special educational needs. The school's strong commitment to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils underpins this approach.
25. In all other subjects schemes of work widely used nationally are now securely in place and teachers use them well overall when preparing lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is also good provision for pupils' personal and social development, health education and citizenship. Weekly planning now frequently includes links with previous and future work, ensuring better continuity and progression than at the time of the last inspection. The timetables for each year group are well organised in the main, but a few long afternoon lessons and the use of too many sedentary activities in sequential lessons either side of

morning assembly occasionally lead to pupils losing concentration. Good links between subjects make learning more relevant and purposeful for pupils.

26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Teachers identify these pupils and develop individual action plans with good support from the co-ordinator to help them make progress, particularly in literacy and mathematics. Appropriate tasks and support are allocated well.
27. Accommodation is good and well used. The library is large enough to teach a class and is also used for music. The hall is large enough to accommodate the whole school comfortably for assemblies or other events and is well used by the local community. Outdoor space is extensive and well used. Activity on the rough surface in one playground is currently under observation and review.
28. In all subjects resources have improved since the last inspection and support pupils' learning effectively. The school has begun the process of reviewing and updating books in the library, with the help of parents. Displays of subject information and pupils' work are now good across the curriculum and add effectively to the resources available.
29. Teachers benefit from relevant training, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and the school makes good use of their areas of expertise to deliver the planned curriculum. Where there is currently little expertise, as in music, the school has developed the effective use of a commercial scheme, which supports non-specialists, and has brought in the local-education-authority music consultant to demonstrate teaching. These measures have been very effective. Learning support assistants are trained well in a range of relevant areas, and all support pupils' learning well.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for pupils' health, safety and welfare. Pupils receive good personal support and academic advice and guidance. They have mainly positive views on the school's provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction and transfer arrangements are well organised and supportive.
- Widespread individual target-setting supports pupils' academic progress.
- All staff are caring and supportive; administrative and caretaking staff contribute particularly well to the school's caring and welcoming ethos.
- The school is successful in encouraging older pupils to support younger ones.

Commentary

30. The school's child protection policy is in line with locally agreed arrangements and staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. The health and welfare of pupils are high priorities and staff show good levels of care and concern for all pupils, creating a positive, caring ethos. The administrative officer ensures a warm welcome for visitors, parents, pupils and staff, and the caretaker ensures a very well kept, hygienic environment. Midday supervisory staff work as a team to ensure good levels of supervision and care at lunchtimes. Most staff have a first-aid qualification. Almost all pupils replying to the questionnaire feel they have an adult they can approach with a problem. Very good procedures for the induction of new pupils include the use of existing pupils as 'buddies'. There is extensive target-setting based on assessment, which helps pupils know what to do in order to improve. Arrangements for transfer to secondary education are thorough and supportive.
31. The school supports pupils' personal development well. It has good behaviour procedures, which teachers use consistently. School and class councils provide a framework for developing a sense of community responsibility and roles assigned to older pupils, such as

playground monitoring and 'buddying', effectively promote mature and caring attitudes. A large majority of pupils feel that they get help from teachers and that the school listens to their ideas.

32. The school has made a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Its monitoring and support of academic performance are now good overall, rather than satisfactory.
33. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored and tracked so that targets and work are adjusted as necessary. Time for teaching in small groups by learning support assistants is planned well to coincide with the time for independent work in literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for transition to the secondary school for pupils with special educational needs are very good, including the continuity of support from the local education authority.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents and the local community. The school enjoys very good links with other local schools, especially the neighbouring secondary school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's communication with parents on general school life, events and issues is good.
- The school is keen to obtain and act upon parents' opinions and suggestions.
- There is a high level of parent involvement with activities involving their own children.
- The school has very strong and fruitful liaison with other schools and colleges.
- Some pupil reports do not make standards and progress sufficiently clear.

Commentary

34. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. It provides frequent, useful and timely information to keep parents aware of school activities, educational developments and curriculum matters. Some examples are:
 - Newsletters, letters home and termly letters from each class showing work to be covered in the ensuing term and detailing how parents can help.
 - Meetings on educational issues.
 - Pupil records of homework, targets and reading.
 - Consultation evenings and the availability of teachers for pre- and post-school discussion.
35. All of these have a positive impact on the school's ability to work in partnership with parents, which in turn has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school and their achievement.
36. Through questionnaires, open-days and meetings the school seeks parents' views and, where possible, acts upon them. The termly class letters are an example of this. Parents' concerns and complaints are logged, together with the action taken. These records indicate that the school deals effectively with almost all parental concerns. Parents, supported by all this information, contribute well to their own children's learning. The parents' association offers valuable support through social and fundraising events, making a particularly useful contribution to the development of the school's provision for ICT.
37. Annual pupil reports are extensive and convey predominantly what pupils can do. Reports fulfil statutory requirements for Years 2 and 6, but do not always convey how well pupils are doing for their age and ability in other year groups. The targets and patterns of progress shared through consultation evenings, as noted carefully in pupils' individual target books and progress books, are very useful for parents.

