

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTLANDS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115027

Headteacher: Mr John Williams

Lead inspector: Martin Creasey

Dates of inspection: 24th - 27th May 2004

Inspection number: 258377

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:	380
School address:	Beeches Close Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM1 2SB
Telephone number:	(01245) 251 700
Fax number:	(01245) 351 473
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Neil Spurgeon
Date of previous inspection:	June 15 th 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Westlands Community Primary School is a larger than average school with 380 pupils aged four to 11. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below the national average. Nearly eight per cent of the pupils have first languages other than English and this is above the national average and an increase since the previous inspection. The numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and the numbers with statements of special educational needs are in line with the national average but the number of pupils with special educational needs is below. The school serves a large area of mixed housing in Chelmsford comprising accommodation rented from the local council and housing associations and about a third of privately owned housing. The school has recently undergone a major rebuild and this disrupted all parts of the school for more than 12 months. The building is now completed and the school reopened in September 2003. The expected growth in pupil numbers that this building was planned for has not taken place; consequently the school has spare rooms and a large budget carry over from last year. All parts of the school are now housed in a single building with light, spacious connecting corridors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2451	Martin Creasey	Lead inspector	Music English as an additional language (EAL)
19426	Chris Farris	Lay inspector	
10611	Martin James	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Physical education Religious education
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology
12116	Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Westlands Community Primary School is an effective school. There is a strong commitment to inclusion throughout the school and all pupils are supported to do well. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards in line with national expectations in English, science and mathematics. Pupils achieve standards well above those expected when compared to similar schools. The partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher provides effective leadership. The deputy has been appointed to the headship in September when the headteacher retires. Teachers in the four teams contribute to the school's successful operation. During the past two years a major rebuilding project has held up some important curriculum improvements most notably in information communication technology (ICT) and standards are below what they should be. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good and children make good progress in their first year at school.
- The standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are very high compared to similar schools.
- Pupils make good progress which compares very well with schools nationally.
- Most pupils in Year 6 achieve standards in reading that are in line with national expectations but more could attain the higher Level 5 given more interesting resources.
- The standards in ICT are below those expected nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) do well, as do those with first languages other than English (EAL).
- Teachers do not always use all the information they have about pupils to prepare work appropriate to their needs.
- Some pupils exhibit challenging behaviour but this is dealt with effectively and the atmosphere throughout the school is good.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. There has been an increase in the number of pupils whose first language is not English and attainment on entry to the school is lower than at the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are lower than previously, but at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are similar to those observed in the last inspection. Standards in religious education (RE) in Key Stage 2 are better and school assemblies and collective worship are also improved. The standards in ICT are not as good as last time.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003

reading	C	E	E	D
writing	E	E	D	C
mathematics	E	E*	E	E

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* - very low. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

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

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

Achievement throughout the school is good. In the Key Stage 2 national tests pupils reach standards above those expected nationally overall and when compared to similar schools achieve well above average results. In the Foundation Stage children make good progress but many do not meet all the goals they are expected to reach at the end of Reception. In Key Stage 1 pupils' achievement is satisfactory with standards below national averages in the core subjects.

Pupils' personal development is good. The provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is good and contributes well to the personal development of pupils. Some pupils have behaviour problems but these are dealt with quickly by staff using effective systems and involving parents if appropriate. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2 and satisfactory throughout the rest of the school. Pupils' learning matches this and they make most progress where teaching is best. Teachers need to improve their marking and use all the information they have so that pupils have a clear indication of what they need to do to improve and work is set to meet their needs. **The care, guidance and support for pupils are good.** All staff work hard to ensure this. The curriculum is broad and balanced with very good provision for pupils outside of school hours where their sport and creative learning experiences are enhanced. Teachers are being innovative and joining some subjects together and pupils are enjoying the experience. Some development is still required to maintain pupils' progress using this method.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The teamwork system in the school is supportive and contributes significantly to the good achievement. There needs to be more opportunity for

subject leaders to monitor the progress and development of their subjects. The governors provide satisfactory strategic support and meet statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed strong support for the school and the way their children enjoyed school. A small number felt that pupils' poor behaviour was dealt with inappropriately. However, the school does have effective systems and processes in place for dealing with poor behaviour and there are clear examples of how the action taken by the headteacher has been referred back appropriately to individual parents. Pupils in Key Stage 1 expressed overwhelmingly strong support for the school. Key Stage 2 pupils were more measured but still felt that the school met their needs well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in literacy by ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills in other subjects particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the use of the assessment information so that teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils and inform them about how to improve.
- Ensure that the innovations introduced to the curriculum in teaching some subjects together are more effectively raising standards and achievement.
- Ensure that standards in ICT are improved across the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

