

INSPECTION REPORT

WESSINGTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wessington

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112646

Headteacher: Mrs F Rylands

Lead inspector: Roger Eagle

Dates of inspection: 19th - 21st January 2004

Inspection number: 258343

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:	48
School address:	The Green Wessington Alfreton Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE55 6DQ
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Cath Pilsbury
Date of previous inspection:	30 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wessington Primary is a small rural school which provides education for children from the ages of four to 11. Currently, there are 48 pupils with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Numbers vary within the year groups from three to 11 pupils. Pupils are taught in two classes but the class for the older pupils is split into two groups for the mornings. The school is close to the town of Alfreton and serves the village community of Wessington and the immediate vicinity. Pupils come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Nearly all the pupils are of white British origin and all speak English as their first language. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies widely, but it is average overall. Currently, 24 per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is just above the national average. Nine per cent have statements of special educational needs, which is well above average, for learning, physical or medical difficulties. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time is broadly average. The school recently received the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools and ECO awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12597	Roger Eagle	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The school provides a good standard of education and gives good value for money. The staff and governors are working with determination to further raise the achievements of all the pupils. The school has recently made rapid progress. The headteacher has a very clear view of what needs to be done to continue the school's improvement and is successfully building the systems and staff's skills to achieve this. The staff work well as a team and with the parents to improve pupils' learning. Teaching is good overall and pupils are enthusiastic learners. This ensures that all pupils make good progress. The school is very well placed to make further improvements.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's very strong leadership, guidance and practical support ensure a strong commitment to high standards among the staff and pupils.
- Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science are good.
- Pupils are very willing learners and play a very active, responsible part in the life of the school.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is good throughout the school.
- Teachers and support staff work well together to help all pupils feel valued and succeed.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- There is a very good partnership with the parents and they have a high regard for the school.
- The curriculum for the youngest pupils does not cover all the areas of learning fully.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.

Overall, the school has improved well since the last inspection in March 1998. Over this period, there have been many changes in leadership and, until recently, action to tackle the issues raised in the last inspection has been delayed. However, since the appointment of the present headteacher, the school has made up lost ground. Standards have risen overall, teaching has improved, and leadership and management are more effective. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen. The school has made good use of a specialist ICT teacher, planning is thorough and the range of equipment and resources is good. There are now appropriate curriculum plans for all subjects, based on national guidance, which provide a sound framework for building pupils' learning systematically. There is more work to be done to ensure that the Foundation Stage curriculum covers all the areas of learning fully. The school improvement plan is more effective. There is a well-constructed programme of development and targets are monitored effectively by the governors. Arrangements for performance management are in place and teachers' individual objectives are linked appropriately to the school's priorities. The health and safety policy has been revised to cover statutory requirements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average attainment. Children in this year's group are on course to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year and they are making good progress in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Because there are very few pupils in each year group, overall standards often vary widely between one year and the next. In the 2003 national tests, pupils in Year 6 reached standards that are well above average in English and science, but just below average in mathematics. Overall, they did much better for their age than they had in Year 2, achieving very well in the intervening years. In the current Year 6, standards are about average in English, mathematics and science. In the current Year 5, standards are above average. Despite these variations, all children are making good progress and achieving well. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Throughout the school, pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age in ICT and religious education. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. More able pupils achieve well and reach high standards.

Pupils' personal development is very good. It is promoted very well through the very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils are very well behaved, thoughtful and friendly. They enjoy coming to school, are self-confident learners and work very hard. They readily accept responsibility for their part in shaping school life, for example, through the school council. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good education for its pupils. Teaching is good overall. Pupils learn well because teachers, well supported by teaching assistants, plan interesting and challenging activities, and encourage children to expect high standards of themselves. The curriculum is soundly based on national guidance and is enriched by a wide range of popular after-school activities. The needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are met well. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage needs to be more carefully planned to ensure that all areas of learning are covered in sufficient depth. The staff care very well for pupils and there are trusting and relaxed relationships between adults and pupils. The partnership with parents supports the pupils' learning very well and there are strong, mutually beneficial links with the wider community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall with some very strong aspects. The headteacher provides very purposeful leadership. Her vision, enthusiasm and determination have resulted in significant improvements in many aspects of the school's work. There is a strong commitment amongst the staff to improving teaching and learning so that the pupils achieve high standards. The governors make good use of their skills and experience to support the school. They understand its strengths and are well aware of the challenges it faces. Subject co-ordinators are taking an increasingly active role in school improvement but they are not yet sufficiently involved in checking and developing learning and teaching to raise standards further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive and have no significant concerns. They acknowledge the improvements that have taken place in the past 18 months. They are particularly pleased with the behaviour of the children, the teaching and the way the school is led and managed. The pupils devised their own useful questionnaire to survey opinion. They like the school and their teachers, feel that their teachers help them to learn and enjoy the extra activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further improve the curriculum in the Foundation Stage to ensure that there is a well balanced coverage of all the areas of learning and children have more opportunities to initiate and plan their own activities.

- Further develop the monitoring and evaluation role of co-ordinators so that they are better informed and can take full responsibility for leading improvements in their subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, and pupils reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, standards have risen since the last inspection.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Standards in ICT have risen recently; achievement is now satisfactory and standards are average.

Commentary

Starting school

1. With such small numbers, the attainment profile of the children on entry to the school varies from year to year. However, over several years, assessment data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding are broadly average when they enter the Reception Year. Last year, the Foundation Stage children made good progress and reached the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning.

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

Standards in:	school results	national results
reading	18.6 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.8 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	19.4 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 5 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school's results in the national Key Stage 1 tests have varied widely in recent years, as expected with such small numbers of children in each year group. However, in 2003, the results were very high in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils reached Level 2B, the level expected at this age, in writing and mathematics, and nearly all reached Level 2B in reading. About half the pupils achieved beyond this, reaching Level 3. Standards in science, as assessed by teachers, were equally high with nearly all children reaching Level 3.

School's results in national tests

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

Standards in:	school results	national results
English	28.1 (28.5)	26.8 (27)

mathematics	26.5 (25.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.3 (28.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Results have also varied widely in the Key Stage 2 tests. Taking the three core subjects together, the results in 2003 were above average overall. Results were above average in English and well above average in science. Results were lower in mathematics because fewer children achieved Level 4, the level expected at this age, than in English and science.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage

- At the time of the inspection, three of the four children in the Reception Year had been in school for just two weeks; the other child began school last term. They are making good progress in communication, language and literacy, in mathematics and in some aspects of their personal, social and emotional development. All are likely to reach the expected goals, with some exceeding them by the end of their Reception Year.

Years 1 and 2

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well across the key stage. Higher attaining pupils make good progress and this is reflected in the significant proportion of children who are reaching standards above the expected levels in Year 2. The school has recently introduced more effective arrangements for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This information is being used to set targets for the next stages of pupils' learning. These strategies are proving effective in raising standards for all groups of pupils. Standards in science are above average and achievement is good. This is because teachers plan interesting activities and pupils are given lots of practical experience. In religious education, ICT and other subjects seen, standards are broadly average.