38. The school enjoys good links with the local community. It engages in several village activities and makes use of local resources to support the curriculum through visits and speakers, stimulating pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
39. There are very effective mechanisms to ensure the smooth induction of pupils into Reception and Year 3 and their eventual transfer to secondary education. Educational links with other schools and colleges are very strong and beneficial to the school.
40. Parents are generally very supportive of the school. They feel particularly positive about the staff's high expectations of pupils, induction arrangements, the school's approachability, their children liking the school, leadership and management, and the way the school encourages their children to become more mature. The more negative opinions of a small minority, expressed in inspection questionnaire returns, are related to 'information on children's progress' and 'bullying and harassment'. Inspectors agree with all the positive views listed. With regard to information on pupils' progress, the inspection finds that the school makes good provision for consultation with parents and the sharing of information on targets, but that the clarity of written reporting on progress could be improved. While a small amount of inappropriate behaviour exists, the inspection finds that the school handles any inappropriate behaviour, including possible bullying or harassment, effectively.
41. The school makes good arrangements to obtain parents' views. It makes appropriate arrangements for homework and communicates these well.
42. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have good opportunities to meet their children's teachers and the co-ordinator three times a year to review progress and adjust targets. The co-ordinator is readily available for informal contact. Parents are advised carefully about the nature of the support that they can offer at home

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

These aspects of the school's work are **good**. Good leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy are supported by good governance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and deputy work very effectively as a team to give the school a clear educational direction.
- The headteacher's efficient management skills complement the deputy headteacher's leadership as a role model for class teaching.
- The monitoring of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching is well organised and promotes improvements in teaching and learning.
- The role of co-ordinators in reviewing the curriculum and monitoring planning has been strengthened.
- The governing body plays an effective challenging and supportive role.
- Day-to-day administration is highly efficient.

Commentary

43. The headteacher and deputy form an effective management team. The deputy's effective leadership as a role model complements the headteacher's efficient management skills. Together they give the school a clear educational direction, monitoring pupils' achievement and teachers' effectiveness carefully. The appointment of a new Key Stage 1 co-ordinator follows the setting of priorities in the current school improvement plan. This focuses clearly on the need to raise standards by the age of seven through the application of more-varied teaching strategies appropriate to these year groups. The inspection agrees that this is the most important priority for the school.

44. The governing body gives good support, ensuring that the school meets statutory requirements. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and carry out their functions well. Meetings are well organised. Governors receive full and clear information from the headteacher's reports, so that they are able both to support and challenge effectively. Together, the headteacher, deputy and governors have successfully addressed all key issues raised by the last inspection. In particular, the school's planning and assessment procedures are now much more effective, ICT provision and standards have improved considerably and the curriculum for religious education now meets statutory requirements, with consequent improvement in pupils' achievement.
45. The school's involvement in the Primary Leadership Programme and preparation for the Basic Skills Quality Mark has underpinned and clarified the role of co-ordinators in their regular and systematic review of the curriculum. This clearly informs their subject action plans which generally contribute well to the school improvement plan, and have had a clear impact on raising standards in the school, particularly in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
46. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is led and managed well. The newly-appointed co-ordinator has built well on the work of the previous co-ordinator, and the school has been well supported by governors with responsibility for special educational needs. Learning-support assistants liaise closely with class teachers over the implementation of pupils' individual education plans. Progress is carefully monitored, particularly in mathematics and English, and targets are adjusted as needed. Regular reviews inform the target setting and result in pupils achieving well.
47. The headteacher, administrative officer and the finance committee keep a close watch on finances in a difficult situation, where spare places have to be kept available in Reception and Years 1 and 2 for pupils from other schools to transfer to Waddesdon in Year 3. The school has handled recent staffing-instability well, keeping parents informed of changes as soon as possible and managing the accompanying budgetary alterations successfully. While unexpected additional staffing costs during the previous year resulted in a small deficit, the school is working towards balancing its budget by the end of this financial year. Good budget planning and monitoring have resulted in positive improvements, especially in ICT provision and standards. The school has used funds effectively to support its development priorities. The headteacher and administrative officer liaise carefully with the local education authority. Day-to-day administration, including financial management, is highly efficient, helping to ensure that teachers do not need to be involved in tasks that are not directly to do with teaching and assessment.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	426,188
Total expenditure	452,124
Expenditure per pupil	11,646

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,290
Balance carried forward to the next	-11,646

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall, and very good for their personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, the school's provision has improved since the last inspection. All children start Reception in the September before their fifth birthday, with the youngest attending on a part-time basis. The current intake is a particularly young cohort and most are not five until the summer term. Nevertheless they have settled in well to the routines of the school and use their indoor and outdoor environment with confidence. This is because the reception teacher works hard to ensure that their transfer into school is as smooth as possible by visiting them in their playgroup setting and arranging for them to attend assemblies, concerts and special events. The local playgroup has suffered from a period of unsettledness in recent years and this has affected the learning experiences offered to the children who attend. As a result attainment on entry has fluctuated since the last inspection. Standards are generally below those expected for children of this age and, in some areas of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and language acquisition, standards are well below expectations for the majority of children. The Reception teacher has a good understanding of children's needs and carefully plans work to meet their interests and learning needs. She uses assessment well to monitor children's progress and identify areas for further development. The skills of the classroom support assistant are used effectively to support individuals and groups of children to ensure that all achieve as well as they can during their time in the Reception Class. The quality of teaching and the use made of assessment are strengths of the Foundation Stage. These areas have improved since the last inspection and now make a valuable contribution to children's good achievement in all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff place a strong emphasis on improving children's skills in this area.
- A very well-planned learning environment supports independence.
- All children achieve very well.

