

INSPECTION REPORT

WALTHAM ST LAWRENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Waltham St Lawrence, Reading

LEA area: Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 109832

Headteacher: Mr D Goodall

Lead inspector: Mrs A M Grainger

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 258297

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:	103
School address:	School Lane West End Waltham St Lawrence Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG10 0NU
Telephone number:	(0118) 934 3248
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Pettit
Date of previous inspection:	4 th - 6 th February 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the villages of Waltham St Lawrence and Shurlock Row, near Reading. With 49 boys and 54 girls on roll, the school is below average in size. The significant majority of pupils live in nearby owner-occupied housing, although a few live in rented accommodation. A few pupils are from the travelling community and live on a nearby mobile home site. Five per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average.

Most pupils are of white British origin, although a few are from mixed race backgrounds. Very few pupils have English as an additional language, and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. Nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties.

Almost without exception, children have had Nursery education before starting at school, although this is with a wide range of pre-school education providers. There are two intakes to the school each year. Children who have their fifth birthday during the autumn term enter in the following January. Those who have their birthday in the spring or summer terms start school after Easter. Only the summer-born children start school before the age of five. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the school is above that expected nationally for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20782	Mrs A M Grainger	Lead inspector	English Mathematics Art and design Geography History Music English as an additional language
9002	Mr D Ashton	Lay inspector	
23385	Ms S Gerred	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Waltham St Lawrence Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school does some significant things well, but there are also some areas requiring improvement. Pupils' overall achievements are satisfactory because teaching and the learning opportunities are adequately matched to their needs. Leadership, management, and the value for money provided by the school are all satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in writing in Year 2 are well above those expected nationally and represent good achievement in relation to pupils' attainment on entry to the school.
- The good progress made by pupils in mathematics in Years 4 to 6.
- Good provision for pupils' personal development, which results in good standards of attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The sensitive care for pupils' personal wellbeing and the value given to their views.
- Effective partnerships with parents, other schools, and the community.
- Subject co-ordinators' roles are not sharply enough focused on monitoring and developing teaching and the curriculum, although they are satisfactory overall.
- Too little use of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning across the subjects.
- Marking that is not focused enough on guiding pupils about how to improve their work.

Improvement since the school was last inspected in February 2002 is satisfactory. Adequate progress had been made in overcoming the weaknesses that resulted in the school being designated as 'underachieving'. Although there are still some instances of work not sufficiently challenging higher-attaining pupils, action has been taken to ensure that these pupils' achievements are now satisfactory in relation to their capabilities. The provision for religious education, music, and pupils with special educational needs is better, as are the learning opportunities for Reception children. The provision for pupils' personal development has improved well, and with it the standards of attitudes and behaviour.

Although further work is needed to increase the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators, there is now a shared view among the whole teaching team of how the school needs to develop. Improvements in governance are good. The headteacher, staff and governors are aware that further improvements in the quality of education are needed. The school is better placed to achieve this than two years ago.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - lowest 5%. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school's results fluctuate, often quite markedly, because of the natural variations found in small year groups of pupils. The data in the above table indicates that pupils did not do very well in the National Curriculum tests in 2003. However, other data shows that almost all pupils who were in the school from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6 made satisfactory progress overall in mathematics, and a few made good progress. However, in English,

several pupils' progress was unsatisfactory in writing. Improving pupils' achievement in writing has been a main focus for the school and the present picture is better. Pupils now in Year 6 are achieving satisfactorily in English, mathematics and science in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are making good progress in mathematics. Present standards are as expected nationally in English and science, and above the nationally expected level in mathematics.

The success of the efforts to improve pupils' achievement in writing can be seen in Year 2, where present standards are well above the nationally expected level, representing good achievement for this year group. In reading, mathematics and science, standards are above average in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In all other subjects for which enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements, achievement is satisfactory and standards are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, including in ICT. In art and design, standards are above this in Year 2. Religious education standards are at the level expected in the locally-agreed syllabus.

Reception children achieve satisfactorily overall, and well in their physical development. Almost all are on course to achieve the standards expected nationally at the end of the Reception Year, and a good proportion is likely to exceed these standards.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The result is that attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good throughout the school. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are very sensible and show maturity beyond their years, setting a very good example for younger pupils. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Most pupils have good attendance, but the poor attendance of just a few pupils this school year has reduced the attendance rate, which was formerly well above the national average. Nevertheless, the school tries hard to get all pupils to attend well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education, including the teaching provided by the school, is satisfactory. As a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory overall at each stage of their primary education. There is good provision for writing in Years 1 and 2, for mathematics in Years 4 to 6, and in physical development for Reception children, promoting effective learning in these particular stages and areas. The curriculum, which is satisfactory, is enhanced by a good range of additional activities such as clubs, visitors to school and visits out of school. Pastoral care is good and the school provides a warm family atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and grow in confidence. The partnerships with parents, other schools and the community make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. There is a team focus on improvement. The headteacher provides a satisfactory educational direction and all staff are clear about where the school is going. Whilst the informality of some of the systems for checking the provision by co-ordinators works adequately in this small school, sharper and more rigorous systems are needed in order to hasten the pace of improvement. Governance is good, providing the right balance of support and challenge and ensuring that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are positive. Many recognise and appreciate that the school has moved forward since its last inspection. Pupils are very happy at school. Those in Year 6 say that they will be sorry to leave at the end of the school year.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Sharpen the involvement of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and developing teaching and the curriculum.
- Develop the use of computers to support pupils' learning across the subjects.
- Ensure that marking is used to provide guidance for pupils about how to improve their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards presently in Year 6 are at the nationally expected level in almost all subjects including English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT). They are above the nationally expected level in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above those expected nationally in writing in Year 2, which represents good achievement in relation to pupils' attainment on entry.
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are making good progress in mathematics.

Commentary

1. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were close to the national average in mathematics and science, but below the national average in English. Compared with the performance of other schools whose pupils had similar attainment at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were well below the national average in mathematics and science, and in the lowest five per cent of schools in English. However, analysis of the school's data shows that almost all pupils who were in the school from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6 made securely satisfactory progress in mathematics, and a few made good progress. Whilst 76 per cent of the pupils made satisfactory progress in English, the others did not. The school has identified that the weakness in progress was in writing and has been well aware of the need to rectify this situation.
2. Standards presently in Year 6 are as expected nationally in English and science, and above the expected level in mathematics. All groups of pupils now in Year 6 are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their end of Year 2 test results, including in writing. In mathematics, pupils in Years 4 to 6 are currently making good progress because of effective teaching and good coverage of the mathematics curriculum.
3. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, pupils' results were well above the national average in mathematics and above the national average in reading, but below it in writing. Compared with the performance of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' results were above average in mathematics, but below average in reading, and well below in writing. As in Year 6, it is pupils' performance in the tests in writing that has caused the most concern. To a large extent, this is what has led to the trend in the school's results being below that found nationally in Years 2 and 6. Improving pupils' achievement in writing has been a major focus for the school.
4. A much better picture is evident in the writing standards in Year 2 now, which are well above those expected nationally and represent good achievement in relation to pupils' attainment on entry to the school. In 2003, no pupil reached the level above that expected for their age in the writing tests. Now, in Year 2, 33 per cent of the pupils are on course to reach this higher level.
5. At the last inspection, the school was found to be underachieving. This was because pupils with potential for higher attainment were working below their capabilities. The school has focused on eradicating this underachievement. The writing standards now in Year 2, and pupils' good progress in mathematics in Years 4 to 6, indicate that the action taken is starting to be effective. Although there are still instances in lessons of work not challenging higher-attaining pupils well enough, particularly in Years 1 and 2, it is no longer the case that higher attaining pupils as a group are underachieving.

6. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils from the travelling community are given sensitive support to achieve well and make up lost ground when returning to school after absences. Nevertheless, the significant periods that some have away from school adversely affect the standards they attain and result in them not doing as well as they should.
7. Pupils' competence in ICT is at the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. However, ICT skills are not well enough applied and developed in other subjects. Religious education standards are as expected in the locally-agreed syllabus. In all other subjects for which enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements, standards are at the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, although art and design standards are above this in Year 2. No overall judgements have been made for physical education in Years 2 and 6, or for geography and music in Year 6.
8. Almost all Reception children are on course to achieve the nationally expected standards at the end of the school year, and a good proportion are likely to exceed these standards. Their achievement is satisfactory and they maintain the above-average attainment they have on entry to the school. In physical development, their achievement is good because of effective teaching. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is better now than at the last inspection, and is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (18.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (27.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.3 (29.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.2 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, as is their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. They are particularly mature and sensible by the time they reach Year 6.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other and with the adults in the school. Positive relationships result from the care shown for pupils and the very good example set by the staff.
- Pupils are confident and keen to take responsibility because they are given opportunities to do so from the moment they start school.
- Effective attention is given to pupils' personal development.

- Attendance and punctuality are areas of concern for a few pupils, although most attend well.

Commentary

9. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to learning in most lessons, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Nearly all listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of teachers' high expectations of attitudes and behaviour. Pupils respond particularly well and maintain a high level of interest when set appropriately challenging tasks, which provide opportunities for pupils of all levels of attainment to achieve well. Outstandingly good attitudes were seen in a Year 6 religious education lesson in which the content captured pupils' interest exceptionally well. However, very good attitudes are the normal situation among this small class of the oldest pupils.
10. Standards of behaviour are also improved and are good throughout the school. Pupils are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen. Parents and pupils confirm that the school does not tolerate any acts of unkindness and should bullying occur, it is dealt with quickly. As at the last inspection, no pupil has been excluded from school.
11. From the day they start school, children are encouraged to become independent and to take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. This contributes to the good standards children achieve in their personal, social and emotional development during the Reception Year. Responsibilities range from older pupils ringing the school bell or acting as a school councillor to younger ones in Reception and Year 1 tidying up at the end of sessions. Older pupils use the 'friendship bench' on the playground to befriend younger ones and respond well to opportunities to care for each other. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously, developing very good levels of maturity by the time they reach Year 6.
12. Pupils play harmoniously together and work very well together in groups. The few pupils with poor attendance are welcomed back by staff and their classmates after periods of absence and this helps them to settle back in. Staff give a very positive lead in the development of good relationships. They give praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models for behaviour towards others.
13. The good ethos of the school helps to promote pupils' personal development. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are better than at the last inspection. Spiritual and cultural development have improved most significantly, having formerly been unsatisfactory. They are now supported by work in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils experience a wide range of spiritual and cultural traditions, including visits to the village church, an art gallery and a synagogue. An Indian dance project and visitors from the local arts centre and community further enhance their learning. Pupils are now prepared well for a modern culturally diverse society. Tolerance and understanding of the views and beliefs of others are promoted well.
14. With the assistance of the education welfare officer, the school is working hard to improve attendance and punctuality. The school is very concerned about the poor attendance of just a few pupils this school year, which has reduced the attendance from a level formerly well above the national average.

Attendance

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	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and the range of learning opportunities meet pupils' needs satisfactorily. The partnerships with parents, other schools and the community support learning well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, pupils' learning and assessment are satisfactory. They help pupils to achieve satisfactorily in each stage of their primary education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2 results in pupils achieving well and reaching standards that are well above those expected nationally in Year 2.
- Effective teaching of mathematics in Years 4 to 6 contributes significantly to pupils' good progress in this key subject in these year groups.
- Good teaching ensures that Reception children achieve well in their physical development.
- Teaching does not always provide enough challenge for pupils with potential for higher attainment, although their achievement is satisfactory overall.
- Teachers' marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils about how they can improve. There are examples of learning being held up because errors are not sufficiently identified.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	0	13	10	2	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning is better now than at the last inspection. At that time, teaching did not meet pupils' needs adequately in Year 2 and there were weaknesses in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development for Reception children. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory across the whole school, with some good features in all year groups. Even so, there are some areas in which improvement is needed.
16. For Reception children, teaching and learning are good in physical development because lessons in the hall are well organised and meet their needs well. There is also effective day-to-day provision in the classroom and outside area. Learning is good in many activities in which direct teaching takes place across the areas of learning for children of this age. There is secure development of the basics in communication, language and literacy, which lays the

foundations for the later good achievement in writing. Brisk teaching of activities in mathematical development results in children being well motivated and involved. However, there is not always enough clarity and purpose to activities that children undertake without direct adult involvement. In some mathematical development activities, not enough account is taken of the range of children's needs and this results in some underachievement at times.

17. The teaching of writing is good in Years 1 and 2 because teachers stimulate pupils' desire to write through tasks that capture their interest. In Year 2 in particular, pupils are taught how to use descriptive language to set a scene, create atmosphere and engage the reader. Story writing is well taught. There are some examples of good teaching of writing in Year 6 that also develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in history and religious education, particularly their capacity to empathise. However, the teaching of story writing is not as effective in Years 3 to 6 as lower down the school. Nevertheless, teachers are better at matching work to pupils' needs in English than at the last inspection and they develop skills in writing for a good range of purposes. As pupils move up through the school, teaching successfully sustains their good skills in speaking, listening and reading.
18. Teaching and learning are good in mathematics in Years 4 to 6 because work is well matched to pupils' needs and lessons are clearly focused. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident in relating mathematics to everyday situations, so making problem-solving meaningful for pupils. However, in contrast to the strong teaching of writing, there are weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Work is not well enough varied to meet the range of pupils' needs and higher-attaining pupils are not always pushed on well enough. As a result, in Year 2 in particular, the teaching of mathematics is only just adequate.
19. There are other occasions when work does not challenge pupils with potential for higher attainment well enough in Year 2, for instance in science and history. The support for pupils with special educational needs is much more effective. Support staff are good at identifying where support is needed in lessons as well as giving planned support to individuals and groups. Teachers are well aware of the specific learning needs of pupils from the travelling community, particularly when they return to school after a period of absence. Expectations of the standards these pupils are capable of attaining are appropriately high. There is a good balance between challenge in the work set and the provision of support when it is needed. Appropriate support is also given to pupils with English as an additional language so that they learn as well as others.
20. There has been satisfactory improvement in the teaching of religious education and music since the last inspection. Teachers' confidence in teaching music is better now and teachers are more successful in helping pupils to learn from religion. An example of excellent teaching of religious education was seen in Year 6. However, pupils in Years 1 and 3 are not given enough opportunities in to record their work in religious education.
21. Although the overall assessment of pupils' learning has developed and is now satisfactory, marking continues to be an area requiring some improvement. Often, marking does not give pupils enough understanding of how, as individuals, they can improve their work. It is unsatisfactory, for example, that marking does not pick up basic errors and bring them to pupils' attention, for instance in the lack of punctuation in writing in Year 3 and in incorrect work in mathematics in Year 2. A further area requiring development is the use of computers in lessons in classrooms to support learning across the subjects, although there are times when this is satisfactorily achieved in lessons in the computer suite.