Years 3 to 6

- Standards in Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science, but they are higher in other year groups. Although attainment varies between year groups because of small numbers, pupils generally achieve well, typically making more progress than expected over the years. They make good progress because lessons are carefully planned, activities are stimulating and teachers encourage pupils to expect high standards of themselves. The practice of teaching Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 as two separate groups for literacy and numeracy has enhanced pupils' progress. This is because teachers make good use of the opportunities to work with small groups and match work closely to the needs of the pupils. Standards in science are above average and achievement is good. The science curriculum has been revised to enable pupils to build knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. In religious education, ICT and other subjects seen, standards are broadly average.

Whole-school matters

- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, apply their literacy skills well in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in researching science projects. They also make good progress in learning through speaking and listening, for example, in the school council and celebration assemblies. Mathematical skills are used effectively for planning work and recording observations in subjects such as science and design and technology.
- In ICT, pupils make satisfactory progress and, overall, attain the standards expected for their age. Standards have improved recently because the school makes good use of a specialist teacher who works with groups throughout the school. This ensures that the children acquire

sound ICT skills which they then use in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in mathematics and art.

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the school's effective systems of identification and support. Their work is planned in small steps to achieve targets appropriate to their particular needs. They are well supported by teaching assistants who help them to play a full part in all lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are very good. Their spiritual and cultural development are good and their social and moral development are very good, leading to very good personal development overall. Attendance levels are higher than the national average and pupils arrive punctually for lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to come to school and they work very hard.
- Pupils' behaviour both in lessons and in the playground is very good.
- The school is very successful in developing pupils' personal development.
- The very positive relationship between staff and pupils leads to pupils being confident and having high self-esteem.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage to learn independently.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

- Pupils' attitudes to their learning at the last inspection were very good. The school has maintained this positive picture and pupils' behaviour has further improved so that it is now very good. Pupils in all classes concentrate well in lessons. They approach their work and the stimulating activities the school provides in and out of school hours with enthusiasm and persevere when they find activities challenging. Pupils are very well behaved. They care and look after each other very well. For example, the 'friendship bench' in the playground enables older pupils to befriend any children who are lonely or unhappy. All pupils are polite, courteous and very helpful. Their very good behaviour leads to a calm and relaxed atmosphere in all lessons and this helps pupils to achieve well. All staff have high expectations of pupils and there are very good reward systems in place for supporting positive behaviour. Pupils respond to these well. There is good professional support available for the very few pupils with special educational needs who have behaviour difficulties. There were no incidents of bullying seen during the inspection, and there have been no exclusions in the last school year.
- Pupils with special educational needs also show a positive attitude to learning. The caring school ethos, together with the interesting range of activities that are planned for these pupils and the sensitive support from teaching assistants, helps them to take a full part in lessons and work hard, so that they achieve well.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
44	0	0
1	0	0

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

Relationships

12. Relationships between pupils themselves and between staff and pupils are very positive. The youngest children, who had only been in school for two weeks at the time of the inspection, have settled well and move around the school and the playground confidently. The oldest pupils reported that one of the things they liked about the school was that they liked their teachers and they felt safe. Staff in the youngest class provide many opportunities for pupils to work in small groups or pairs and this helps them to share equipment fairly, listen carefully to each other and take turns. Opportunities for older and younger pupils to work together through becoming 'reading buddies' helps to cement caring and helpful relationships throughout the school. Pupils are quick to applaud each other's successes and enjoy making nominations for the headteacher awards in weekly celebration assemblies. These are very happy and relaxed occasions when the school comes together to reward a range of achievements covering all aspects of school life. This not only supports positive relationships but also re-emphasises the values that the school promotes. The very good trusting and calm relationship between staff and pupils helps to create a positive learning environment and this, in turn, helps pupils to become self-assured and confident in expressing their views.

Personal Development

13. Provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Many opportunities are provided, especially for the oldest pupils, to become responsible and to play a significant role in shaping the life of the school. Pupils in both classes are encouraged to become responsible through the role of monitors and as pupils grow older these opportunities increase. The very active school council and the school ECO committee meet regularly to discuss and make decisions on some important aspects of school life. Consequently, these Year 5 and 6 pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are successfully developing very good social skills and learning at first hand how democracy works. During their discussions and when making decisions, they understand about the importance of acting fairly and listening to others' points of view. All pupils know the school rules and have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are thoroughly engaged in all activities and they work together well, but there are too few opportunities for them to initiate their own activities and work independently.

Cultural and spiritual development

14. Provision for these aspects of personal development is good. Pupils in the older class display very open attitudes when learning about other faiths and cultures, showing a genuine interest in the lives and beliefs of others. Their lively questions and discussions reflect a growing awareness of their own spiritual development. The achievements of pupils are celebrated regularly and included in acts of collective worship when pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own and others' abilities and personal qualities. This helps them to develop self-knowledge and respect for the feelings of others. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their own culture through visits to local places of interest linked to their work in history, geography and religious education.

Attendance

15. Levels of attendance are similar to the national average and unauthorised absences are below the national average. Effective systems are in place for monitoring attendance. Parents ensure that their children attend regularly and any unexpected absences are swiftly followed up. Pupils arrive promptly at the beginning of the day and registers are marked correctly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	5.5
National data	5.4

School data	0.3
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

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and good teaching was seen in all key stages. The good teaching is reflected in pupils' learning and achievement over time, which are also good. Children are enthusiastic learners and work very hard. Day-to-day assessment is used well to help pupils understand how they can improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning is very thorough and ensures that all pupils are challenged to do their best.
- Teachers provide a range of interesting activities to stimulate pupils' curiosity.
- Both teachers and pupils have high expectations of achievement and behaviour.
- Teaching assistants support individuals and small groups skilfully and contribute usefully to the assessment of their progress.
- Teachers explain ideas and question pupils effectively to extend their understanding.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported sensitively and included in all activities.
- In some lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to initiate their own ideas and evaluate how well they have done.
- Very occasionally, the pace of work is too demanding for the younger and less able pupils in the class.