Commentary

49. Children achieve very well because the teacher uses every opportunity to develop their skills. The teacher and assistant foster very good relationships, helping the children in their care to feel valued, welcoming their contributions and demonstrating a good awareness of their different needs. Children with special needs are supported to enable them to participate as full members of the class, reluctant speakers are encouraged in a supportive context and more-confident children are challenged through more-direct questioning. All children maintain good focus and concentration. They display good levels of independence throughout the day. They sustain concentration when completing tasks and eagerly select their own activities, because they are motivated and interested in all that school has to offer. Because of the very good relationships demonstrated by adults, children learn to help and co-operate each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The focus on teaching skills in literacy helps children to make good progress.
- Good opportunities for speaking and listening extend children's vocabulary.

Commentary

50. The teacher is aware of the limited language skills of most children and plans for a range of experiences to introduce new vocabulary and to stimulate conversation. All children are stimulated by these experiences and eagerly respond when supported by simple questions and adult intervention. Staff take every opportunity to introduce new vocabulary and reinforce this through constant use and repetition. This good support encourages the most hesitant speakers and, as a result, all are achieving as well as they can.
51. There are good opportunities for children to share 'story sacks' and reading books at home and to listen to well-chosen stories. This contributes to their enjoyment of books. They willingly 'read' books to one another in the library and participate in group reading, where they are eager to demonstrate their knowledge of the features of books and their understanding of the story. The use of well-planned sessions for teaching letter sounds and reading is helping all children to make good progress in this area. Children hold pencils correctly and show developing control over the size and orientation of their letters. Their work shows that all children are making good achievement because writing is carefully assessed and used to identify targets for further learning. Staff have sufficiently high expectations for all children and this gives them the confidence to attempt their own writing in a range of different situations. Occasionally, when work is not appropriately well matched to their needs, children rely too much on the support of adults and their learning is affected.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment is well used to inform planning.
- Staff offer good opportunities for children to practise and reinforce new learning.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are good because staff plan for a range of interesting activities that develop mathematical understanding. Teaching is particularly effective in whole-class sessions where children enthusiastically join in with counting games or clapping patterns. The very good relationships established result in children confidently volunteering to devise their own repeating patterns for the class to follow. Children make good progress in understanding about patterns because they have a wealth of opportunity to practice making patterns with natural objects outside, with cubes for recording and by threading repeating patterns. They extend this understanding by observing patterns in animals and as a result most can sustain a repeated pattern. Children use their knowledge of numbers to count in ones and tens and are learning to write and order numbers with some accuracy to nine. Staff make effective use of assessments to plan for the range of abilities within the class. There was too little evidence to judge children's achievement in early number calculation.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff present a wealth of opportunities for learning in this area.
- Staff make effective use of questions to extend children's understanding.
- Staff offer good opportunities for children to learn about other cultures.

Commentary

53. This is a very well-planned area of learning because it provides opportunities for children to learn from first-hand observations. Staff use questions skilfully to support children's learning and to introduce new vocabulary. The first-hand experiences help children to develop very positive attitudes to their learning and excite even the most reticent. They are stimulated by well-planned topics that help them to understand the world in which they live. They explore natural materials when they make 'nests' for their toy pets, they learn about the changes that occur in spring through a stimulating seasonal display and relevant language, and they plant seeds to observe the conditions required for growth. There are very good opportunities for children to use computers, as an independent activity within the classroom and as a focused-task in the computer suite. Children improve their control by operating the mouse to drag icons and can draw a 'butterfly' using the 'split windows' facility. Children are making good progress in this area because they are very well supported through demonstrations, explanation and good levels of individual help. Children operate listening systems and carry out simple functions with confidence because there are regular opportunities for them to use the equipment to explore and to practise skills previously taught. The celebration of Chinese New Year by dancing as dragons and the opportunity to work alongside older pupils in 'One World Week' have contributed to children's growing awareness of other cultures and traditions. Teaching and learning are very good in this area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is well used to support learning through physical activity.
- Children use small tools with confidence because there are regular opportunities for their use.

Commentary

54. No hall sessions were observed during the inspection: therefore no judgements can be made about teaching. Children were observed using the outside area and involved in different forms of physical activity and look set to meet the expected goals by the end of the year. Although small, very good use is made of the outdoor play area and this contributes well to children's development in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Because space is restricted there is a limited amount of equipment for use outside. Nevertheless, children learn to climb, jump, pedal and balance through well-planned activities and appropriate adult intervention.
55. Children confidently manipulate malleable materials to make clay mice and use simple tools to construct shelters for their pets. Teaching is good in this area and staff make effective use of questions to challenge and enhance children's learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a good range of opportunities to explore and experiment in this area.
- Staff offer good provision for children to play imaginatively.