Example of outstanding practice

An example of excellent teaching and learning in religious education in Year 6 provided pupils with a deeply spiritual experience as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of Judaism.

During the main part of the lesson, as part of the ongoing work on Judaism, the teacher and pupils set out a table for a meal to celebrate the Passover. An appropriately reverent atmosphere was established as a tablecloth was placed on a large table and the whole class gathered round. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge as she clearly explained the main ingredients of the Seder meal, and the symbolism associated with each item. Once the table was laid, a sheet was passed around and each pupil read a section to tell the story of the Passover. All of this was undertaken with respectful solemnity. What lifted the experience to a deeply spiritual level was that pupils then wrote in role as members of a Jewish family immediately after the Seder meal, recording their thoughts and feelings. One pupil who had just returned to school following a long period of absence wrote, "I felt very happy when I was celebrating the Passover it made me feel so happy it was like it's just rained and there's a rainbow now". Another pupil wrote, "When I heard the story, I felt that a part of me was there, a part of it all. I felt so proud of Moses and that he stood up and fought for what was right". These examples are typical of the quality of reflection and illustrate the effectiveness of the teaching in bringing about an exceptional level of empathy.

The curriculum

The range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through activities additional to everyday lessons. The accommodation and resources give satisfactory support for the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good learning opportunities in English in Years 1 and 2 develop pupils' writing well.
- Effective coverage of the mathematics curriculum in Years 4 to 6 results in pupils making good progress.
- The curriculum is effectively enriched through extra-curricular activities, visits out of school, and visitors who talk to pupils.
- Computers in classrooms are not used well enough to reinforce and develop ICT skills or to enhance the learning opportunities in other subjects.
- Activities that Reception children undertake without direct adult involvement do not always have a clear enough purpose.

Commentary

22. Satisfactory action has been taken to rectify the weaknesses identified at the last inspection in the learning opportunities for Reception children. Children now have access to an ample range of learning opportunities which enable them to make satisfactory progress in all the recommended areas of learning. As a result, standards and achievement are better than at the last inspection in personal, social and emotional development - the area in which the weaknesses were most marked - and also in physical development. Although the learning opportunities are now satisfactory, there are still areas for development. There is not always enough structure to the play activities to promote children's creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Some activities that children undertake without direct adult involvement do not have a clear enough purpose.
23. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets their needs satisfactorily in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is good coverage of all aspects of mathematics in Years 4 to 6 and this results in pupils making good progress. Effective opportunities are provided for writing in English lessons in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well in this area. However, there is inconsistency in how well writing is promoted in other subjects. It is done well in Year 6 in subjects such as history and religious education, but there are missed opportunities, for example in geography and history in Year 2. The practice of

grouping pupils by their prior attainment in Years 3 to 6 for English and mathematics helps to ensure that pupils are given work that is matched to their particular needs and aptitudes. It is a factor in the good progress made in mathematics in Years 4 to 6.

24. In science, pupils' satisfactory achievement is supported by an increased focus on learning through investigation, and this promotes the good development of skills in scientific enquiry. There are adequate opportunities for pupils to use ICT skills to reinforce and extend their work in other subjects when working in the computer suite. However, not enough use is made of computers in classrooms to develop ICT skills and enhance the learning opportunities across the curriculum. This prevents better than satisfactory development of pupils' competence in basic ICT skills and results in missed opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding in other subjects.
25. Sex and relationships education and awareness of the dangers of drugs misuse are satisfactorily taught through an appropriate programme of personal, social and health education. Since the last inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans now have an adequate focus and appropriate targets. Work matched to these pupils' needs helps them to achieve satisfactorily. There is also satisfactory provision for pupils from the travelling community and those for whom English is an additional language.
26. Extra-curricular provision is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils have opportunities to attend after-school clubs in a range of areas, including various sports and musical activities. These activities are well attended and show pupils' eagerness to engage in interesting and lively events. Visits to places of educational interest, visitors to the school to develop cultural awareness, for example of Indian dancing, and school performances all add enrichment to the curriculum. There is also good provision, after school, to help pupils with their work, especially in mathematics and computers, and there is the chance for them to learn French.
27. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with good outdoor areas for physical education as well as a hall. Good improvements to the external accommodation and resources mean that Reception children have continuous access to outside facilities, which supports learning satisfactorily. Resources to support learning are satisfactory overall, but the number of computers in the ICT suite is only just adequate, which sometimes restricts the rate of pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with satisfactory support and guidance, and involves them well in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good pastoral care, and staff know pupils and their families well.
- The school provides a pleasant, healthy and safe environment, in which pupils feel secure.
- Well-organised arrangements help children starting in Reception to settle in well and there are supportive arrangements to ease the transition from Year 6 to secondary school.
- Pupils' views are sought and valued.

Commentary

28. The school provides a happy environment with a warm family atmosphere. This puts pupils at ease, builds their confidence, and is conducive to learning. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues and risk assessments, particularly when school trips are involved. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the personal, social and health education programme. First-aid provision and arrangements for caring for pupils who are unwell are

good. Child protection procedures are very good and there is good liaison with outside agencies. All the strengths found in these areas at the last inspection have been maintained.