Commentary

16. The table below presents the range of teaching quality seen across the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	10	3	0	0	0

Common strengths

17. Most of the teaching is good and enables all pupils to learn well. Teachers take great care to plan lessons which are lively and interesting. They link lessons well to previous work, making sure that pupils know what the lesson is about and how it fits in with what they have already learnt. Teachers make use of a good range of learning styles and resources to ensure that lessons move at a good pace and pupils remain engaged. They expect pupils to do well and pupils respond positively and are eager to succeed. In a science lesson, for example, the teacher challenged the pupils to think of evidence to show that the earth is spherical and spins on its axis. The pupils used their knowledge of horizons, day and night to explore this question. They clarified their thinking by questioning each other when they disagreed or did not understand. Teachers reassure, support and challenge judiciously so that pupils are well focused, persistent and confident that they can succeed. Consequently, pupils work productively and make good progress. For example, in a literacy lesson about understanding the main characters in a text, the teacher:

- carefully explained the objective for the lesson, making sure pupils understood words they might not be familiar with, such as 'explore';
- provided written guidance and resources for the teaching assistant so that a pupil with special educational needs could play a full part in the lesson at an appropriate level; and

- challenged the higher attaining pupils to provide specific evidence from the text to support their assertions about the actions and motives of the characters.

Inclusion

18. The school is fully committed to meeting the needs of all pupils. This is reflected in the teaching, which means that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are supported and learn well. Each of the two classes contains several year groups. In whole-class lessons, teachers pitch and direct their questions carefully to hold the attention of the pupils. Generally, in small group work, they provide activities which are appropriate to the experiences and levels of attainment of the wide range of ages.
19. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, planning the next steps of learning and helping pupils to take them. They work well with individuals and groups. Their support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly valuable and ensures that they confidently take a full part in all lessons. Teaching assistants take careful account of the particular difficulties faced by individual pupils and know when to intervene with support and when to stand back so that pupils are encouraged to work things out for themselves.

Areas for improvement

20. All teaching is satisfactory or better. However, although they were consistently outweighed by the strengths, there were weaknesses in some lessons.
21. In the Foundation Stage, teachers provide activities which engage the children and stimulate their learning. However, there are too few opportunities for children to develop independence through making their own choices. There needs to be a better balance between teacher-directed activities and activities selected by the children.
22. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, they are very well behaved and have very good relationships with each other. Teachers could make even better use of these positive qualities to develop pupils' capacity to work independently. They need to provide more opportunities in some lessons for pupils to plan their own work and make choices about methods and equipment.
23. Time is generally managed well but sometimes there are too few opportunities for pupils to review their learning towards the end of lessons. Pupils work very hard and think carefully about the tasks set by their teachers but would benefit from taking more time to reflect on what they had achieved and think more about how they could improve by sharing their work and learning from others.
24. Very occasionally, the activities provided for the younger and less able pupils in the junior class are too difficult. Although they do their best to tackle their tasks, they make slower progress at this point in the lesson because they are not sure what is expected of them.

Assessment

25. The arrangements for assessing pupils' progress have been improved recently. The staff have devised useful tracking systems for English and mathematics that show levels of attainment and rates of progress clearly. Teachers are beginning to use this information systematically to set targets for groups and individuals and move their learning forward. For example, older pupils have personal targets for writing recorded in their books and refer to these in the course of their work. Teachers have devised target banks, related to key objectives, in 'child friendly' language. The school plans to extend this good practice to mathematics. There are examples in pupils' recorded work and from lesson observations of teachers using marking and verbal feedback to provide sound guidance for improvement.
26. These new assessment systems are beginning to have an impact on further improving pupils' progress. The headteacher has decided, rightly, that they need now to be embedded in

practice. They will be run until the end of the school year and then the staff will review their effectiveness.

Leadership

27. The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching. Many changes have been introduced in the past year; these have built on existing good practice and resulted in greater consistency. The headteacher has decided, wisely, that it is now time to draw breath and evaluate the impact of these changes before planning further developments.

The curriculum

Overall, the school provides a good range of worthwhile curricular opportunities. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection so that there are now appropriate plans for all subjects, including information and communication technology. These are based largely on national guidance and they provide a sound framework for systematically building pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is particularly enriched by the wide range of very good opportunities that the school provides through clubs and activities during, and at the end of, the school day. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage needs further improvement as it is too tightly linked to the Key Stage 1 curriculum and does not provide sufficient opportunity for children to work independently and initiate their own activities. Arrangements for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the good support for these pupils meets the requirements of the national code of practice.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school uses the local environment and community well to enrich the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- Staff work hard to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all pupils.
- Literacy is used well across the curriculum.
- The curriculum for the youngest pupils needs further development.

Commentary

Planning

28. Teachers' planning is based on national guidelines, and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. In order to meet the wide needs of their mixed-aged classes and ensure that all curriculum areas are fully covered, the school has devised a two-year rolling programme for pupils in the infant class and a four-year programme for junior pupils. Weekly and daily planning clearly identifies what pupils are expected to learn. A range of activities is planned, often within the same lesson, to ensure that the needs of pupils of different ability, including those who have special educational needs, are met. Consequently, they all make good progress.
29. The planning frameworks provided by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are used well to ensure that lessons have a clear purpose. Teachers find good opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in other curricular areas and this supports the good standards that they achieve. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, they use measuring skills in design and technology when planning changes to the school environment. Although there was limited evidence during the inspection, pupils' portfolios of work show that they are beginning to use their ICT skills in other curriculum areas.

30. The school provides a very good range of after-school activities, which are run by teachers and members of the local community. These include a number of sporting activities, such as gym, football and Kwik cricket, as well as a recorder club, country dancing and art. These clubs are well attended, especially by older pupils.

Inclusion

31. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equality of access to learning for all pupils. This is evident in the way that staff skilfully ensure that pupils who have special educational needs take an active part in all lessons. They devise activities that are carefully linked to their individual education plans, and teaching assistants, through their sensitive support and praise, encourage pupils to work hard and achieve well.

Staffing

32. The number of teaching and non-teaching staff is higher than average for schools of this size. This is partly because the school has such a high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and also because governors have agreed to employ an extra part-time teacher for the older class. Consequently, the junior class is divided into two groups each morning for literacy and numeracy lessons. This system is working well as pupils are taught in much smaller groups and the smaller age range makes planning and teaching more effective. Consequently, they make good progress. The older class is also taught by a third teacher for two days each week to give the headteacher some non-teaching time. All three teachers work well together to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Their individual strengths are used well. The school also employs a specialist teacher for half a day each week to teach ICT. She successfully supports staff and pupils by ensuring that all curriculum requirements for ICT are met and by providing training in those areas where staff lack confidence. This has supported the rise in standards in ICT since the last inspection.

Accommodation and resources

33. The school makes very good use of its limited accommodation. Governors have agreed an extensive programme of refurbishment and development. This has included recent changes in classrooms for all pupils and the addition of a secretary's office near to the school entrance, improving accessibility for parents. The change in classrooms has resulted in improved facilities for Foundation Stage children and a more appropriate size room for the large Key Stage 2 class. All space is used effectively, especially in corridors, where reading books and the school library are well organised. Staff and pupils ensure that classrooms and corridors are attractive, welcoming and well maintained. There are plans in the near future to build an extension to provide a secure outside play area for Foundation Stage pupils. The school hall is small and limits the number of pupils able to take part in physical education lessons at any one time. Staff cope with this effectively and good links have been made with a local high school to provide facilities for athletics and indoor sport in the summer term. Resources are satisfactory, and there has been significant improvement in resources for ICT since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support for pupils are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes great care to ensure that all pupils are safe and secure.
- Staff know the pupils very well and there is a strong sense of trust between staff and pupils.
- Effective support from the staff helps pupils to become confident learners.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to express their views and shape school life.