In Year 2 standards are generally **below the national averages** in English, mathematics and science. However, progress is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are **in line with national averages** in English, mathematics and science. Standards are well above those in similar schools in all core subjects by the end of Year 6. (Similar schools are those with between 20 and 35 per cent of the pupils eligible for free school meals.) There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls although in the Key Stage 2 tests last year girls achieved slightly higher levels than boys. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and the provision made for them is good with education plans being used by teachers to prepare appropriate work. The achievement of pupils developing English as an additional language (EAL) varies according to the language levels they have. Generally they achieve well and many are attaining standards in line with their capabilities. Both pupils with SEN and those with EAL are well supported by effective teaching assistants who make a significant contribution to the standards they achieve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are high at the end of Key Stage 2 when compared to similar schools.
- Those pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported, make good progress and achieve well.
- The progress pupils make in Key Stage 2 is good and matches the progress made in the best schools nationally.

- Children make good progress in the Reception classes but their literacy and numeracy skills are still below the goals children are expected to reach when they begin Year 1.
- Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but the standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 are below those of both all schools nationally and similar schools.
- The standards in ICT across the school require improvement.
- The number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in reading in Year 6 is good but pupils capable of achieving higher levels in reading lose interest because of a lack of stimulating resources.

Commentary

Starting school

1. Children beginning school in the Reception class have a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Early assessment shows that most children have well below average skills in language, literacy and numeracy but are about average in other areas and particularly good in social development.

School's results in national tests

2. In the Year 2 tests last year there was an improvement in writing although standards were still below the national average. In reading and mathematics results are still well below the national average. When compared with similar schools mathematics results are well below average, reading is below and writing is average. The school was inspected six years ago and there appears to be a reduction in the standards achieved in Key Stage 1 since then. However, measures were less precise then. Although results in the past four years are below the national trend there has been some recovery and although attainment on entry is now lower last year the improvement in results was above the national trend in all tests.

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

Standards in	School results	National results
reading	14.3 (13.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.9 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.3 (13.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in the national tests last year was above the national average overall. In mathematics and science the results were about average but in English they were above, showing good improvement on previous years. When compared with similar schools all core subjects' results are well above average. This means that in Key Stage 2 results over recent years are above the national trend. These results are at least maintaining the judgements from the previous inspection and show improvement against similar schools.

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

Standards in	School results	National results
English	27.9 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)

science	29.3 (28.5)	28.6 (28.3)
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There were 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage

- The children in the Reception class have attended school for almost a year and teachers are preparing for the end of year assessments. Children are taught in single age groups in a large well organised space specially prepared for the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and as a result the children made good progress although many will achieve standards below those expected nationally. The standards observed show that children's communication, language and literacy skills and mathematics development are below the national expectations. The good progress that children make means that other areas of learning are in line with national expectations, particularly social and creative development. These findings show that the good standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained.

Years 1 and 2

- The pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught in four mixed age classes. They are making satisfactory progress. The observations and work scrutiny show pupils are achieving below the standards expected for pupils of their age at the end of Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science. In writing there are improvements in standards but there are not enough opportunities provided in other subjects to develop their skills, particularly in reporting their findings in the science work they do. In reading pupils do well and many pupils are reading at the level expected for their age; however, fewer pupils are able to read at the higher Level 3. In mathematics the standards are hindered by the limited language skills of pupils. Consequently the problem solving work is well below the national standards. In science pupils demonstrated a sound understanding of the subject when in discussions with the inspector but their recorded work is poor and standards are slightly below national expectations. Work was sampled in physical education (PE) and design and technology (DT) and appeared to be in line with national standards. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards in geography and history are below average. In ICT the standards are recovering after the building project in the school restricted the use of equipment but are below the national expectations. In RE pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The tracking of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 during the inspection revealed that the emphasis the school places on developing pupils' spoken language skills is proving successful. This does leave pupils in difficulty when asked to write more or respond to a written challenge such as those posed in the national tests. As a result the standards in tests remain low.

Years 3 to 6

- The pupils are taught in mixed age classes throughout Key Stage 2; four classes in each of Years 3 and 4 pupils and four of Years 5 and 6 pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2 the standards in English are in line with the national expectations but are well above average when compared to pupils in similar schools. The number of pupils reading at Level 4, the national standard, is very good. However, the number of pupils reading at the higher Level 5 is below the national average and this is linked to the quality of the reading

scheme which pupils tend to find uninteresting. Writing skills are slightly below the national expectations. In mathematics and science the achievement of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national standards. In all core curriculum subjects progress is good throughout Key Stage 2 and is often very good in Year 6. As a result the achievement of pupils in English, mathematics and science when compared to that in similar schools is well above average. Following the major rebuilding of the school the ICT equipment has only recently become available and is still lacking in some aspects; therefore, standards are below national expectations as there is not yet full coverage of the required curriculum. The standards in RE have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with those expected. In the sampling undertaken of other subjects achievement is in line with national standards.