Commentary

56. It is not possible to make firm judgements about teaching, as children were not seen engaged in music or creative activities. However, there is a good range of children's work on display showing their experiences of a range of skills. Children explore different media to draw spring flowers; they decorate the 'Chinese Dragon' using printing patterns and make observational drawings of their feet, identifying features of their feet and shoes. Children have regular opportunities to paint, which allows them to explore this medium and to develop their control when using simple tools. There is good emphasis on role-play, which is frequently changed to stimulate imaginative play. Children use their own experiences to engage in play with one another. Good planning and provision in this area helps all children to achieve as well as they can.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6.
- Leadership and management of English are very good.
- Assessment is good overall and informs planning and target-setting well.
- Pupils achieve well overall because of the predominantly good and very good teaching.
- The school has identified that pupils' achievement during Years 1 and 2 has not always been as good as it could be and is focusing on the improvements needed.
- Speaking and listening opportunities are underdeveloped in Years 1 and 2.
- Approaches to assessment, marking, presentation of work and independent writing are not yet consistent in Years 1 and 2.
- The school supports pupils with special educational needs successfully through catch-up programmes.
- Resources and accommodation are good overall although library books need review - the school has already planned for this.

Commentary

57. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy, and teaching approaches reflect this. Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 and in English in Year 6 have risen overall since the last inspection because the school has worked hard to tackle the areas that needed improvement. In particular, above average results for Year 6 pupils in 2003 show good progress since Year 2 for those pupils. Standards in national tests for Year 2 in 2003 were average in both reading and writing.

58. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including boys, girls, pupils from minority ethnic groups, pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils, is satisfactory in

Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by good planning and careful deployment of classroom support assistants, who are also deployed well to teach additional catch-up programmes.

59. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Years 1 to 3 and above average in Years 4 to 6, by which time pupils explain their work clearly to adults. Year 6 pupils talk very confidently about aspects of the school. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 plan and use good opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to talk to each other in groups and pairs about their work and what they have learned, but speaking and listening opportunities have been less fully developed in Years 1 and 2. An exception was a very good literacy lesson in Year 2, where pupils worked together to prepare questions for the teacher who was in role as a character from a book they were reading.
60. Most pupils like reading. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where they work through published schemes, reading individually and in groups. Group reading is well supported by teachers and learning support assistants on the whole, although opportunities to extend independent reading experience during group reading times are not always exploited well. Overall, with the exception of higher attainers, pupils' knowledge of different authors is limited. Teachers strongly encourage pupils throughout the school to read with parents and carers at home and this continual practice supports pupils' reading development well. Pupils use a range of strategies to work out how to read words and sentences and most tackle new reading material confidently, although lower-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 less so. Year 2 pupils understand how to use an information book, and pupils from Years 3 to 6 regularly use the Internet for research as well. Year 6 pupils are very familiar with the Dewey system used in the school library. Classrooms have limited space for reading areas but some classes have good book displays focusing on an author or information books for a topic being taught. The spacious library is well stocked but the quality and range of fiction and non-fiction is due for review and the school has already started to plan for this. An annual author visit stimulates reading interest further.
61. Pupils' achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. In Years 3 to 6 it is good. New strategies are very effectively raising standards in Years 3 to 6, but are not yet showing sufficient impact in Years 1 and 2. Some opportunities for self-assessment are beginning to be offered to younger pupils, but marking of younger pupils' work varies in quality and does not often help pupils know what they have to do next to improve their writing. The teaching of handwriting in Years 1 and 2 does not yet transfer securely into pupils' recorded work. This has a negative impact on presentation, as does the overuse of worksheets with the youngest pupils.
62. Factors that have been instrumental in raising standards in writing overall and have been particularly effective in Years 3 to 6 are:
 - Support and advice from the local education authority and training on the Primary Leadership Programme.
 - Very good leadership and management, which has underpinned a coherent approach to the subject's development.
 - Identification of needs through monitoring lessons and pupils' work.
 - Assessment approaches, including marking, which inform planning and group and individual targets well.
 - Opportunities for pupils to be involved in their own learning, such as planning and discussing their work together, evaluating and recording their own understanding of what they have learnt, reviewing marked work and identifying what they need to do next.
 - Identifying action needed after careful analysis of pupils' attainment in optional and statutory national assessments yearly.
 - A portfolio of different types of writing across the curriculum by pupils throughout the school as examples for staff to refer to.

- Good application of literacy skills, for example, highlighting text to support note-taking of key facts is frequently used in other subjects in Years 3 to 6, making literacy relevant for pupils.
 - Using the plenary both to reinforce and evaluate what pupils have learnt.
 - A clear approach to learning about spellings as well as opportunities to practise them in Years 3 to 6.
 - Increasing use of ICT as a tool for writing and use of the Internet for research, and competent use of the overhead projector and video to support learning.
63. Four out of six lessons observed were of very good quality, one good and one satisfactory. Taking into account pupils' recorded work over the past two terms and samples on display, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The good and very good teaching in the school typically includes the following strengths in addition to those mentioned above:
- Good links with pupils' own experience and other subjects mean that learning is relevant.
 - What pupils are intended to learn in lessons is clear and written on their work so that they know what they are learning and why.
 - Lessons move at a good pace with time limits given so that pupils work well on task.
 - Focused checks on knowledge and understanding mean that pupils' learning is secure.
 - Homework is relevant.
 - Good relationships between teachers and pupils, together with good classroom management and control, support learning well.
 - Good demonstrations by teachers ensure pupils are clear about what they have to do.
 - High expectations stimulate pupils to achieve well.
 - Independence and responsibility is encouraged through purposeful activity.
64. The weaknesses noted in some teaching include limited opportunities for pupils to work together, insufficient variation in the match of tasks to pupils of different abilities, planning too much work to cover and not using closing plenary sessions to confirm the learning.
65. The co-ordinator leads and manages English very well. Her excellent subject knowledge and good liaison with the local education authority and the Primary Leadership Programme result in effective partnership with staff to implement changes necessary for improvement. Improved monitoring, assessment, planning, teaching, target-setting, resources and organisation have led to raised standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Changes in staff have meant that some approaches are not so well embedded through the whole school, but this is currently being addressed in order to support better continuity from the Foundation Stage to Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects, and links with other subjects appear clearly on the planning. Literacy skills are also developed well in the context of learning about film and video. Staff use the ICT suite facilities confidently to develop and apply pupils writing and research skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards above average and well above similar schools in 2003.
- Good teaching in Years 5 and 6 with elements of good teaching in other classes.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use recording opportunities well, but some lower attainers in Years 1 and 2 are required to record too much.