Commentary

Pupils' care, welfare and safety

34. The staff take very good care of all the pupils and regard them as the school's greatest asset. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare are very comprehensive and well known to all the staff. Child protection procedures are very effective and staff are vigilant in their application. Staff take great trouble to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are looked after correctly and sensitively. Arrangements for dealing with first aid and prescribed medicines are good. Access to the premises is controlled well. Staff and pupils know the procedures for checking and recording visitors to the school.
35. Teachers make it their business to get to know the pupils and their personal circumstances very well. This enables them to respond effectively to pupils' personal and academic needs. Very positive relationships ensure that pupils are confident in sharing their concerns with a member of staff when they need to.
36. The school meets the learning needs of different groups of pupils well. They are encouraged to believe that they will succeed and not to be afraid to seek help when faced with difficulties. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs. Learning and behaviour problems are identified at an early stage and staff liaise closely with parents. Good use is made of support services when necessary. Innovative approaches, such as the 'positive play' initiative, and well-defined programmes of action in individual education plans, help pupils to overcome difficulties.

Induction and transfer

37. There are effective arrangements for pupils to get to know the school and staff before they start in the infants' class. The youngest children quickly get to know school routines and become confident members of the school community. Pupils in Year 6 moving to the high school have suitable opportunities to become familiar with their new school. Prior to their transfer, they make use of the high school's sports facilities and complete a 'bridging' unit of work in ICT.

Involving pupils

38. The school council provides a very good forum for pupils to express their views. The members of the council accept their responsibilities readily, consult with fellow pupils and put forward their ideas and opinions confidently. They take their part in shaping school life seriously, for example, in devising a questionnaire to find out pupils' views about homework and school meals. The ECO committee also provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship and influence the actions of the school as a responsible community.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, partnership with parents, other schools and the community is very good. Since the last inspection, the school has further strengthened the links with parents and the community to enhance pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very approachable and are trusted by the parents.
- The school actively seeks and responds to parents' views, and encourages them to play a full part in school life.
- The school is seen as a focal point of village life.

- Written reports are detailed but do not give a clear view of how well pupils are doing and how they can improve.

Commentary

Links with parents

39. The headteacher continually looks for ways of building a closer partnership with parents. She makes herself available to parents at the earliest possible opportunity and responds rapidly to their suggestions and concerns. She ensures that any problems are dealt with swiftly and checks with parents that there has been no recurrence. The other teachers are also readily accessible to parents to discuss their children's progress or share important information. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are closely involved in discussions about their children's progress and how they can support their further development.
40. The school recently surveyed parent opinion on a wide range of school issues. The governors provided very good feedback to parents on the results of their survey, commenting on the issues raised and setting out what they had done or planned to do.
41. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the life of the school. They support learning in the classrooms and play a significant part in running extra-curricular activities. Newsletters are well presented and provide a regular flow of useful information to keep parents up-to-date with school issues. Many parents attend the weekly celebration assemblies. These informal, enjoyable occasions are an effective means of marking pupils' academic and personal achievements, as well as an important way of demonstrating the school's values in practice. The parent liaison group is very active in raising funds. They have raised a substantial sum of money for the current building project.
42. Written reports provide parents with a good picture of their children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. However, reports do not show clearly how pupils' achievements compare with what is expected for their age or give an indication of the next, most important steps in their learning.

Links with other schools

43. Links with local schools are satisfactory. The school makes use of the high school's sports facilities and Year 6 pupils begin an ICT project in their final term which is completed at the high school. These arrangements help to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move on to the next stage of their education. Links with neighbouring primary schools provide opportunities for pupils to extend their social experience, for example, through taking part in joint schools' sports events.

Links with the community

44. The partnership with the local community is very good. There are very good links with the parish council and local churches. The chair of the parish council describes the school as 'at the heart of village life'. The school regularly hosts a luncheon club for senior citizens. Many members of the village community, as well as parents, support events organised by the parent liaison group. The school plays a central part in local well dressing events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The weaknesses found at the last inspection have all been overcome. The school is led very thoughtfully and skilfully by the headteacher. Following her appointment four terms ago, she rapidly assessed the school's strengths and weaknesses and successfully planned for its systematic improvement. She has established a very positive school ethos and generated a drive for improvement which is shared by all the staff. The governors are well

informed and maintain an effective overview of development planning and school performance. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is not sufficiently well developed in monitoring learning and teaching so that strengths can be shared and standards can be raised further.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's development and she sets a very strong example in leading improvements in learning and teaching.
- The staff share a strong commitment to improvement, they are well deployed and work well together as a team.
- The governing body is well organised; they know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are actively involved in its development.
- The school has clear priorities for improvement and the headteacher has planned effective action to achieve them.
- Curriculum co-ordinators do not yet check the effectiveness of learning and teaching or contribute systematically to improvement planning.

Commentary

Leadership

45. The quality of leadership has improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher has created a very inclusive school community which is characterised by hard work and care for one another. Her vision and determination to succeed have brought together the staff and harnessed their skills and experience for the common benefit of the school.
46. The headteacher is the school's special educational needs co-ordinator. She gives a very clear direction to secure good provision for pupils with special educational needs and has won the confidence of staff and parents. She has put her extensive, practical experience and comprehensive understanding of this area to very good use. There are secure systems in place for the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs. The appropriate training and effective deployment of teaching assistants leads to positive support and enhances pupils' good achievement.
47. Although there have been many staff changes in the recent past, the school community has a strong, collective commitment to improvement. Good teamwork typifies the school's approach to its work. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and the staff as a whole take responsibility for the education of all pupils. The close partnership between teachers and teaching assistants, for instance, contributes very effectively to the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
48. The headteacher has good plans to develop leadership skills in other members of staff. Given the length of time she has been in post, good progress has been made. Subject co-ordinators, for example, have played a part in the school's recent development by ensuring curriculum coverage and auditing resources. However, they do not yet play a full part in deciding the priorities for their subjects and planning the action for improvement. The staff recognise that this is the next stage in the development of their role.

Governance

49. The governing body is well organised and informed about the work of the school. The governors are well led by the chair and carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. All statutory procedures are in place.
50. The governors work well as a team through an effective committee structure. The work of the committees is linked closely to school improvement. The curriculum committee, for example,

receives reports and presentations from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to help them monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan.