Whole school matters

7. The school provides some opportunities for pupils to use skills, knowledge and understanding developed in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. This is better in Key Stage 2 where writing in science, history and geography is linked to their literacy work. However, some improvement is required in Key Stage 1 where the emphasis is more on developing speaking and listening skills and not on using writing effectively. Pupils are developing their ICT skills and were observed using the web to research for information in history. This was particularly well used in the Year 5/6 classes where achievement was good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and behave **well**. Relationships at all levels are **good**. The school provides well for pupils' personal development and so they grow in confidence, awareness of others' needs and enjoy their involvement in school life. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes to their school life and most are keen to learn.
- Most pupils behave well and enjoy the good relationships they have with staff and with their schoolmates.
- The school is largely free from any form of harassment because staff work hard at eliminating it.
- The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. This helps them to mature and grow as well-rounded individuals aware of the needs of others.
- Attendance is satisfactory. It is well monitored but insufficiently promoted.

Commentary

8. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are keen to make progress and do well. They are polite and chirpy and interested in everything that is going on. In lessons they settle down quickly and most keep working even when not directly supervised. They respond well to instructions and enjoy their learning. Pupils are particularly well motivated when the lesson is challenging - as in a Year 6 music lesson when they worked together very effectively to compose music in the Tudor style. They work well either individually or collaboratively and give willing support to colleagues who find the work more difficult.

9. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is good overall; this leads to a calm environment that is conducive to learning and is appreciated by staff and pupils alike. Staff provide good role models and deal quickly and sensitively with any behaviour problems. They have high expectations and most of the pupils respond very well to these. No aggressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and, according to staff and pupils such behaviour is relatively infrequent and quickly dealt with. A few parents feel that firmer sanctions need to be used in cases of aggressive behaviour by pupils. However, the documentary evidence shows that the school does deal well with such behaviour and informs parents of both the victims and perpetrators appropriately. One pupil has been excluded during the past year on three occasions and is no longer in the school. Pupils enjoy good relationships with staff and with their peers. The pleasant environment within the school is evidence of the genuine spirit of friendship and respect that exists at all levels.
10. Provision for pupils' personal development is good, particularly the provision for their social, moral and cultural development. Lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship, coupled with discussions in class on moral and social issues help pupils to make the right choices in life and widen their understanding of the needs of others. As a result, by the time they leave, pupils are mature and well adjusted, able to see the other's point of view and to get on well with those around them. Pupils' cultural development is also well supported. They learn about their own culture and about the cultures and religions of pupils from other ethnic groups within the school. Visits and visitors help to widen this understanding. Pupils begin to appreciate the work of famous artists and musicians. Music plays an important part in school life and contributes to the spiritual development of pupils as well as helping their growing cultural awareness. Pupils take part in local music and choir festivals and the school steel band play in the town and in other schools. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory overall with opportunities provided in a range of settings for pupils to reflect on their lives and the effect they have on others. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
11. During the last reporting year attendance was 94.0 per cent. This was marginally below the national average but the figures were skewed by extended holidays overseas by pupils of Asian heritage. Taking these into account, the underlying attendance level is broadly in line with the national average and is judged to be satisfactory. The level of unauthorised absence is lower than the national average and is good. Most pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time. The school monitors attendance well, with all unexplained absences chased up promptly on the first day. However, little is done in the way of actively promoting or rewarding good attendance in order to raise the attendance from satisfactory to good or better.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
303	3	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
9	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
11	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
10	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. In the Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2 it is good and this contributes significantly to the progress and achievement pupils make.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** in the Foundation Stage and **satisfactory** throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. There are clear links to the learning of pupils and progress through the Foundation Stage is also good. Pupils' progress improves at the end of Key Stage 2 where teaching is mostly good. The assessment of pupils and their progress is satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEN make good progress and they use the individual education plans to set work for these pupils. They are well supported by teaching assistants.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils make good progress.
- In lessons pupils are engaged in their work and encouraged to do well.
- The teaching assistants provide a significant level of support and contribute well to teaching and learning, particularly in the Foundation Stage where their work is very good.

- Teachers have a good command of the subjects they teach particularly the literacy and numeracy work.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are demonstrating good knowledge and understanding in their lessons.
- Teachers need to improve the way they use the wealth of assessment information to prepare work appropriate for the needs of the pupils in their classes.
- The teaching and learning of pupils with SEN and EAL is good.
- There needs to be improvement to the way teachers plan for teaching combinations of subjects.