29. Teachers and support staff are sensitive to pupils' personal needs and they provide good pastoral support and guidance. The good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing they will be dealt with sympathetically. Teachers track the progress and personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and this supports their learning. Pupils who have made the most significant progress during the year are presented with certificates in the family assembly. However, there are some weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work that mean that the overall guidance for pupils, based on monitoring, is no better than satisfactory.
30. Arrangements for children starting school are good and ensure that they settle quickly and happily. Several opportunities are provided for children to visit the school before starting and an informative booklet supports parents in preparing their children for school.
31. Learning support assistants have a vital and successful role, particularly in one-to-one situations with pupils who have special educational needs. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is better than at the last inspection, although individual education plans and records of reviews of pupils' needs are not always dated. This means that they cannot be used as well as they should to monitor progress. There is sensitive support for pupils from the travelling community, particularly when returning to school after a significant absence.
32. Good account is taken of pupils' views at school council meetings. As a result of the opinions expressed, a tuck shop, litter pickers and a newspaper have been introduced. School councillors respond well to the opportunities to represent their classmates, clearly take their duties seriously, are very articulate and enjoy their responsibilities. There are good arrangements for seeking pupils' views more widely through a questionnaire. To show how seriously pupils' views are valued, the headteacher writes to pupils after the analysis of their responses to the questionnaire.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents, other schools and the wider community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with good information about the school and the standards and progress of their children.
- The very good contribution made by parents enhances pupils' learning. There is a very strong Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association.
- Good community links enrich the learning opportunities.
- Good links with other schools and colleges ensure that pupils happily transfer to the next stage of their education and also support curriculum developments.

Commentary

33. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and other correspondence. They are also given good information about their children's progress through consultation evenings, open days and family assemblies. Annual reports are detailed but still do not give targets for improvement in pupils' work as they should. Parents are also welcome in school to discuss concerns at any time. Homework diaries and reading records are used effectively for parents and teachers to monitor progress. Parents of children starting in Reception receive good advice on how to help their child to cope with school life.

34. Parents are pleased with the school. They feel comfortable in approaching the headteacher and staff with any concerns. They feel that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible and they appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities. They appreciate the good and honest information the school has provided on how it has dealt with the weaknesses identified at the last inspection.
35. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning by providing assistance in the classroom and on visits out of school. They also raise significant funds for the school through the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association. Many parents support their children very well with their homework, including hearing them read at home daily.
36. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress, which is an improvement since the last inspection. They are appropriately involved in the review of individual educational plans and target setting.
37. The good links with the community include the village church where pupils are involved in celebrating Christian festivals. Pupils take part in musical events, sporting activities and charity fund raising and write for the parish magazine. Members of the community are invited to join in events, which include a summer fair and an annual ball.
38. There are good working relationships with the local schools. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary education. The result is that although Year 6 pupils are sorry to leave, they are not unduly daunted by the move to Year 7 in another school. The collaboration of staff and shared resources enhance the teaching and learning of all pupils. Of particular benefit to pupils have been the developments in teaching and the curriculum supported by advanced skills teachers from the partner secondary schools. The school provides teacher training experience for students. All these initiatives contribute positively to the pupils' learning. All the strengths found in the school's partnerships at the last inspection have been maintained and built on further.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body is well involved in shaping the direction of the school and is well placed to take the school forward.
- Since the last inspection, teamwork is better developed and more effective in bringing about improvement.
- The roles of co-ordinators are still quite underdeveloped and too informal, particularly in monitoring and developing teaching and the curriculum. However, they are satisfactory overall and better than at the last inspection.

Commentary

39. At the last inspection, the school was not as effective as it should have been and was judged to be underachieving. There were a number of weaknesses in the management and governance that contributed to this. Since then, the school has made satisfactory progress in rectifying the shortcomings and ensuring that all groups of pupils, including those with potential for higher attainment, achieve satisfactorily. A significant factor in this improvement has been the better teamwork of staff in working towards agreed priorities. All teachers now share the headteacher's understanding of how the school needs to develop.
40. The headteacher provides a satisfactory and sufficiently clear educational direction for the school. The role of the teacher with special responsibility is better defined. The post holder provides satisfactory support for the headteacher on development planning. She, together with

other teachers, gives adequate assistance to the headteacher in the day-to-day management of the school.

41. The involvement of the governing body has improved well, and this has contributed significantly to how the school has developed over the last two years. Governors have worked closely with the headteacher and staff since the last inspection and are now well placed to take the school forward. That governors are now strongly involved in shaping the direction of the school is important because the school is facing a time of change with the forthcoming retirement of the long-serving headteacher.
42. There is now better involvement of co-ordinators in the management of the school, although further development of this area is necessary. Improvement has taken place this school year because the local education authority made funding available to release co-ordinators from classroom duties to check the quality of provision in their subjects. The school rightly prioritised the involvement of the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators in activities such as lesson observations and the monitoring of pupils' books. As a result, the mathematics co-ordinator, for example, has a secure awareness of where the strengths and weaknesses in teaching are to be found. She knows where extra support is needed and what aspects of the mathematics curriculum require improvement.
43. The roles of the other co-ordinators are at an earlier stage of development. Methods of checking provision are largely informal and insufficiently systematic. Although they work adequately in this small school, greater rigour is needed to ensure more effective evaluation of provision and speed the pace of improvement. Nevertheless, there are some good features already, such as the action taken by the religious education co-ordinator in developing a long-term plan of work to guide teachers in developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The leadership of special educational needs is better now and is satisfactory. With support from the headteacher and the local education authority, the teacher for Reception children has brought about satisfactory improvement in the provision for children starting school.
44. Financial planning is good. The present high balances reflect careful forward planning to support educational developments, with an extension to the building planned. In particular, this development will improve the accommodation for Year 2 pupils who are taught in the smallest classroom. Procedures to control, record and monitor expenditure are efficient. Recommendations in the last audit report have been acted upon. Administrative procedures are good, with the school finance officer providing very effective day-to-day management. The headteacher, staff and governors together give satisfactory attention to whether the school gives best value for pupils and their parents. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	293,827
Total expenditure	311,932
Expenditure per pupil	2,888

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	45,042
Balance carried forward to the next	26,937

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Reception children start school in the term after their fifth birthday, except for the summer-born children, who start after Easter. Almost all have had pre-school education before starting at Waltham St Lawrence Primary School. Overall attainment is above that expected nationally for children of this age. There are currently seven Reception children, all already aged five, who are taught in the same class as the Year 1 pupils. No pupil is identified as having special educational needs or has English as an additional language. As well as the class teacher and support assistant who are normally present in the autumn and spring terms, the teacher who is in the school to give additional support in the summer term was also working in the class during the inspection.

Teaching and the range of learning activities are satisfactorily matched to children's learning needs. As a result, children's achievement is satisfactory. Reasonable improvements have been made to teachers' planning since the last inspection although there are still some shortcomings. Because of these shortcomings, children do not always achieve as well as they should, particularly when choosing activities for themselves. Planning does not identify clearly enough the small steps in learning that children are expected to make in lessons towards broader learning goals. There are adequate procedures for checking and recording children's progress and these are used satisfactorily to guide their next steps of learning. The outdoor area has been developed well to support children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle into school well, and their attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Planning does not sufficiently identify what children are expected to learn from the activities they choose for themselves.
- Sometimes valuable time is lost during the change over from one activity to another.