51. The governors have carried out a self-evaluation exercise and targeted aspects of their work for improvement. They plan to develop their monitoring role through a programme of school visits. They recognise that this needs to be planned carefully with the staff to decide the purposes and protocols of their visits and the arrangements for considering what they have learnt.
52. The governors are very supportive of the school. They are well aware of its strengths and the challenges it faces. They take their role as critical friends seriously. For example, the governors surveyed parent opinion about a wide range of aspects of the school's work. In consultation with the staff, they made good use of the information gained to challenge aspects of current practice and make changes where necessary. The governors apply the principles of Best Value to proposed major spending decisions, for example, when planning the accommodation remodelling and extension.
53. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and shares her vision for the school and drive for continuous improvement. Their leadership ensures that the partnership between governors and staff enhances the work of the school.

Management

54. The school is managed well and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher has drawn up a clear plan for addressing the school's priorities over three years. This is based firmly on what needs to be done to realise the vision she has agreed with the staff and governors. Careful analysis of performance data has helped the headteacher to decide in detail the action to be taken this year. Action plans are well constructed but not all include clear reference to the intended impact on pupils' achievements. This makes it more difficult to evaluate their success and plan further improvement.
55. Staff and governors take part in the improvement planning process and governors monitor the progress of the plan. The school has tackled a large number of priorities this year and the pace of change has been fast. The headteacher and chair of governors have rightly decided that it is now time for a period of consolidation and evaluation of recent innovations. Within the school, the headteacher takes nearly all the responsibility for monitoring teaching and checking pupils' learning. She, and the staff, are aware that the other teachers are too little involved. There are plans to develop the skills and opportunities they need to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning, but these are at an early stage of development.
56. The staff are well deployed. The Key Stage 2 team work very well together to make best use of their expertise and ensure that lessons are well planned and build on previous work. The practice of teaching literacy and numeracy in separate Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 groups has a beneficial effect on the pupils' progress. The school makes good use of performance management to promote individual professional development and whole-school improvement. Targets and support for staff are linked to school priorities. Joint training for all teachers and support staff enhances teamwork and ensures consistency of purpose and approach. Throughout the school, adults provide very good role models for children. They treat all pupils with respect and manage their behaviour positively. The children respond very well in return and treat each other kindly.
57. Financial management is good. Spending is prudent and related appropriately to the school's priorities for improvement. Prior to the arrival of the headteacher, the school had built up a substantial surplus. This, together with specific grants and a substantial sum raised by the parents, is being used wisely to make significant improvements to the accommodation and resources. Governors, the headteacher and administrative assistant keep a close watch on

the budget and check the impact of major spending decisions. The school gives good value for money.

Future development

58. The school is very well placed for building on the improvements already achieved. The headteacher has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and a very clear view of what she wants to improve and how to achieve this. She is establishing secure systems to ensure that improvements are firmly embedded in school practice. The staff and governors are committed to improvement and are taking an increasingly active role in shaping the school's development.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	240,452	Balance from previous year	16,864
Total expenditure	228,996	Balance carried forward to the next	11,456
Expenditure per pupil	4,164		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics is good, but other areas of learning are not covered as fully so that provision, overall, is satisfactory. At the last inspection, provision was also satisfactory, but the curriculum overall was inappropriate because it did not cover all areas of learning for part-time pupils. There has been improvement in curriculum planning in that it now covers all areas of learning, but some weaknesses remain. The timetable for these youngest pupils is too tightly linked to the Key Stage 1 timetable. Consequently, there is insufficient time for them to fully develop aspects of some areas of learning, such as creative development. There are also insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and initiate their own activities. There are currently four children in the Foundation Stage, three of whom had only been in school for two weeks at the time of the inspection. These children work in the youngest class with other pupils aged five to seven. About 50 per cent of children have attended some form of pre-school provision. Children's attainment when they start school is average overall. They achieve well in communication, language and literacy, in mathematics and in some aspects of their personal, social and emotional development, and all are likely to reach the expected goals, with some exceeding them, by the end of their Reception Year. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but it is good in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. Activities in these areas of learning are stimulating and engage children's attention. Children are well supported by able teaching assistants. Although the accommodation is limited, staff work hard to make it attractive and to provide appropriate activities. They are very skilful at utilising other areas of the school building.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children co-operate well, take turns and share equipment fairly.
- Their behaviour is very good.
- Routines are well established.
- There are insufficient opportunities for children to initiate their own activities.

Commentary

60. Children have settled well and are quickly adapting to school routines and rules. They move around the school confidently. They concentrate well and are fully engaged in the activities that staff prepare for them, showing curiosity and interest in new experiences. They frequently work as a group and consequently are increasing their ability to co-operate, share equipment fairly and to take turns. Staff support children well and encourage them to express their own ideas and opinions. They listen carefully and treat them with respect. This helps to develop children's self-confidence and self-esteem. The good role model that staff set helps children to form positive relationships of their own. Children behave well both in the classroom and the playground and staff encourage this through praising and affirming positive behaviour. All activities for the children are planned and supported by the adults in the classroom and involve them working as a group. This leaves insufficient time for children to develop their independence skills through initiating their own activities or by working alone and consolidating their learning by repeating and returning to previous activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Children achieve well.

Commentary

61. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of their Reception Year. Through a range of well-planned and stimulating activities, children are effectively developing their speaking and listening skills. Staff are very skilful at asking questions that extend children's thinking and encourage them to explain their reasoning. Children listen attentively to stories and can recall and explain accurately what happened in the story during the previous lesson and are beginning to predict what might happen next. Early reading skills are fostered further through activities that help children to learn initial letter sounds. Children use this knowledge well to identify the initial letter in their name and the initial letter from pictures of familiar objects. Writing skills are at an early stage of development, but the most able are beginning to form their letters well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Staff plan a wide range of practical and stimulating activities that engage children's interest and ensures they learn well.
- Children are beginning to understand and use mathematical language effectively.

Commentary

62. Children are achieving well in mathematics and most are likely to exceed the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year. The majority of children can count and recognise numbers to five and beyond and the most able can recognise numbers and count to ten. Children practise these skills through playing simple board games. This not only helps them to count and recognise numbers in a meaningful context but also helps to develop their social skills. Staff are very skilled at providing activities that are linked to other areas of learning to develop mathematical knowledge and language. For instance, children were asked to sort clothes in a laundry basket before putting them in the toy washing machine in the role-play area. This immediately engaged their attention and children responded well. They worked co-operatively and began to sort the clothes according to their size with the most able responding well with comparative language, for example, "Look, this sock is bigger than the white one but smaller than the red one." The teaching assistant working with the children looked for further mathematical opportunities throughout this activity, such as turning the washing machine dial to the appropriate number and, once the washing was done, hanging it on the washing line in order of size. Children really enjoyed this activity, which successfully enhanced their understanding and use of mathematical language. Occasionally, when reception children are working with the full class, mathematical activities, although simplified to match their ability, are inappropriate and fail to extend their learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a wide range of resources and successfully encourage language development.
- Children respond well and show curiosity and enthusiasm.