Commentary

12. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is satisfactory with many good lessons and a few very good. In the Foundation Stage teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress. In the Year 5/6 classes teaching is good with a significant number of very good lessons and this contributes significantly to the progress made by pupils and the good standards they achieve by the end of Key Stage 2. Throughout the school teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning and the subjects they teach and the literacy and numeracy requirements are planned and taught effectively.
13. The school is trying to develop an approach to teaching some subjects together such as music and history or science, history and ICT. This is an innovation responding to the government's recommendations to improve teaching and learning in primary schools. The success of this approach is proving variable. Where planning is accurate with clearly identified learning expectations and this is linked to confident, knowledgeable teaching there are successful lessons. This occurred where a Year 5/6 teacher in a music and history lesson successfully combined links to Tudor music to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of rhythm and melody. Other observations revealed that where teachers were using colleagues' planning they were unsure about what the pupils were expected to learn; pupils were less successful in those lessons.
14. Teaching support staff working with pupils with SEN are committed and well trained. They provide skilled support to pupils through a range of programmes and intensive one to one teaching. The targets on pupils' individual education plans are precise and measurable.
15. The table below summarises the quality of teaching across the school. This shows a consistency in the teaching that maintains the quality of the previous inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	3 (8%)	16 (44%)	16 (44%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. Parents' views, expressed through the questionnaire and meeting, show general approval of the teaching in the school. They felt that some learning was disrupted by the poor behaviour of some pupils although this was not the case during the inspection. In one class the poor behaviour of a pupil was dealt with well by the teacher who was supported by the deputy headteacher; the rest of the class were able to complete the lesson successfully.

17. There is a policy for homework which is used effectively by most teachers to reinforce and extend the work in lessons. Parents felt that there was some inconsistency in the use of homework and the inspection findings would agree that in Year 3/4 the setting and marking of homework could be improved.
18. The pupils are acquiring and developing skills, knowledge and understanding and this is good by the end of Key Stage 2 when pupils do well in national tests despite their low attainment on entry to the school. They generally apply themselves well and are developing independent learning skills, although these need improving in Year 3/4. Overall pupils' views were that teachers were fair and tried to help them improve, providing good support with high expectations. Pupils felt very supportive of their teachers in Key Stage 1 with less certainty about this in Key Stage 2 where pupils were not critical but were more measured in their judgements. Pupils with SEN and EAL are learning successfully and this is linked to the good support and teaching throughout and the school's commitment to including all pupils wherever possible.
19. The school collects and analyses a considerable amount of assessment data about pupils. Their national test and other test and assessment information are recorded well for individual pupils. The coordinator for assessment is new in post but manages the collection and storage well and she is supported by the deputy headteacher. There needs to be improvement to the way this information is passed back to teachers so that they can use it more effectively in their planning for individual and groups of pupils, particularly those who are capable of attaining at higher levels. The current system of shared planning means that in some cases teachers do not adjust the plans using assessment information to meet the needs of pupils in their own classes. During lessons teachers do try to ensure that adjustments are made to lessons to ensure pupils progress appropriately. This is particularly well done in the Foundation Stage where teachers and teaching assistants work well to monitor pupils' progress and adjust lessons where necessary. The marking of pupils' work is efficient and up to date but does not focus on making clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work or set targets for improvement that they can work towards.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. It is enriched very well by extra activities. Accommodation is very good and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum prepares pupils well for their secondary education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school provides a wide range of visits and clubs which support pupils' development.
- The accommodation has been developed well over the last year and now provides a bright, spacious and stimulating learning environment.
- The statutory requirements for Key Stage 2 swimming are not fully met.

Commentary

20. The school has worked hard recently to improve the quality of its curriculum. There are detailed schemes of work in place for all subjects. Interesting activities are planned and teachers are trying to link work in different subjects to make their teaching more efficient.

The school is constantly reviewing the situation and making changes where necessary. Inadequate resources in the past mean that the school has not been able to fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for ICT. The situation has improved since the new ICT suites were installed a month ago and additional resources have been ordered to ensure that the requirements are met.

21. The school gives good support to pupils with special educational needs and those with first languages other than English. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is being developed and is currently satisfactory.
22. The Foundation Stage curriculum ensures that all the areas of learning are taught. A strong emphasis is placed on children learning through play and practical activities. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 benefit from a broad and balanced programme of work. The school's long-term planning ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education are covered systematically except for the requirement in the PE curriculum to teach swimming which is not met. There is a good programme of activities in personal, social and health education and citizenship. Opportunities are now provided for pupils to use ICT skills across the curriculum.
23. The school offers pupils a wide range of very good extra activities that enhance pupils' learning in creative, sporting and practical areas. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the chance to take part in a residential visit. The good programme of educational visits includes pupils of all ages. As well as supporting work in a range of subjects, these visits make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils participate eagerly and in good numbers in a wide selection of clubs outside lesson times. Pupils enjoy singing and many take part in local music festivals.
24. The activities include a typical range of sports and arts groups, but also offer more unusual pursuits such as karate, sewing and cycling proficiency.

Example of outstanding practice

The quality of extra-curricular activities and the school's steel band.