- Good use of assessment and target-setting.
- Insufficient regular opportunity for pupils to explain their calculating strategies.
- Mental and oral starter sessions not always punchy enough.

Commentary

67. Standards are average at age seven and set to be above average by the end of the year at age 11. Pupils currently in Year 6 a third above average, a third average and a third below average, but the school's determination to meet its targets, together with its thorough use of assessment and booster opportunities, mean that standards are set to be above average by the end of the year.
68. Pupils of all abilities make average progress through Years 1 to 4 and good progress in Years 5 and 6. Overall, achievement is good, because of the particularly well-focused challenge and support given in Years 5 and 6. The school currently has new teachers in Years 2, 3 and 4, with the current Year 1 teacher working with this age group for the first time. In all these classes, teaching is satisfactory, with several good elements in some. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress to the other pupils in their ability groups. Teachers keep good track of the needs, talents and targets of all individuals and of different groups. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievement, although in 2003 the school identified a need to keep a close watch on older girls' standards in mathematics. In the current Year 6, girls are doing well.
69. Pupils are in the main better focused on their work during Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, both during class sessions and during group tasks. In lessons with the younger pupils, teachers do not always insist on eye contact during explanations and calm routines for moving from one activity to another are not yet fully established. Younger pupils therefore undertake their work in a less focused way, with too high a noise level for good concentration. The pace of lessons is good throughout Years 3 to 6 and pupils show good concentration and effort on both practical and recording tasks.
70. Planning and preparation are strengths in the teaching of all aspects of mathematics throughout school. Teachers routinely share the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the outset and use the end of the closing plenary session to summarise how well pupils think they have done. These self-review activities give pupils some involvement in knowing what they have achieved, but do not in all cases require sufficiently careful thought by pupils in their decision-making. Teachers' weekly evaluations of lessons in all year groups are thorough and show a good knowledge of what went well and what needs attention. Teachers use assessment information well to set targets, though systems are not wholly unified through the school, with targets in mathematics books not so effective as those in target books. Teachers' summary overviews of pupils' standards year on year in their progress books are helpful to pupils, parents and teachers alike.
71. In some classes, mental and oral starter sessions are brisk and questions well targeted to pupils of different abilities. This is not yet routine, however. In some classes the initial session lacks pace and urgency. In several lessons observed, teachers missed opportunities to involve pupils in explaining their own mathematical thinking, tending to explain calculations themselves rather than require pupils to share their calculations with each other.
72. The subject has been satisfactorily led in recent years. Resources are good and the local education numeracy consultant has given helpful training to staff. The new co-ordinator recognises the need for further training and some tightening of assessment, with a particular focus on Years 1 and 2. During her first term in post, she has monitored teaching throughout the school together with the consultant and gained a clear overview of the current provision

and standards. Assessment is in place throughout the school, although the good tracking systems are better developed in Years 3 to 6.

73. Overall, the school has made good improvement in the subject, raising standards at seven and 11 faster than nationally since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Teachers make good use of ICT to support mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where work on spreadsheets is developing well. The school is developing the application of numeracy in other subjects, but has not yet established a clear plan of agreed contexts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Following good improvements since the last inspection, standards have improved across the school.
- Standards exceed expected levels by the end of Year 6.
- Assessment procedures are used effectively to check pupils' progress and evaluate learning.
- Residential visits for older pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Opportunities for pupils to use and apply their ICT knowledge in science are limited in some year groups.

Commentary

75. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Standards are average at age seven and above average at age 11. The co-ordinator has addressed planning, teaching and assessment in order to improve standards and, from her analysis of pupils' achievement, has identified areas for further improvement. Her knowledge of the curriculum has contributed to the improved provision for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and she now has plans to focus on the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2, where provision is not as good. The teaching of scientific enquiry skills has been a particular focus and this is already having an impact on standards. In Years 3 to 6 very good emphasis is placed on investigating and planning tests and by the age of 11 most pupils are confident when planning a 'fair test', understanding that only one variable is changed. All pupils experience a range of different ways of recording their findings but insufficient use is made of the computer, prior to Years 5 and 6, to use simple databases and spreadsheets for helping pupils to collect and analyse their work. There are developing links with literacy and numeracy. All pupils are introduced to new vocabulary and staff plan opportunities for interpreting data by analysing graphs and charts and for using reference materials to support new topic work.
76. No lessons were taught in Year 2 during the inspection, but pupils' recorded work and observations of pupils in Year 1 indicate that standards are broadly satisfactory. Higher attainers respond well to additional challenge, but some tasks planned for average or less-able pupils are not always well matched to their learning needs. Good opportunities for Year 2 pupils to explore forces and movement and to understand how outcomes can be changed by testing the effects of different ramps, for example, result in pupils learning about the importance of making tests fair. In the lesson observed, pupils made satisfactory progress when sorting and classifying sounds using their own criteria, but this learning was not consolidated sufficiently through questioning or demonstration in the closing plenary session.
77. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is mostly good and pupils' work shows that most teachers use the information from their assessments to plan for the different needs within the class. This is