Commentary

63. Only one aspect of this area of learning was observed during the inspection. This was an activity closely linked with the science work of older pupils on materials. Children used their senses well to investigate different types of paper and were encouraged to use a range of words to describe appearance and texture. When asked to identify small objects made from different materials hidden in the paper, with the use of a metal detector, pupils respond with excitement and enthusiasm. The most able can identify which objects are metal, plastic or wood. Although children are given opportunities to explore and investigate, these are sometimes too adult-directed and this prevents children from having time to ask questions or speculate on why things might happen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement on these areas of learning in terms of the standards children attain or the quality of teaching. Provision for children's physical development has improved since the last inspection as outdoor activities are now regularly timetabled and the school has plans for a designated play area for Foundation Stage children. Wheeled resources have been purchased since the last inspection and these are used regularly. Timetabling for children's creative development is too tightly tied to the curriculum for the older pupils. Consequently, they do not have time to devise their own activities, choose their own materials and work independently. Although there are attractive resources available to encourage children's imaginative play, there are insufficient planned opportunities for them to use these without adult supervision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are generally above average and have improved since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Teachers' planning is thorough.
- Pupils enjoy their work and know what they are expected to learn
- Some good assessment procedures have recently been introduced.
- Occasionally, plenary sessions are too rushed.

Commentary

64. National tests in 2003 show that by the age of seven pupils reach standards that are above average in reading and writing when compared to all and similar schools. When using average point scores, standards in reading and writing are in the top five per cent of schools nationally. National tests for 11-year-olds in 2003 showed that standards were also above average in English when compared to similar schools and the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was well above average. Data comparing these pupils' Year 6 results with their previous attainment in Year 2 indicates that they are achieving well. As the school has small year groups, this comparative data needs to be treated with some caution.
65. The inspection confirmed that pupils in the youngest class attain above average standards in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. In the older class, although the oldest pupils attain average standards in English (they are a very small cohort with a high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs), pupils in other year groups are attaining standards that are above average. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Their teachers plan work carefully and devise interesting activities that engage their interest. Teaching assistants give sensitive support so that pupils work hard and make good progress.
66. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in all year groups. Pupils are keen to answer questions and share ideas. Interactive teaching styles and good questioning techniques encourage pupils to voice their opinions confidently and explain their reasoning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 share their ideas with a partner before reporting back to the rest of the class and this ensures that all pupils have the chance to express their views. In the same class, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through the use of tape recorders. In one lesson, a small group of Year 2 boys worked with another pupil with communication difficulties to record the story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff, each taking the part of a character from the book. They completed this task confidently, recalling the story well and playing each part with good expression. They were very well supported by a teaching assistant who skilfully stepped back to allow them to manage the activity themselves.
67. Pupils achieve well in reading for a number of reasons. There is an emphasis on the systematic teaching of phonics for younger pupils; teachers themselves read with enthusiasm and provide good opportunities for pupils to read across other curriculum areas; and parents support children's reading at home well. By the time they are seven, pupils read accurately and fluently from a wide range of texts. They use their phonic knowledge well to decode unknown words and confidently predict what might happen next in a story. Pupils in the older class are very confident in reading unseen texts. They read with good expression and clearly refer to the text when discussing characters or events in a story. They are able to locate information quickly in non-fiction books and effectively use the library catalogue system. Pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic readers and enjoy talking about the books they have read. Results from national tests have shown that girls achieve better than boys in reading. The school has recently extended the range of reading books available to include more titles that will appeal to boys. There was no marked difference during the inspection of the levels attained between boys and girls.
68. Standards in writing are above average and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 form their letters well and are beginning to write for a range of different purposes, for example, story writing, instructional writing and book reviews. They are confident and make good attempts at spelling unknown words, using their phonic knowledge well. The most able pupils are beginning to join their writing, producing a good cursive style. Pupils in the older class are given a good range of frequent opportunities to extend their writing skills. They learn strategies for planning, drafting and editing their work so that the most able write fluently and engage the reader's attention. Their work is punctuated and spelt correctly. Pupils' good writing and spelling skills help them to present their work well in all subjects.
69. The quality of teaching in English is good. Teachers' planning is very thorough and they give clear explanations so that pupils know what it is they need to learn. Good day-to-day assessment ensures that plans are changed when necessary to ensure that all pupils achieve

well. Activities are well matched to pupils' needs and are often stimulating and engage pupils' attention. There is a good level of challenge for all pupils but especially for the most able. Consequently, pupils work hard and with enthusiasm. Teachers are skilful at ensuring that pupils learn strategies to improve their work and this enhances their good achievement. There is a good pace to lessons generally but, occasionally, plenary sessions at the end of lessons are too rushed and do not give pupils enough time to evaluate how well they have done.

70. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for further improvement and has devised a very useful three-year action plan. She has recently introduced some effective systems for assessing progress and setting targets in reading and writing. She has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development, especially at Key Stage 2. Her monitoring role in terms of evaluating the quality of teaching and learning overall, however, is underdeveloped and this limits her capacity to lead further improvements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. The good skills that pupils acquire in English are used well across other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are further developed in mathematics and science lessons, where they confidently propose ideas and explain their reasoning. Reading and writing skills are purposefully developed through research and report writing. Pupils' good knowledge of spelling and well-formed handwriting results in their work being well presented in all subject areas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and has improved since the last inspection. Teaching is good and standards of achievement are above average in all aspects of mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils' progress is good.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- Teachers plan lessons carefully so that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are challenged and supported well.
- The curriculum is well balanced and covers all aspects of mathematics systematically.
- Too little time is given to summing up and reviewing learning at the end of lessons.

Commentary

72. In the national tests for 7-year-olds in 2003, results were very high. All pupils reached the expected standard and more than half achieved the higher level. Since there are small numbers in each year group, comparisons with national averages do not always provide a reliable picture of overall attainment. However, taking the past three years together, results have exceeded the national average overall.
73. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach standards that are above average. In the lessons observed in Key Stage 1, standards were above average in number. Analysis of work and discussion with pupils shows that appropriate emphasis is given to this crucial aspect of mathematics and that pupils achieve well. For example, pupils in Year 2 solve addition and subtraction problems with numbers greater than 10; they make good use of strategies such as doubling, taking the largest number first, and separating tens and units. Pupils also have good opportunities to learn about shape and measuring, and also to collect, organise and analyse data. Consequently, they achieve well in these aspects of mathematics as well and standards are above average.
74. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003, results were just below average. Small numbers in each year group mean that results can vary widely from one year to the next. Standards in the present, very small Year 6 group are about average, but in the larger Year 5, pupils reach

standards that are above average for their age. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils in Year 4 have a secure understanding of the equivalence of simple fractions. They can explain their methods of calculating fractions of given lengths, for example, one tenth of a metre, when solving word problems. Pupils in Year 6 and many in Year 5 are confident when working with co-ordinates, including negative numbers, to explore translations. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 are already attaining the standards in number and algebra which are expected of 11-year-olds. They demonstrate secure understanding of place value, adding and subtracting decimals to two places, using fractions and percentages to describe proportions, and picking out patterns of multiples.