The school's steel band provides an excellent example of how an after school activity can develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. This began as an idea with the music teacher and grew in popularity amongst pupils across the school. Now the band plays regularly in the school for assemblies and other celebrations to the obvious delight of the other pupils. Their reputation has spread and the band performs at music festivals and events across the town and beyond. The pupils have not only developed their musical skills to a high level but their social and cultural awareness too

25. There have been successful efforts to improve the building and outdoor site since the last inspection. The school is now very spacious; the outdoor area is attractive and very well maintained. Plans are in place and funding has been provided to develop a wildlife area. This should have a positive impact on the teaching of science and personal and social education. Inside, the school is clean, bright and well maintained. Interesting and good quality displays of pupils' work around the school create a stimulating learning environment.
26. The range and quality of resources is satisfactory. They are well organised and accessible. The new ICT resources provided in each of the three teams in Key Stages 1 and 2 are making a significant contribution to improving standards and the quality of

learning in the subject. The school benefits from a good number of teaching assistants who provide effective support in lessons. As a result, pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported. The school is beginning to identify gifted and talented pupils. Plans are in place to ensure they are correctly identified and their needs met.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, the school cares for the pupils **very well**. The pastoral support provided is of a high order and pupils are happy and thrive well in a safe and secure environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff look after the pupils and support them very well, enabling them to grow in confidence and experience.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- Child protection and health and safety procedures are all securely in place.
- Children are well supported as they start school.
- Class councils provide pupils with a satisfactory opportunity to express their views.

Commentary

27. The pastoral support provided by the staff is very good and the pupils recognise and appreciate this. The school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure and can enjoy their school life. Staff provide a high level of caring support and the good relationships that exist make it easy for pupils to share their troubles with the staff, knowing they will get a sympathetic hearing. Such relationships significantly boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
28. Personal development of the pupils is well promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, individual support and through the high expectations that teachers have. There is also good support for their learning, including support for pupils with special educational needs and for those whose first language is not English.
29. The physical well-being of pupils has a high priority and child protection procedures are very good. The deputy headteacher has designated responsibility and has had extensive training. All staff receive regular training updates and are briefed as necessary on individual cases. Class teachers are aware of pupils' needs and any concerns are flagged up so that early support can be given. Health and safety is well managed. A governors' committee, including a health and safety specialist, carries out termly inspections. The school caretaker looks after day-to-day safety concerns competently and the building is well maintained and cleaned to a high standard. Risk assessment is undertaken for activities both in and out of school. Fire and other emergency procedures are all in place and effective.
30. Children starting in the Reception class enjoy a smooth and confident start to their school life because of the good support given by the staff. The recent move of the pre-school group into the school building should make this even better in the future. Pupils who start at times other than the normal are well supported by staff and by their classmates so that they become familiar with school routines as quickly as possible. Pupils in Year 6 get a satisfactory introduction to their secondary school with a taster day that enables them to find their way around before starting full time.

31. Although there is currently no formal school council, pupils are able to make their views known on issues via class councils and feel that their opinions are valued. Their views were recently canvassed during the appointment of the new headteacher and, additionally, pupils have been able to suggest ideas for playground improvements following the completion of the building work. The formation of a school council is planned for next term.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with parents and other schools and **good** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are happy with the education provided for their children.
- Information provided to parents is clear and well organised, particularly when important changes are planned.
- There are good links with the local community and the school premises are well used by many local organisations.
- The school has satisfactory links with other schools.
- The school has no regular procedures for taking parents' views into account.

Commentary

32. Only a small percentage of parents responded to the questionnaire or attended the pre-inspection meeting and discussions were held with other parents during the inspection to add to the views expressed previously. Overall, parents are supportive of the school. They find it friendly and easy to approach and they see their children liking school and being helped to settle in quickly. They believe their children are taught well and make good progress and they approve of the school's work ethic. The inspection findings support these positive views.
33. A few of the responses to the questionnaire said parents' views are not taken into account and they are not well informed. One in four was concerned about behaviour in the school and one in five was concerned about the leadership and management.
34. The school practises an 'open door' policy and welcomes parents' and carers' visits on any issues that they wish to discuss. Parents recognised this positive aspect at the meetings and through the questionnaire. In general, parents are happy to discuss day-to-day pastoral or academic issues concerning their child with the class teacher. There is no process established to formally seek parents' views on aspects of school life and a few parents felt that issues passed to senior management do not always get dealt with effectively. However, written evidence would suggest that the senior management team tries hard to inform parents about decisions. The recent changes required to the Key Stages 1 and 2 teams created by a member of staff leaving were explained to parents in detail in a series of letters home. Similarly, but less publicly, parents and carers whose children are victims of aggressive behaviour are written to with full explanations about the outcomes of any follow up to incidents. The parents or carers of the perpetrators are also

informed of the action taken, the school's expectations about the child's future behaviour and how this will be monitored.