resulting in higher achievement throughout these year groups. In lessons where teaching is good, pupils benefit from a sharp lesson pace that provides opportunities for them to collaborate, experiment and clarify their ideas through challenging and probing questions. As a result, most pupils show enthusiasm and are keen to work hard, responding well to practical investigations. Residential visits also make a valuable contribution to pupil's attitudes to science. A recent visit to Shortenills enabled pupils to explore at first hand the needs of animals and their habitats. These experiences have enhanced pupils understanding and stimulated them to the extent that all are eager to contribute to the continuing work in the classroom. Occasionally, lessons are too long to sustain pupil's concentration or work is not well matched to their needs. In these situations pupils' attitudes are not as good. They lack interest in their work and rely too much on the contribution of others to help them complete their tasks.

78. The recent introduction of regular assessments is helping all staff to make accurate judgements and to identify areas needing further focus. In Years 3 to 6 marking effectively involves pupils. They respond to teacher's comments, assess their own understanding of the work being covered and are involved in the setting of individual targets. Marking is less effective in Years 1 and 2 and pupils are not consistently made sufficiently aware of their next steps for learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Confident teaching and use of facilities in the ICT suite promotes successful learning.
- Higher achievers among the older pupils do particularly well.
- Pupils occasionally lack focus because teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- Good planning and preparation result from improved staff expertise.
- Aspects such as the use of control technology and e-mail are underdeveloped.

Commentary

79. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards and pupils' achievement are better than in 1998, when the inspection found both provision for the subject and pupils' progress were unsatisfactory. The improvement in achievement stems from the school's successful focus on building up resources and staff confidence and expertise.
80. Although gaps in knowledge and understanding remain, as pupils have not yet experienced the full curriculum in the newly refurbished suite, standards at ages seven and 11 are average. Pupils of all abilities achieve at least satisfactorily through Years 1 to 6. Some higher attainers in Year 6 make good progress in particular aspects, as shown by their multimedia presentations. Overall, however, achievement by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and pupils of minority ethnic groups, is satisfactory.
81. Common strengths in teaching include good planning and preparation, which result in the routine sharing of lesson aims with pupils and routine self-review by pupils at the close of lessons. Teachers throughout the school use the ICT equipment confidently, so that their introductory explanations are brisk and clear, ensuring pupils have good opportunity to put new learning into practice. Where teaching is more successful, in good lessons observed, teachers promote a good pace throughout the lesson by showing pupils their expectations in terms of effort and concentration. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, rather than good, it is because teachers do not clarify their expectations or put time limits on pupils' activities. On occasion, this allows some pupils to chatter or fuss rather than put focused effort into the task set. During the inspection, lessons observed included an equal mix of satisfactory and good teaching. When learning support assistants are present, teachers

deploy them well and they show good subject knowledge, assisting pupils effectively. Teachers challenge higher-attaining pupils well, especially the oldest, who clearly recognise their success and enjoy their learning. Teachers ensure equality of opportunity for all, often organising mixed ability pairs to work together, helping the more able develop their understanding by explaining tasks and helping the less able through repetition and practice.

82. The subject has been well managed and well led since the last inspection. It has been a school priority to set up a suite with sufficient hardware to allow a class to work together. The choice of hardware and software, the involvement of parents in raising funds for furnishings and the successful training of staff have all contributed to a much-improved facility. The subject co-ordinators over recent years have created an interesting curriculum and devised a helpful assessment process. A few elements are as yet undeveloped, including the use of control technology and e-mail, but these are included in the plan.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The school makes good use of ICT across the curriculum. It uses word-processing to support pupils in their drafting, editing and presentation of reports, accounts and stories. It uses spreadsheets well in Years 5 and 6 to develop pupils' understanding of numeracy and develop data-handling skills, but these are little used in younger year groups. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils research information, particularly in history and religious education. It has not yet developed control technology to extend pupils' understanding in design and technology.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good.
- Teaching is good, incorporating a variety of effective strategies.
- The curriculum is well planned, ensuring pupils find the subject relevant and interesting.
- Good use of ICT and a variety of resources to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject.
- The use of a log to record all aspects of work in RE is a valuable assessment tool.

Commentary

84. The school has made good improvement in this subject since the last inspection, when provision did not meet statutory requirements. Standards at age 11 meet those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards at age seven, as the inspection found insufficient evidence.
85. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily throughout the school and sometimes well in Years 3 to 6. Overall achievement shown in workbooks and seen in lesson discussions in these year groups is good.
86. Planning and preparation are consistent strengths in teaching, as is the use of artefacts, visitors, video and Internet research. Teachers ensure that tasks planned are interesting. They make good use of these teaching aids to stimulate discussion and different forms of writing. As a result, pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn information about the religions studied and consider what they learn from the stories, celebrations and customs studied. Pupils of all abilities participate and achieve equally well.