75. Teaching and learning were good in all the lessons seen. The strength of teaching lies in the careful planning which ensures that pupils of all abilities make good, systematic progress in developing mathematical understanding. This is because:
- teachers take great care to match work closely to pupils' different needs;
 - learning objectives are explained clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them and are purposeful;
 - pupils expect to succeed and know they will be supported when they need help;
 - teachers question and challenge pupils skilfully to check and develop their understanding; and
 - teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities and are well supported.
76. The curriculum is well-structured and resourced to cover all aspects of mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, for example, the effective use of a range of activities and resources, including number games and practical equipment, helps pupils to grasp new ideas and develop new skills. The older pupils are taught mathematics in two separate groups of Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. Teachers make good use of the opportunities this provides to plan a well-focused programme of activities for these smaller groups and ensure that they receive carefully targeted adult support. Within these smaller groups, pupils achieve well because the day-to-day progress of individuals is carefully monitored and misunderstandings are quickly corrected.
77. Generally, too little time is given to exploring and consolidating what has been learnt in the lesson. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are often brief and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to consider and explain what they have achieved, and to learn from each other.
78. Assessment in mathematics is sound. Teachers use a range of strategies to assess pupils' work and annotate their planning to show how day-to-day adjustments will be made to subsequent work. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and comments often show how well pupils have done and what they need to do to improve. Teachers assess pupils' progress against key objectives at regular intervals and national tests are also used to track progress. The school plans to make greater use of this information to set targets for groups and individuals. There are examples of targets being used effectively to promote progress but this practice is not yet applied with all pupils.
79. Mathematics is co-ordinated effectively. The curriculum is well organised, reliable assessment systems have been introduced and there are good plans to support developments in learning and teaching with appropriate training. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and she has observed classroom practice as part of her general programme of monitoring learning and teaching. This has enabled her to form a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has devised a useful three-year outline plan for mathematics which sets out clear procedures for auditing provision and deciding priorities for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

80. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, they use graphs, charts and measuring skills in science and physical education when recording the effects of exercise on their bodies, and in design and technology when planning changes to the school environment. The school council designed their own questionnaire to survey pupils' opinions about school life and collated the results.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good** overall. Standards and the curriculum have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average overall throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons and make good progress in gaining scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers plan interesting activities and provide good opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves.
- Assessment systems are sound but are not yet used to guide planning or help pupils improve.
- The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to check learning and teaching so that she can plan for further improvement.

Commentary

81. Pupils' standards and progress have improved since the last inspection. Pupils now achieve well throughout the school.
82. Standards in Year 2 are above average with most pupils on course to reach the expectations for seven-year-olds and many likely to exceed them. Lesson observation and the evidence of work completed over Years 1 and 2, shows that pupils are making good progress in developing scientific knowledge and understanding, acquiring and using scientific vocabulary with confidence. They are also developing sound skills of investigation and learning to think like scientists. For example, pupils in Year 2 carried out tests and recorded their findings when exploring materials for making a boat. They could explain how they followed consistent procedures to make their tests fair. However, there were too few opportunities for the more able pupils to extend their investigative skills further by making predictions and proposing hypotheses.
83. Standards in the most recent national tests for 11-year-olds were well above average. All pupils achieved the expected level and over half reached the higher level. In the current, very small Year 6, standards are about average with most pupils on course to reach the expected level. Standards are above average in Year 5, where most pupils achieve the standards expected for their age and several are working at a level more typical of the oldest pupils. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 achieve well because they undertake a well-balanced programme of activities which are generally well matched to their different levels of experience and attainment. For example, in their work about the solar system, the older pupils were challenged to find information about the earth's orbit of the sun and the seasons, whilst the younger pupils learnt about the sun's apparent movement in the day. The curriculum for Key Stage 2 has been improved since the last inspection. It has been reorganised to ensure that the four-year rolling programme covers all aspects of science regularly. This ensures that pupils have a good recollection of previous work and that their knowledge, skills and understanding are built systematically.
84. Lessons are lively and practical with plenty of opportunities for pupils to work together in small groups. Teachers expect pupils to achieve high standards. Pupils respond enthusiastically and work sensibly, co-operatively and with perseverance. Teachers ask probing questions to assess and develop pupils' understanding. In return, pupils are keen to make suggestions and

offer explanations. For example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher challenged the pupils to think of evidence to support their knowledge that the earth is spherical. The pupils drew on their previous learning about horizons to explain their reasoning. Occasionally, the work set for the younger pupils in the Key Stage 2 class is too difficult. For example, the Year 3 and 4 pupils were asked to consider different shadow shapes and match them to specific times in the day. Although they did their best, their progress was slower at this point because they were not sure what was expected of them and did not know how to apply their practical experience of shadows cast by the sun.

85. Teachers check pupils' understanding through their marking and questioning and give helpful guidance in lessons. A sound system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in science has been introduced recently. This is based on the key objectives of the national scheme of work. It has yet to be fully implemented and, at present, is not used to plan work or to help pupils improve.
86. The co-ordinator has taken appropriate action in the past year to improve provision in science. She has:
 - revised the curriculum to ensure regular coverage of all aspects of science;
 - audited resources to ensure that they support the curriculum adequately; and
 - devised systematic arrangements for assessment.
87. She has not yet checked learning and teaching systematically by analysing performance data and pupils' work, or observing lessons. She recognises that this has limited her capacity to build on current successes and lead further improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology overall is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now satisfactory.
- There has been good improvement in resources and their organisation.
- Good planning ensures full curriculum coverage.
- The subject leader has good subject knowledge and supports staff and pupils well.
- There was only limited evidence during the inspection of pupils using their skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

88. Raising standards was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Sound progress has been made and standards throughout the school are now similar to those expected nationally. In the three lessons or part-lessons seen, pupils made satisfactory progress in developing and consolidating their skills. Younger pupils use a mouse confidently when word-processing their work and are able to plan and make things happen through the use of a control mechanism. Work from Year 2 pupils' portfolios indicates that they can enter, organise and classify information when making a graph of their favourite fruit and add images to text to illustrate their work. At Key Stage 2, pupils use computers confidently to revise multiplication tables and build on their existing skills by using an art program to select and redesign their own pictures, using a range of colours and shapes. Portfolios of work for these older pupils show evidence of them developing a range of skills including:
 - searching the Internet for research purposes and using the facts and information they have found to produce a well-presented and illustrated written report, including graphs and tables;