Commentary

45. Standards have improved since the last inspection. This is due mainly to a better quality of teaching and learning, but also to improvements in the external accommodation and resources. Now, almost all children are on course to reach the standards expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year and a good proportion is likely to exceed them. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to children's attainment on entry.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some good features. Staff ensure that Reception children are made to feel welcome and help to settle them into routines, which then become firmly established. Arrangements, such as sitting on the 'Star of the Day' chair, successfully build the children's self-assurance and confidence in their approach to activities and daily routines.
47. Teachers have high expectations of the children's involvement and behaviour. As a result, children quickly learn what is expected of them and respond eagerly. They settle quickly to tasks, maintain interest when working alone or as part of a group, and respond promptly to instructions. They behave sensibly in their classroom, in the outdoor area, and when moving around school. They demonstrate good maturity for their age in both their attitudes and behaviour.

48. Children are friendly towards one another because they are encouraged to share and take turns. They are expected to clear up after themselves and they take responsibility well for tidying up both indoors and outdoors. Teachers make good use of the extended outside area to ensure that children have regular daily access to outdoor play, which makes a good contribution to their personal and social development.
49. A weakness in teaching is that time is sometimes wasted in changing over from one activity to another. This results in children sitting unoccupied for too long on the carpet, which slows their rate of learning. Whilst learning intentions are clear in planning for adult-led activities, there is a lack of clarity and purpose to some activities that children choose for themselves, particularly outside when there is no direct adult intervention. This means children are not always challenged as effectively as they could be.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The class teacher creates a stimulating environment that promotes children's language development well.
- There are missed opportunities for children to practise early writing in imaginative situations, such as in role-play areas.

Commentary

50. Almost all children are likely to reach the end of Reception Year goals in writing, and a good number are on course to exceed them. Children's achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is maintained at a level above national expectations. This is because the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.
51. The regular activity of showing items, such as toys brought from home, and talking about them provides a satisfactory opportunity for children to speak to the whole class. The children enjoy this activity and respond with interest, gaining confidence in speaking in a formal situation and learning to listen carefully to others.
52. Almost all children confidently name and sound the letters of the alphabet. This is because the teacher often begins lessons with activities, such as songs and rhymes that develop and reinforce this important basic skill. Appropriate activities successfully develop children's competence in reciting letters in alphabetical order and develop their interest in books. Suitable opportunities are given to higher-attaining children to develop skills in reading simple texts. The many labels, captions, words and phrases displayed around the classroom successfully promote children's understanding that writing conveys meaning and help them to become familiar with frequently-used vocabulary.
53. Early writing skills are developed satisfactorily as children practise tracing over the teacher's writing. They learn to form their letters carefully, because they are provided with good examples to follow. A small number of higher-attaining children are already being helped to write phrases on their own. However, there are missed opportunities for children to practise their early writing in more informal situations, for example through role-play situations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Topic work, number rhymes and songs are used well to develop children's mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Weaknesses in planning result in occasions when learning is slowed and children do not do as well as they should.

Commentary

54. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall, which means that attainment is maintained at a level above that expected nationally. Almost all children are on track to reach the goals expected at the end of the Reception Year and a good number are likely to exceed them. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are often good when the activities involve direct teaching and are conducted at a brisk pace, keeping children fully engaged. There is effective learning in regular activities involving lively number rhymes and songs, such as 'Ten fat sausages'. These activities successfully develop a secure sense of number, order and sequence.
55. The teacher plans an adequate balance of games and practical activities to make learning fun and so encourages children to practise mathematical skills. She makes good use of children's enjoyment of topics, such as dinosaurs, to develop their understanding of mathematical vocabulary. For example, they use the words 'shorter', 'taller', 'shortest' and 'tallest' when looking at a pictogram of dinosaurs. Support staff are used effectively to develop children's learning, which is an improvement since the last inspection, for example in activities involving addition and subtraction related to the dinosaur topic.
56. As well as the good features of teaching that help children to learn well, there are also some weaknesses that restrict the pace of learning. Planning does not identify clearly enough what different groups of children are expected to learn. This means that lower-attaining children sometimes struggle with work that is too hard. Similarly, there are missed opportunities to consistently extend the children who are capable of higher attainment because the opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding in written form are too infrequent. This means that children do not always achieve as well as they could.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing movement and actions in response to music during lessons in the hall.
- Children achieve well in their development of skills using small tools and writing implements.

Commentary

57. Teaching and learning are good and promote good achievement and attainment that is above that expected nationally. Almost all children are on course to reach the nationally expected standards at the end of the Reception Year and many to exceed them. There is particularly effective development of skills in responding through movement to music. Teachers and support staff demonstrate movements effectively and set a realistic level of challenge. As a result, children work hard, with enjoyment and achieve well in their hall lessons.

58. A good range of activities ensure that children frequently use a broad range of equipment, such as jigsaws, large and small models, construction materials and simple tools, including scissors, glue sticks and paintbrushes. All adults sensitively support and encourage the children so that they work carefully and safely. The children achieve well in these activities because of the good guidance provided by adults.
59. Improvements to outdoor accommodation mean that children now have regular, daily access to some aspects of physical education, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. Although they do not have daily access to climbing and balancing apparatus, the school satisfactorily compensates for this through the use of the outdoor school climbing frame in good weather.

OTHER AREAS OF LEARNING

60. Provision in **knowledge and understanding of the world** and **creative development** were sampled. Not enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements on overall provision.
61. Satisfactory opportunities develop children's competence in using paint and other materials to make pictures. Children achieve well in early design and technology skills. This is because of the good help they are given in activities such as designing and making model dinosaurs with moving parts, using painted card, scissors and split pins. Children happily join in singing familiar rhymes and songs. They enjoy using musical instruments to accompany a poem. The playhouse outside is set up to promote independent play and this supports children in acting out imaginary situations in the home.
62. An appropriate range of learning experiences is provided both indoors and outside that promote the development of children's skills. However, planning does not always ensure that there is enough structure and focus to some play activities, particularly those that do not have direct adult involvement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing in Year 2 have improved and are well above those expected nationally. This represents good achievement in relation to pupils' attainment on entry to the school.
- Although pupils in Year 6 successfully write for a range of purposes, they do not sufficiently develop events in their stories or use language well enough to describe and create atmosphere.
- Not all teachers do enough to use and develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects.
- Teachers' marking does not always pick up well enough on weaknesses such as in punctuation.

Commentary

63. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below the national average. They were in the lowest five per cent when compared with the results achieved by other schools whose pupils had attained similarly at the end of Year 2. The picture was little better in the end of Year 2 tests. Although the reading results were above the national average in Year 2, they were below average when compared with those achieved by schools

with pupils from similar backgrounds. The writing results were below the national average, and were well below average for similar schools. The results were lower in 2003 in both Years 2 and 6 than when the school was last inspected.