87. Teachers ensure good equality of opportunity, involving boys and girls and pupils of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds equally in discussion.
88. The subject is well led. The school has developed an interesting curriculum based on the locally agreed syllabus. Planning for each year group encourages good use of artefacts and visitors, though visits to places of worship other than the local church have not yet been undertaken. Teachers are confidently using the ICT suite and videos to encourage participative research and active watching and listening to promote discussion. In Year 6, the introduction of a log to record pupils' participation in a range of RE activities for which there is no written outcome is a very useful tool for assessment and evaluation. Assessment otherwise remains an area under development.

Geography

No judgement was made on overall provision, as this subject was sampled.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Residential visits for Years 4 and 6 contribute to well to pupils' personal and social development.
- Assessment of geographical skills is as yet underdeveloped but the school has begun this.
- Opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to write and record independently are limited.

Commentary

89. Teachers plan good links with other aspects of the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils study the imaginary island of Struay, linking well with work in literacy, Year 4 pupils study the Indian village of Chembakoli, contributing positively to pupils' cultural awareness, and Year 5 pupils devise questionnaires on local traffic, developing their research and enquiry skills well. From Years 3 to 6, an ongoing focus on what is in the news gives pupils a good opportunity to engage with events the world around them, linking with aspects of PSHE and Citizenship. Pupils' work indicates that they are developing appropriate geographical skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly in Years 3 to 6, although these have only just begun to be assessed.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 3 to 6 cross-curricular work is planned well.
- Historical enquiry skills are being developed well in Years 3 to 6.
- Assessment of historical skills is as yet underdeveloped - the school has just started to do this.
- History does not as yet contribute significantly to pupils' cultural awareness, although local culture is soundly provided for.

Commentary

90. Teaching in three lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good. Overall, taking into account the work seen as well as the lessons observed, teaching is good. Pupils' work indicates that they are developing appropriate historical skills, knowledge and understanding particularly in Years 3 to 6, although these have only just begun to be assessed. Features of good teaching include good preparation, planning, class control, pace and opportunities for pupils to support their learning by working in groups. Weaknesses include cramped

organisation and seating which distracts pupils, and planning to cover too much within the time available.

91. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills and make learning relevant by forging links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 learning about famous people wrote statements about Florence Nightingale and Year 6 pupils studying the Second World War composed effective graphic musical scores to represent the Blitz. Year 5 pupils have used ICT and mathematics in their local research on the 1851 census in order to compare it with their previous research on the 1891 census. Older pupils are encouraged to do independent research and pupils in Years 5 and 6 complete individual research studies linked with their topics. Visits to local museums and exhibitions add interest and enrichment to the subject.
92. Leadership and management of history and geography are satisfactory. Since the last inspection there has been improvement in both subjects. Schemes of work are in place and planning is good. In Years 3 to 6, pupils note the aims of lessons and evaluate their own work and understanding. This is beginning in Year 2. Presentation of work is good in Years 3 to 6 but variable in Years 1 and 2, where too much work involves copying or completing worksheets. Until recently, there was more emphasis on content than on the development of geographical and historical skills, but assessment of skills has just begun, and work is now sampled to monitor standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. Few lessons were observed in music, physical education, art and design and design and technology. Provision for these subjects was sampled rather than inspected in detail. It is therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about standards or teaching and learning. Provision in music is good overall, following the school's effective involvement of a local education authority consultant, who has introduced patterns of work suitable for non-specialists which have improved staff expertise and confidence. Provision for physical education is satisfactory overall and there are good opportunities for older pupils to participate in inter-school sporting competitions. Provision in art and design is good. The school has recently introduced new planning, which promotes the teaching of textiles and sculpture and makes good use of the work of artists and craftspeople to further pupils' understanding in this area. Provision in design and technology is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
94. Pupils achieve well in **music** lessons throughout the school. In lessons and snatches of lessons observed, pupils showed enthusiasm and very good focus as a result of their teachers' confident lead and energetic pace. Pupils routinely use instruments in a disciplined way, collecting and returning them without fuss and playing them rhythmically as they follow the teacher's or group conductor's lead. Standards seen are at least average and sometimes higher, as in a Year 4 lesson, where several pupils showed an ability to maintain an instrumental rhythm 'off' or 'on' the beat, while singing a melody simultaneously. Pupils in Year 2 also achieved very well both in their singing and their repetition of a regular rhythmic pattern. Teaching is good, benefiting clearly from the training and support received during the introduction of new teaching materials.
95. In the two lessons observed in **physical education** (PE) teaching and learning are satisfactory in Year 2 and good in Year 6. This mirrors findings from the last inspection. In both lessons pupils behaved well, responded quickly to teacher direction and were keen to improve the quality of their work. Year 2 pupils sustained good focus when practising their catching skills and Year 6 pupils used their knowledge from previous lessons to refine and develop their skills. Older pupils are particularly well motivated because teaching is good. They learn from other pupils' demonstrations and from continuous coaching from the teacher, who makes effective use of her time to support groups and individuals. Pupils in both lessons commented on the work of others and this enhanced their own performance, but in the Year 2 lesson, too much

repetitive activity slowed the pace. Standards in both lessons met those expected for pupils of these ages and all pupils demonstrate an appropriate understanding for the need to warm up and cool down after exercise. Curriculum plans indicate that all areas of the PE curriculum are taught throughout the year and there are good opportunities for pupils in Years 4 and 5 to undertake swimming and to continue this until the required distance is met. Provision is enhanced through specialist coaching in football and from links with the adjacent secondary school, which support the teaching of team games and dance. Pupils benefit from visiting dance specialists and devise dances to celebrate Chinese New Year.