35. The school provides parents with good levels of information. There is a good quality prospectus and governors' annual report and regular letters and newsletters are sent home. Curriculum details are provided for parents each term. Helpful information is provided to parents of pupils just starting in the school. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and include an additional page providing information on a pupil's achievement and how that might be compared to their capabilities.
36. The school has good links with the local community. The very good accommodation enables local clubs and groups to hire rooms for activities both during and after the school day. Through the local adult community college regular courses are run for parents. Pupils visit the local church and other landmarks within the town. Visitors from the church, other schools and local services regularly take Thursday assemblies. All these activities help to widen the pupils' experience and increase their self-confidence.
37. The school funds a part-time speech and language therapist who works with individual pupils and provides training for support staff. This is a valuable and important resource that provides much needed language development for pupils and support for their families. The school also funds a family counsellor who visits the school weekly and works discreetly with children and families requiring such support.
38. Links with other schools are satisfactory. Sporting links exist with other local primaries and matches are played. Within the 'cluster' of schools there is liaison between teachers on issues involving special needs and the Foundation Stage. The school provides good work experience for a number of secondary pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** and have a significant effect on the good standards achieved by pupils when compared to similar schools. The governance is satisfactory ensuring statutory policies are met. The governors maintain a clear strategic view of the school and its progress. There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school with more to come but there are good management systems in place that have effectively supported the staff through these issues.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the school provided by the strong partnership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is good and has a positive effect on standards.
- The wider leadership team structure involves many of the staff in important school improvement decisions.
- The subject coordinators tend not to be so effective in monitoring the progress and standards in their subjects.
- The management systems in place are good and performance management is carried out well.
- There have been high budget surpluses over the past two years because of the building project delaying spending and the over estimate by the LEA of the number of pupils likely to be on roll.

- The management of the budget is good and the large surplus of funds remaining from the building project will be reduced to an appropriate amount by the end of this financial year.

Commentary

Leadership

39. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have worked together for some years and provide effective leadership of the school. There have been several changes to leadership positions in the school following the promotion and departure of several staff and the headteacher plans to retire at the end of the summer term. The deputy headteacher has been appointed to the headship to begin in September this year. All these changes and proposed changes have the potential to create uncertainty and problems in a less well organised school. However, over the years the senior management team have developed a leadership structure that has held up well during this transition phase and the quality and standards have largely been maintained. The result of this leadership is that pupils achieve standards that compare very well with similar schools and Year 6 pupils this year would seem to be on track to maintain this record.
40. The leadership's philosophy is to involve teachers in the running of the school and improvement planning. As a result four teams have been created, Foundation Stage; Key Stage 1; Year 3/4; Year 5/6. Each team maintains some autonomy of management with team leaders participating in the senior management team which analyses and plans school improvement decisions. Each team leader has a deputy and each subject has a coordinator and there are coordinators for SEN and assessment. The strengths of the system are that with the departure of the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the Year 5/6 team leader and some other key personnel, the school still retains an effective leadership structure. Within the system new coordinators are supported by those more experienced.
41. The previous SENCO organised provision for pupils with special educational needs very well. The school has good procedures for the early identification and diagnosis of need. Information from assessment is used effectively to determine as early as possible those pupils who will benefit from intervention strategies and good additional support is provided. The deputy headteacher has maintained the SENCO role and provides strong support for the assessment coordinator and the inexperienced Year 3/4 team leader.
42. The main weakness of the existing system is the lack of opportunity provided to subject coordinators, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, to effectively lead improvements in their subjects. This is because the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is done by the deputy headteacher who feeds back to subject coordinators the improvements required. This is effective in improving teaching and learning and in providing information for performance management. However, it restricts the opportunities for subject coordinators to effect improvement in subjects. The subject coordinators demonstrate satisfactory leadership in terms of subject knowledge and understanding and they now require more opportunities to share these skills and monitor their subjects in practice.

Management

43. There are good management systems in place and team leaders and the deputy headteacher contribute to the performance management of all staff. This is undertaken regularly and appropriately and informs the whole school improvement strategy well. The school improvement plan sets out clear achievable targets for improvement and is used well to monitor progress. Staff meet under the chairmanship of the headteacher on a non-pupil training day in the spring term to discuss the school development plan and review how successful planned improvement has been. Decisions are also taken on the priorities for the coming year. The school is committed to inclusion and the management systems for behaviour and SEN are instrumental in ensuring that this is successful.