64. Overall, standards in the present Year 6 are as expected nationally in English, as they had been in the years prior to 2003. They are above the nationally expected level in the specific areas of reading, speaking and listening. The writing standards are relatively weaker and reduce the overall standards. Nevertheless, the achievement of pupils now in Year 6 is satisfactory, even though this was not the case for all pupils in 2003. Present Year 6 pupils have made securely satisfactory progress in relation to their end of Year 2 test results.
65. The school has succeeded in raising the writing standards in the present Year 2 to a level well above that expected nationally and improving pupils' achievement in this area so that it is now good. Potentially higher-attaining pupils are no longer underachieving. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are not as high as in writing, but they are above the level expected nationally and pupils are achieving satisfactorily in these aspects.
66. Writing standards in Year 2 have been raised by good attention to the development of skills in story writing and the use of language to describe and set a scene. The co-ordinator, who teaches in Year 2, is attending a training course and has made good use of the approaches explored on the course. She has also worked closely with the Year 1 teacher to develop writing and to ensure that the work in Year 2 builds well on that undertaken in Year 1.
67. It is planned to develop across all year groups the approaches to writing presently being trialled in Year 2. This should help to raise standards in Year 6 where a present weakness in the writing is that skills in story writing are not as well developed as many other features of writing.
68. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with good teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2. The foundations for good handwriting are laid well in Year 1. As a result, most pupils have a neat joined style by the end of Year 2. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 successfully develop pupils' competence in writing for a range of purposes. Basic reading skills are developed satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and, by Year 6, many pupils look closely at texts to discover deeper levels of meaning. Many opportunities for speaking and listening maintain the good standards pupils have in this area when they enter the school. Overall, teachers are better at matching work to pupils' differing needs than at the last inspection.
69. All teachers mark pupils' work but they do not always give enough guidance to pupils about how they might improve. In Year 3, for example, errors in basics such as punctuation are not picked up well enough. As a result, quite a few pupils persist in omitting capital letters and full stops, which is unsatisfactory. Although there is some appropriate use of computers in the suite to support work in English, classroom computers are not used sufficiently for this purpose overall.
70. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. All teachers are committed to bringing about improvement. This school year, there has been adequate checking of provision, but this needs to be even more rigorous and systematic to raise standards further. The school has made good use of support provided by the local education authority, for instance in reviewing the provision for writing and in the training provided for the co-ordinator.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. There are some good examples of writing in other subjects, particularly in history and religious education in Year 6, but not all teachers do enough to develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, the good writing skills in Year 2 are not used well enough in subjects such as geography and history. This not only results in missed opportunities for writing for different purposes, but also means that writing is not used well enough as a means of developing knowledge and understanding in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 make good progress because they are taught well and there is effective coverage of all aspects of the mathematics curriculum in these years.
- The achievement of pupils in Year 2 is only just adequate.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils enough guidance about how they can improve.

Commentary

72. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were close to the national average. They were well below average when compared with the results achieved by other schools whose pupils had attained similarly at the end of Year 2. These results were lower than when the school was last inspected and significantly lower than in 2002. The lower results in 2003 were largely a result of the natural variations found in small year groups of pupils. The school's data shows that almost all pupils in last year's Year 6 made securely satisfactory progress from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6, and several pupils made good progress.
73. The overall standards of work of pupils presently in Year 6 are above those expected nationally. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' end of Year 2 test results. However, because of good teaching and effective coverage of the mathematics curriculum, pupils now in Years 4 to 6 are making good progress.
74. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, pupils' results were well above the national average. Pupils' performance was above average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards presently in Year 2 are above, rather than well above, those expected nationally. Pupils' achievement is only just adequate in relation to their attainment on entry because there are aspects of teaching requiring improvement.
75. Teaching, the use of assessment, and the curriculum are satisfactory overall, as at the last inspection. Learning is good in Years 4 to 6 because work is matched well to pupils' needs, including those of higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their developing mathematical knowledge and understanding to real-life problems in Years 4 to 6. In one lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils successfully worked out how many strips would be needed to make different patterns of trellis fence and identified the formula needed to calculate this. Activities such as these bring mathematics to life and make it meaningful. Often lessons are well focused, and teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn.
76. Pupils make a secure start in Year 1 but, once they reach a particular level, the highest-attaining pupils are not pushed on quickly enough. The work in Year 2 is not always well enough matched to pupils' differing needs although adequate support is usually provided for those who are lower-attaining or who have special educational needs. Whilst the greatest attention is given to work with numbers, there is just enough attention to other aspects of the mathematics curriculum. The teaching is just adequate in maintaining pupils' above-average attainment on entry to the school. Teaching in Year 3 is satisfactory but, as in Year 1, there are some occasions when higher-attaining pupils are not challenged.
77. In Years 3 to 6, work is marked regularly but there is not always sufficiently clear advice to pupils about how they might improve. In Year 2, marking is unsatisfactory. Not only does untidy presentation pass without comment, but also some work is left unmarked. There are examples

of incorrect work being ticked, particularly when there is not close enough checking of all the work on a page.

78. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The monitoring of teaching through lesson observations has started this school year and has highlighted where there are strengths and also where improvement and support are needed. The co-ordinator is also aware that the use of ICT requires development and that problem-solving across the school requires development to extend the good practice in Years 4 to 6. Further development of the co-ordinator's role and the checking of teaching are essential to take the school forward and to eradicate the shortcomings in provision in some year groups.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. There is satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects, such as in science and design and technology. This not only allows pupils to reinforce and apply their knowledge of mathematics, but it also supports learning in these other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis on practical and investigative work, which contributes well to the development of pupils' skills in scientific enquiry.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to match work to pupils' differing needs, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

80. Pupils' results in the end of Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2003 were close to the national average, as at the last inspection. However, they were well below average when compared with the results achieved by other schools whose pupils had attained similarly at the end of Year 2. Teachers assessed pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 as above average. Standards now are much the same. They are again at the level expected nationally in Year 6, and above the nationally expected level in Year 2. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are achieving satisfactorily.
81. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 have the expected depth of knowledge and understanding in all the aspects of science required by the National Curriculum, including practical and investigative work. By Year 6, pupils successfully use their knowledge of scientific facts to make predictions and plan, carry out and record investigations. They draw conclusions in a sensible and systematic way. Teachers develop skills in scientific investigation well by giving good attention to this aspect and ensuring that tests pupils carry out are 'fair'.
82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features in Years 3 to 5. In a Year 4 lesson, direct teaching was made interesting with engaging resources and dramatic demonstration that amused pupils and made learning fun. This well-planned lesson reinforced pupils' knowledge and understanding of a 'fair' test. There are also good features to teaching in Year 5, including effective marking. Not only does the teacher's marking acknowledge work, but it also poses questions that take learning forward. Appropriately high expectations are evident not only in the vast quantity of work undertaken in Year 5, but also in the standards in much of pupils' recorded work. In all classes, there is satisfactory coverage of all the required aspects of the curriculum, with good emphasis on practical scientific enquiry.
83. Work for pupils with special educational needs is planned to meet their particular requirements and they are well supported, so that they are motivated and not discouraged. This enables

them to achieve as well as other pupils. However, work for the most capable pupils is not always planned to extend and challenge them enough, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is not well used to include work of differing levels of difficulty. This means that not all pupils always reach the standards of which they are capable.