- producing multimedia presentations using power point, for example, based on characters from Shakespeare's plays;
 - exchanging and sharing information through sending emails and attachments; and
 - using word processing confidently to present their own poetry and extended stories.
89. Good progress has been made in improving resources. There is not sufficient room in the school for a computer suite, but the recent purchase of laptop computers has increased flexibility and ensures that sufficient computers are available for the teaching and consolidation of new skills.
90. Planning for ICT has improved and is now thorough. A scheme of work based on national guidance ensures full coverage of all aspects of the subject through a two-year rolling programme in the younger class and a four-year programme for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and teachers' subject knowledge and confidence have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are taught new skills well. Teachers give clear explanations and allow sufficient time for pupils to practise and consolidate their new learning. Good use of praise and encouragement means that pupils work hard and concentrate well. They use and practise their skills confidently when working without adult support. Younger pupils share equipment and resources fairly. Good assessment procedures have been introduced and are being further developed. Consequently, teachers can monitor pupils' progress carefully. The recent introduction of self-assessment for pupils in the older class helps them to evaluate how well they are achieving as well as indicating what they need to do next to improve further. ICT is very well co-ordinated. Sound progress has been made with improving the weaknesses found at the last inspection. The school employs a specialist part-time teacher to lead developments in ICT. She has worked hard during the last 18 months to develop a programme of continuous staff training. The purchase of good resources, together with the introduction of a thorough scheme of work to ensure full curriculum coverage, has helped to raise standards and improve pupils' and staff's confidence. The school recognises the need for further improvement and has prioritised the further development of ICT across the curriculum in its current school improvement plan.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. Pupils use ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example, to word-process their writing, and to consolidate knowledge and skills in mathematics and science. However, there was limited evidence during the inspection of teachers providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills across a range of curriculum areas and this remains an area for improvement.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

93. No lessons were observed in **history** or **geography** during the inspection. Some written work from pupils in the older class was sampled in geography, but evidence in both subjects was limited, making it impossible to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision.
94. In geography at Key Stage 2, good use is made of field trips and first hand experiences to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. A visit to a local reservoir, for instance, enhanced their knowledge of environmental change and management. There are good opportunities for the use and development of ICT, mathematical and literacy skills in geography and pupils have produced some well-presented reports following their visit. There is also evidence of pupils researching the Internet to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the physical features of rivers. Teachers use resources and the local community well. In their historical study of World War Two, for instance, pupils are learning what it was like for children at that time through a good range of artefacts, recorded interviews

and the recollections of their grandparents. At the last inspection, although the quality of teaching was satisfactory, too much of pupils' work was based on worksheets. This is no longer the case. Pupils' work in both subjects is original and well presented.

95. Subject co-ordinators' roles are limited. Schemes of work have been introduced since the last inspection and these ensure good curriculum coverage through two-year, for the younger pupils, and four-year, for the older pupils, rolling programmes. Formal records of attainment and assessment are being developed.

Religious education

96. Only a part of a lesson was seen in religious education during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The school ensures that statutory requirements are met through the use of national guidelines and the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Planning is based on a two-year cycle for the younger class and a four-year cycle for pupils in the older class. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.
97. Teachers use the local community well and arrange visits to local churches for younger pupils to help them learn about Christian traditions and celebrations. Good cross-curricular links are developed in the younger class. For instance, when learning about Noah's ark, they worked in pairs in a drama lesson with one pupil taking the role of Noah and trying to persuade their partner to enter the ark.
98. Older pupils learn about a range of other faiths and, in the part-lesson seen, showed a genuine interest in learning about other religions. Good use of resources and questioning by the teacher helped pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding about how Hindus worship at home.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

99. No lessons were seen in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education** during the inspection. It is not, therefore, possible to make judgements about overall provision. Based on the evidence of teachers' plans, discussion with co-ordinators and pupils, and some examples of pupils' work in art and design and design and technology, it is evident that pupils like these subjects and that the school provides worthwhile opportunities for learning.

Commentary

100. It is clear from the work on display around the school, photographic evidence and from talking with pupils that they enjoy their work in **art and design**. The school follows a commercial scheme of work which ensures that the curriculum offers a good range of experiences to work with a variety of materials and processes in two and three dimensions. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing their understanding of pattern by printmaking with paint and vegetables. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have good opportunities to develop three-dimensional art and design. They talked confidently about the sculptures they had made following a visit to a sculpture park. They made effective use of their sketchbooks to develop their designs and worked in groups to produce their sculptures. They have also made good use of ICT in their work on repeated patterns. Pupils have learnt about art from other times and cultures through, for example, their study of willow pattern designs and aboriginal art.
101. Pupils' work in **design and technology** is linked to their personal and social development and citizenship. Their work is set in the real-life context of their current project about improving the school grounds. Pupils surveyed the opinions of the children about current playground facilities and what improvements they would like. They made good use of the information they collected to develop their own ideas and an attractive display shows their designs and models

of a new playground. Their work is made all the more purposeful as their ideas are being used to remodel play facilities.

102. Pupils enjoy their activities in **music**. They have many opportunities to develop their performance skills. For example, in collective worship, they sang tunefully and with expression, and in a celebration assembly, a recorder group performed informally for the pupils and some parents. Pupils also talked enthusiastically about playing instruments and singing in the Christmas production, Hosanna Rock. A considerable number of pupils are learning to play woodwind and brass instruments with visiting specialist teachers.
103. The **physical education** (PE) curriculum covers a broad range of activities. All pupils take part in games, gymnastics, athletics, dance and swimming. There is also a very wide range of lunch and after-school activities which extend opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in sport. These are popular with the pupils and include cricket, football, netball and gymnastics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 swim regularly and most pupils learn to swim by the time they leave the school. Good use is made of the specialist expertise of the co-ordinator, who teaches PE throughout the school. The school makes good use of resources and the limited accommodation. Since the hall is rather small and can only accommodate half the Key Stage 2 class at one time, Years 3 and 4 are taught gymnastics and dance separately from Years 5 and 6. The village playing field, next to the school, is used for games and athletics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

104. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements can be made about overall provision.
105. The school gives a high priority to pupils' personal development. A good range of topics and activities are planned into the curriculum provided for all pupils. For those in the younger class, these include talking about feelings and relationships, making choices, and rights and responsibilities. Teachers are skilful at using well-known stories as a starting point for class discussions. This helps pupils to recognise moral dilemmas and to begin to look at situations from different points of view.
106. Citizenship is further developed in the older class so pupils have the opportunity to:
- set personal goals;
 - research, discuss and debate topical issues;
 - express their opinions; and
 - learn about looking after themselves and eating a healthy diet.
107. The very active school council successfully supports Year 5 and 6 pupils' development in becoming responsible citizens. Their activities give them experience of solving problems, managing money, learning how democratic processes work and resolving differences. Members of the school's equally active ECO committee are practically involved in improving the school environment. They are learning the importance of canvassing the opinions of others and have recently carried out a survey about the best way of improving the school playground. Their work on introducing a recycling scheme has involved not only pupils in the school but also the local community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

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

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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