96. In **design and technology** there is little evidence of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 and no lessons were observed during the inspection. Teachers' plans show that curriculum coverage is appropriate and that the necessary skills are being taught. Pupils in Year 1 have made model homes from recycled materials and have used simple tools to devise features that open and close and to join and decorate their models.
97. In Years 3 to 6, good use is made of workbooks for pupils to design, plan and communicate their ideas. Year 5 pupils have made drawings of musical instruments from a range of different angles to develop their own designs and Year 4 pupils have planned their money containers, labelling and using appropriate language such as, 'seams'. Year 4 pupils make reference to their previous work on moving mechanisms to help with their plans for a moving storybook. These examples show provision to be good in Years 3 to 6, but teaching quality varies. Workbooks do not show how work is assessed and pupils' evaluations of their designs and final products are not being consistently developed. When teaching is good pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of their tasks and record this. In the one lesson observed, teaching was very good and helped all pupils to achieve very well, using their designs to make a moving toy. This teaching enabled pupils to work at their own pace and they responded very well to this, making good use of their workbook to modify their designs during the making process. Pupils used simple tools confidently and showed a good understanding of specialist vocabulary, which they used consistently to describe their work. There are good standards in some work seen. Overall, standards reached by age 11 are generally in line with those expected for pupils of this age. It is not possible to judge standards at age seven.
98. No lessons were observed in **art and design** during the inspection but the wealth of evidence available shows standards to be good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' work indicates that they are meeting the levels expected for their age. The school is currently improving its provision for the teaching of textiles and sculptures and pupils show good progress in these areas. Year 2 pupils use simple pliers to explore making patterns with wire and Year 3 pupils make very good use of the digital camera to record their elongated shapes, which they use as a stimulus for three-dimensional sculptures. Pupils learn about textiles and the effects of dye, masking techniques and printing. They achieve well in this aspect of their learning.
99. The teaching of art and design has been enhanced through a whole-school focus on 'One World Week', which enabled pupils to explore art from other cultures. They designed and decorated African masks, explored Islamic art and, as a part of their work on African art, designed textiles and examined the work of African-American artists, using their styles as a stimulus for their own work.
100. Links with other subjects include pupils' observation of buildings, paintings and portraiture in Tudor times and the use of the computer to create abstract patterns, but such links with other subjects are generally underdeveloped. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good use of sketchbooks to explore and combine a range of skills. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to study and compare the work of a range of artists, craftspeople and designers as a stimulus for their own work or to develop their understanding of the range of different techniques and styles.
101. There have been changes in the leadership of these subjects since the last inspection. The new co-ordinators are developing their roles and have a clear understanding of areas for improvement in their subjects. The leadership in art and design is good. The introduction of a

new programme of work is supporting teaching and planning by providing a rich art curriculum, and this is raising standards in Years 3 to 6. Leadership in music has also been good, organised by the headteacher with the music consultant and successfully overcoming a gap in subject knowledge, both through the appointment of a teacher with musical expertise to take over co-ordination soon and the deployment of a consultant during the interim period. Assessment is satisfactory overall and has been identified as an area for development by all co-ordinators. Resources for music, PE and design and technology are adequate. For art and design they are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. The inspection sampled work in PSHE and Citizenship, with only one lesson being observed, but the work seen and discussion with the co-ordinator all indicate that provision is **good** overall. Since the last inspection it is now taught as a weekly timetabled subject and has benefited from the school's overall improvement to curriculum review and development.
103. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching and learning, some of the results of the school's policy, plans and practice are evident in the good attitudes and behaviour of most pupils observed throughout the school. In the Year 6 lesson observed, teaching was good and pupils were involved in good group and paired discussion, achieving well in their understanding of persuasive language. Worksheets are currently over-used in Years 1 and 2, but in Year 2, a display of pupils' illustrations shows pupils' understanding of where food comes from. Pupils throughout the school spend time agreeing goals and rules, which are displayed in each class.
104. Other health aspects, as well as drugs education, are taught through PSHE and citizenship. A sex and relationships education programme is part of the scheme of work and meets statutory requirements. Units of work on aspects of *Growing and Changing*, *Me and My Relationships* and *The World of Drugs* recur from Reception to Year 6, ensuring progression of understanding in these areas. Links are made with pupils' responsibilities throughout, but there are also specific units on citizenship, rules and the law.
105. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. A clear scheme of work ensures that there is good continuity and progression from Reception to Year 6. The involvement of the school in the Healthy Schools initiative enhances pupils' health education provision further. Leadership and management of the subject effectively ensure that it has the same status as other subjects.

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	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
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	3
Accommodation and resources	3
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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