84. Adequate use is made of ICT to support and develop pupils' learning in science, particularly when using the computers in the suite. However, not enough use is made of classroom computers in lessons, which limits opportunities for recording investigations in different ways and using data. There is satisfactory use and development of mathematical skills, for instance, as pupils record the findings of their investigations in tables and graphs.
85. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the learning opportunities to ensure that a strong emphasis is placed on practical investigation and scientific enquiry. This has led to improved standards and achievement in this particular aspect of science. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There has been some recent checking of standards, pupils' progress and of the quality of teaching. However, teaching is not closely enough monitored to improve the overall quality of pupils' learning, raise standards and eradicate the shortcomings in some year groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too little use is made of computers in classrooms to develop ICT skills and to support teaching and learning in other subjects.

Commentary

86. The standard of pupils' work in ICT is as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have the expected knowledge and understanding of all the elements required by the National Curriculum. This picture is similar to that found at the last inspection.
87. Year 2 pupils successfully select and change fonts, varying the style, size and colour. They use art programs competently and have produced pictures, for example, of a firework display. They use a data-handling program to produce simple picture graphs. Almost all pupils in Year 6 know how to search the Internet and to download information and pictures. They create multi-media presentations using graphics, sound and animation. They also create their own spreadsheets, for example, to work out exchange rates for world currency, and have the expected understanding and skills in control technology.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good features in Years 5 and 6. Lessons in the suite are well organised and managed, and pupils are given the necessary support to remain gainfully involved. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, linked to work in English on writing a letter of complaint, pupils' learning was good because of the effective one-to-one support provided by the teacher. However, activities are not always sufficiently adapted to meet pupils' differing needs. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, the activities were no more demanding for higher-attaining pupils than for others.
89. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that there is a good long-term plan to support teachers with their lesson plans. This plan provides coverage of all the elements of ICT required by the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator also acts as a 'trouble-shooter' for other staff in relation to resources and equipment. However, because the checking of teaching and the learning opportunities is only informal, and neither

rigorous nor systematic, the capacity of the co-ordinator to identify where improvements are needed is too limited.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. There is adequate use of ICT to support work in subjects such as English, mathematics and history when lessons are taught in the suite. However, although there are sufficient resources in classrooms for ICT skills to be practised and to support work in other subjects, they are not used well enough. As a result, ICT is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects. This aspect of provision has not moved on well enough since the last inspection.

HUMANITIES

Geography

91. Work in geography was sampled through a scrutiny of pupils' books. No lessons were observed because history rather than geography was timetabled during the inspection. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements on standards, pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6.
92. Pupils in Year 2 are working at the standard expected nationally at this age, as at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they are given an appropriate range of learning opportunities. Pupils have learnt, for example, something of life on the imaginary island of 'Struay' from stories and activities linked to them. Skills in making and using simple maps are developing satisfactorily. Pupils successfully distinguish between natural and manmade features of places. They recognise that the features of a place influence the way people live, for example the modes of transport available to them.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are given good opportunities to learn from religion and this also supports their spiritual development well.
- Computers are not used well enough to support pupils' learning.
- There is too little recorded work in Years 1 and 3.

Commentary

93. The last inspection found that standards by the end of Year 6 were a little lower than they should be. This has been rectified and standards now are as expected by the locally-agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6 and all groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily. In particular, improvements have been brought about because of an increased emphasis on pupils reflecting on what they have learnt about religions and the significance of faith. Pupils no longer simply learn basic facts without drawing meaning from them.
94. Pupils in Year 2 gain the expected understanding of special times and festivals such as Harvest and Christmas. They demonstrate understanding about a Muslim birthday and about God's love as shown in Christian parables. They begin to interpret meanings from the Hindu story of Ganesh. By Year 6, pupils begin to compare key aspects of world religions. They show good respect and tolerance for the values and beliefs of others.
95. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although there are examples of teaching that is better than this. In a lesson about Easter in the combined Year 4 and 5 class,

the teacher gave pupils a good, clear and sensitive explanation of what Christians believe about the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. This helped them to reflect sensitively on the feelings of Jesus's friends and family, and to role-play the events of Easter Sunday. Excellent teaching in a Year 6 lesson about the Passover and its significance for Jewish people created an intense spiritual experience as well as developing pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively.

96. A weakness in teaching in Years 1 and 3 is that there is too little recorded work. Opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills through the subject as well as to use writing as a means of developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education. In all year groups, there is too little use of ICT, for example to draft and present work or for researching information.
97. A review of the curriculum has supported improvements in provision. A new long-term plan of work effectively combines local requirements with national guidance. Resources have also improved and the learning opportunities are enhanced by the use of visitors and visits to places of worship, including a church and a synagogue. All of these factors have broadened the experiences for pupils and have made religious education more meaningful for them.
98. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory overall. The subject co-ordinator has been successful in improving the provision, particularly the long-term planning and the resources. As the checking of teaching and the learning opportunities is not established and is only informal, the co-ordinator is, as yet, unable to identify other key aspects of provision requiring improvement to raise standards to a higher level. This is an area that requires development.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6, there is effective use of writing in role to help pupils develop understanding of, and empathy with, people in the past.
- Not all teachers make enough use of pupils' writing skills to develop their historical knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

99. The standard of pupils' work in history is at the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, as at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory because teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are given the help they need to complete the same work as other pupils and make satisfactory progress. However, the work does not always ensure that pupils capable of higher attainment are pushed on well enough.
100. As pupils move up through the school, they develop a satisfactory awareness of how people lived in the past. The good use of writing in role has been maintained and enhances the historical knowledge and understanding of pupils in Year 6, for example as they record their thoughts and feelings as if they are members of a family receiving an evacuee during the Second World War. Pupils of this age have a secure awareness of Britain since the 1930s and understand, for example, the difficulties of rationing and the employment problems in post-war Britain.
101. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 have the expected knowledge for their age of the Celtic, Roman and Tudor periods. This is enhanced through the use of 'Hands-on History'. Good learning took place when a visitor, dressed as a Roman, took them on a tour of their classroom that had been transformed into a 'Roman town'. Pupils' interest was engaged well as they handled

Roman artefacts and were given many interesting snippets of information about how the Romans lived their daily lives.

102. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing awareness of chronology and of some of the changes that have taken place over time. Year 2 pupils know of some famous figures from history, such as Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys. They are starting to develop skills of enquiry, for example by posing their own questions about the Great Fire of London. This provides a good learning opportunity because it requires pupils to think for themselves about the significance of events. However, not all activities for Year 2 pupils are well enough matched to their needs. There are some undemanding tasks that do not make adequate use of pupils' very good writing skills.
103. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. In general, they provide an interesting range of learning opportunities that make history meaningful for pupils. However, marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils as to how they might improve their work. In Year 2, for example, incorrect spellings of important words such as 'Pepys' are not picked up and there is no comment when work is left unfinished.
104. The leadership and management of history are satisfactory but the checking of provision is mainly informal. Although this works adequately in this small school and the strengths found at the last inspection have been maintained, it does not provide a secure basis for the development of provision to raise standards and improve pupils' achievements. The use of ICT to support enquiry skills is not well enough established.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

105. Work in design and technology was sampled. No lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from analysis of work in pupils' books, an evaluation of work on display and a scrutiny of teachers' planning. There is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about overall provision.
106. The small sample of work scrutinised in design and technology indicates that standards are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Year 2 pupils achieve some good results in designing and making glove puppets from felt and other fabrics. They successfully draw plans for their designs and make lists of the materials to be used. Teachers give satisfactory support for these activities by providing pupils with a step-by-step prompt sheet to guide them through the design process from initial design to finished product. Pupils are taught to evaluate their work and make suggestions for improvement.
107. In the present Year 6, pupils have had appropriate experience of a range of tools, materials and techniques. Teachers make good links between design and technology and other subjects, particularly science and mathematics. For example, pupils use their knowledge of electrical circuits to design and make battery-operated fairground rides. Similarly, in Year 5, pupils develop their mathematical skills and historical understanding when designing and making Tudor houses.
108. The long-term plan of work for design and technology covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and time allocated to the subject is adequate. The blocking of design and technology on one or two days each term has the advantage that work can be completed within a short time-scale. However, the disadvantage of this practice is that pupils who happen to be absent miss the teaching of important skills and techniques.
109. The leadership and management of design and technology are satisfactory. However, the checking of teaching and the learning opportunities is only informal and not fully established. As a result, the co-ordinator's capacity to develop the subject and identify weaknesses in provision

is too restricted. The available evidence indicates that standards and the quality of provision are similar to those found when the school was last inspected.

Music

110. Provision in music was sampled by observation of lessons and listening to singing in assemblies. In the lessons seen in Years 1, 2 and 5, the standard of pupils' work was at the level expected nationally, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This and the quality of singing in assemblies indicate that pupils achieve satisfactorily in music. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement on the standards in Year 6. The outcomes in the standards of work indicate that the overall quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory.
111. In the Year 2 lesson, a visiting teacher provided effective teaching of basic skills and prepared pupils well for a composition activity. He and the class teacher worked well together to maintain a good level of involvement of all pupils and to ensure that those who needed it were given additional support to participate. In the Year 1 lesson, pupils also responded well and enjoyed performing an accompaniment to a poem they had prepared in an earlier lesson. In the Year 5 lesson, pupils joined in well singing 'Shalom, My Friend, Shalom' and successfully sang in a round.
112. Satisfactory action has been taken to rectify the weaknesses found at the last inspection in the provision for music. Resources are better now. Teachers make appropriate use of a commercial scheme to provide pupils with appropriate activities. Good use has been made of the input of an advanced skills teacher to build teachers' confidence in teaching music. The present co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject since the last inspection but her involvement in checking the quality of provision remains informal. More systematic monitoring, including an evaluation of the improvements already made, is necessary to give a clear direction for further development.

Physical education

113. This subject was sampled. Insufficient evidence was gathered to judge overall provision. Two lessons were observed, one for Year 1 pupils and another for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, both of which focused on dance.
114. In both lessons, the standards achieved were broadly as expected nationally, although there were good features to the work in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils have good attitudes and work with considerable creative and physical effort. In Year 1, for example, they respond imaginatively to music and use their bodies to clearly differentiate between light and heavy movements. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils have good levels of concentration and respond sensitively to music. They showed this as they rehearsed the movements of an Indian dance, in preparation for a performance at the local arts centre. They used their bodies effectively to create an impression of a monsoon and its impact on birds, animals and people. Almost all pupils demonstrated the precision, control and fluency expected for their age as, for example, they reproduced movements of fighting peacocks.
115. Teaching and learning were good in both lessons. The visiting Indian instructor working with the older pupils demonstrated effectively, helping pupils to improve their work. Similarly in Year 1, adults modelled movements well for pupils, which particularly helped the less confident ones. Time was used effectively and the rate of learning was brisk. The Year 1 lesson began and ended with suitable warm-up activities, and good attention was paid to aspects of health and safety.
116. A good range of extra-curricular activities in a range of sports enhances the provision in lessons. Opportunities for football, hockey, tag rugby, netball and cricket contribute well to

pupils' physical development. The pupils have experienced considerable success in their competitive matches against other schools, particularly in football.

117. The role of the co-ordinator is at only an early stage of development. Checking of teaching and learning opportunities is only informal and not yet fully established. This restricts the extent to which the co-ordinator is able to identify aspects requiring improvement to raise standards further.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected nationally in Year 2.

Commentary

118. Work in art and design was sampled by looking at pupils' work in folders, sketchbooks and on display. The standard of pupils' work in art and design is above that expected nationally in Year 2 and is better than at the last inspection. Pupils' earliest work in Year 1 is also of a good standard. That the good standards on entry to Year 1 are maintained indicates that pupils' achievements are satisfactory and that the teaching has sufficient challenge to satisfactorily meet pupils' needs. The work of pupils in Years 3 to 6 shows that steady progress is maintained. Although standards are close to those expected nationally, rather than above the national expectations in Year 6, pupils now in Year 6 are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Standards in Year 6 now are much the same as at the last inspection.
119. Even at the start of Year 1, pupils' drawings and paintings have good level of detail and secure control of paint and pencil crayon. Pupils demonstrate good awareness of the overall visual impact of their work. Year 2 pupils carefully observe and record what they see in their drawings of shells and other natural objects. They achieve good results in their use of charcoal, chalk and paint wash for cave paintings linked to their history study on early man.
120. Throughout Years 3 to 6, work is at the level normally found at this age. In Years 4 and 5, pupils' paintings of flowers in vases inspired by Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' were supported by a visit to the National Gallery to see Van Gogh's work. The display of pupils' art work around the school adds to the pleasant and attractive environment. Of particular note are the reproductions of the 'Mona Lisa' made by pupils of all ages.
121. Satisfactory, although only informal, arrangements are in place for the checking of the quality of provision in art and design. This works adequately, but more systematic evaluation of standards, pupils' achievement and the quality of provision is needed to raise standards and improve pupils' achievements.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

122. This area was sampled. No specific lessons were seen and not enough evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement about overall provision.
123. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. The range of the programme for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It includes work on diet, health, sex and relationships education, the dangers of misuse of drugs, and personal safety. This programme helps pupils to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and develop socially. It is adequately supported by the contribution of visitors from outside agencies, such as the police and fire services and the school nurse. Pupils' involvement with the school council provides a good opportunity for them to gain first-hand experience in, and come to understand, important democratic processes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

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

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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