Governance

44. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The governors have developed a strategic view of the school's development and receive regular information through the committees on the progress of the improvement plan from the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior members of staff. The statutory requirements are met and there are clear aims and policies. They have provided good support through the major rebuilding phase. The governors review the performance data of the school but the systems for monitoring the work of the school are overly dependant on senior management support. The governors are not so aware of how policies are implemented and the effect they are having on standards. They undertake the performance review of the headteacher appropriately. A developing strength is that the articles of governance include a clause that restricts the chair of governors to hold the position for only three years. This means the expertise gained in this post is shared around the governors widening the experience of this important role.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,279,218	Balance from previous year	108,564
Total expenditure	1,170,654	Balance carried forward to the next year (estimate)	75,375
Expenditure per pupil	3,064		

45. The table above sets out the key financial indicators for the last financial year. The large carry over is well in excess of the three to five per cent of the budget that would indicate a well balanced budget effectively supporting improvement decisions. However, the school rebuilding programme delayed the spending priorities of the governors, most notably on ICT resources and they are now developing the resources throughout the school. The governors are well aware of this financial anomaly and expect the balance to be in line with national recommendations by the end of this financial year. Generally budget and finance matters are managed well by the finance committee and are directed at improvement plan priorities.

46. The school administration is good and the office staff provide a helpful, welcoming atmosphere to the school. Parents appreciate the work undertaken by the school office and find its staff helpful.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. The induction processes for children are very good, the leadership and management are good and the children's behaviour is also good. There is good teaching overall, very well supported by teaching assistants and as a result children achieve well. The curriculum is good. Provision is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to achieve the expected level by the end of Reception.
- Children are polite and well behaved.
- They take turns and share the resources provided.
- Children show some independence in their work.
- Teaching is good and this allows children to achieve well.

Commentary

47. Children have learnt how to behave in school and be part of a social grouping. They have positive attitudes to school and they behave well. They readily share items, take turns and play together. Children are eager to explore new learning and most are able to concentrate on the work being undertaken. They are able to move confidently around both the classroom and the school and they ask for assistance where necessary. The teachers and teaching assistants know the children well and they respond most appropriately to their individual needs. They provide children with a suitable mix of directed activities and independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, children are on course to be below the expected level by the end of Reception. However, their achievement is good.
- Some children have limited speaking skills.
- They enjoy handling books and developing their early reading skills.
- Children readily use pencils to produce simple writing, although few are yet able to produce more than a short phrase of text.
- Teaching is good, with teachers taking every opportunity to develop children's speaking skills.

Commentary

48. Children enjoy listening to stories and the teachers make good use of large story books to encourage this. Some children's speaking skills are less well developed. A number speak clearly, whilst others speak in single words, not possessing the vocabulary or the confidence to make longer contributions. Adults encourage children to develop these skills by talking to them regularly and making good use of questioning. Children enjoy looking at books and they are starting to recognise a number of words that they read to others. Teachers provide children with suitable opportunities to write and, whilst some find the task difficult, others successfully write their names and other simple words. A small number of children are showing increasing confidence in independently writing their news.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, children are likely to be below the expected level by the time they leave Reception. However, they achieve well.
- Children know a range of songs and rhymes that help to develop their understanding of number.
- Whilst most children can count up to ten and beyond, when working together, a small number are uncertain in relating a number of items to the appropriate numeral.
- Higher attaining children are beginning to add two numbers.
- Many children know a suitable range of simple mathematical vocabulary.
- Teaching is good, with a range of activities being provided to suit the needs of different children.

Commentary

49. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to count and use counting rhymes. Children also attempt to identify the correct number of items to match a numeral, but some find this difficult. Many children understand the concept of 'one more', but they are less confident with 'one less'. Some children are able to add two numbers. Many children have an appropriate vocabulary that allows them to talk about various concepts such as 'empty' and 'full' and 'big' and 'small', as well as to name basic two-dimensional shapes. Adults provide children with a variety of mathematical tasks and games and they give children the opportunities to develop their understanding with suitable practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are likely to reach the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. Their achievement is good.

- Children are developing their understanding of people and plants, as well as different places, although some have difficulties explaining their understanding.
- They show an increasing awareness of other religions.
- Children successfully carry out practical activities, such as making food items.
- Teaching is good. A suitable use of resources allows children to develop their understanding through a range of activities and learning experiences.

Commentary

50. The teachers give the children suitable activities and experiences that enable them to learn about the world. Children learn about the parts of the body and they know about the different senses. They are aware of different places, through following the journeys of 'Little Bear' and taking part in activities in the 'Travel Agency'. The children have learnt information about Hinduism and looked at the way of celebrating a wedding. A number of children are able to explain their knowledge with some confidence, whilst others, with more limited language skills, sometimes find understanding and explaining more difficult. However, the children keep careful pictorial records of the work they have done. Practical activities, such as preparing food, are a regular feature in Reception.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to reach the expected level by the time they leave Reception. They are achieving well.
- They use a range of large equipment with increasing dexterity and confidence.
- Most children are competent in controlling smaller items, such as pencils and scissors.
- They have sound control of their bodies in physical education lessons.
- Teaching is good, with many opportunities provided for children to develop their physical skills.

Commentary

51. Children benefit from the range of activities provided daily. Pencils, crayons, scissors, play dough and a variety of construction toys and large outdoor play-items are readily available and children use them with enthusiasm. Using play dough children make small animals and letters, they cut and stick items and thread beads onto a string. Children use outdoor equipment well, for instance using wheeled-vehicles confidently and skilfully. They further develop their physical skills during lessons in the hall. The teachers and teaching assistants, support them well, providing clear demonstrations and much encouragement. They are also most careful to ensure the children's safety at all times.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to achieve the expected level by the end of Reception.
- Most children have the appropriate control of pencils and paintbrushes, with which to develop their work.
- Children are presented with a variety of activities in music, painting and model making, to which they respond well.
- Children are particularly keen to tackle role-play activities.
- The good teaching, with a wide variety of activities being provided, allows them to achieve well.

Commentary

52. A suitable range of activities is provided, which the children undertake with enthusiasm. Children play instruments, sing songs and produce a variety of paintings and models. They show developing skills in all activities. Most children have suitable control of such things as paintbrushes and this greatly benefits the quality of their work. Children are especially happy to take part in activities in the 'Westland's Travel Agency' and they readily act as receptionist and traveller! The teachers and teaching assistants complement each other very well in supporting, encouraging and stimulating the children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the national tests in 2003 Key Stage 2 pupils attained standards that are above the national average but well above those achieved in similar schools.
- Attainment is below the national average at the end of Year 2.
- Reading levels are good and most pupils achieve the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Not enough Key Stage 2 pupils reach the higher Level 5 in reading because they are put off by inappropriate resources.
- Pupils are developing their speaking and listening skills well in Key Stage 1.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write in other areas of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils make good progress which is well above average when compared with schools nationally.
- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and works hard to improve standards.
- The needs of different ability groups are not sufficiently planned for in lessons.

Commentary

53. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with below average language and literacy skills. Teachers work hard to instil basic reading, phonic and grammatical skills, but these remain below average at the end of Year 2. This shows a decline since the previous inspection because standards on entry are lower. Pupils use a range of basic skills such as picture and textual clues when tackling unfamiliar words in their reading, but apart from higher attaining pupils, the majority of pupils struggle to apply their phonic knowledge to new words. This slows down their reading and restricts their understanding of what they read.
54. Pupils' restricted vocabulary and limited application of phonic skills also limit achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2. Although teachers through their questioning and through use of pupil 'talk partners' help develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, opportunities for drama and role-play are limited and too few structured opportunities for language development are built into teachers' planning. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to write in literacy lessons although opportunities for extended writing are not systematically built into the planning for other curriculum areas. Much of the recording in history, geography, religious education and science is done by drawings, which are sometimes labelled, but rarely in sustained pieces of writing.
55. Differences in approach to the teaching of writing are evident between the Foundation Stage, where much of pupils' recorded work is copy writing and Years 1 and 2, where pupils are expected to write more independently. Many pupils find this transition difficult, particularly in a mixed age class. However, pupils are being encouraged to develop joined up writing in Key Stage 1 and this is leading to improvements in writing and spelling which are slowly affecting the work of Key Stage 1 pupils.

56. The standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are currently in line with those expected nationally and in last year's tests were above. This maintains the standards observed during the previous inspection.
57. An impressive majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are reading at the nationally expected level. However, very few are reading at the higher level. Pupils show limited ability to compare and contrast the style of different authors, to predict events using inference and deduction or to analyse why characters behave in a certain way. Guided reading sessions are well established, but the school relies on a published guided reading scheme, which provides little interest or challenge to pupils, particularly the better readers. Pupils read a range of authors at home and can discuss their favourite authors. Not all are sufficiently encouraged or recognise that reading is a pleasurable as well as a functional activity. The school does not make best use of opportunities to make effective links between pupils' reading and reasons for writing.
58. Teaching of English is satisfactory across the school and there were examples of good and very good teaching maintaining the quality of the previous inspection. The very good teaching occurred when teachers were confidently using technical language, planning tasks that challenged all ability groups and took care to engage all pupils by providing realistic situations to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. For instance in a Year 6 literacy lesson on journalism the teacher ensured that boys would engage in the writing task by making sports journalism and football one of the examples. Many girls chose this aspect too!
59. There is a considerable database of information from assessment in English and pupils' progress is plotted and monitored to ensure it is maintained. Planning is detailed and consistent across the parallel classes but teachers do not always use the assessment information available on their pupils to adjust teaching to meet the different capabilities in their classes. Consequently pupils across the ability range are often required to complete broadly the same tasks.
60. Lessons proceed in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and pupils work together in a co-operative and mutually supportive way. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers work hard at making them interesting and motivating for their pupils. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high but some have lower expectations of both the quantity and quality of work to be achieved. Teaching support staff are used well in lessons and effectively help lower attaining pupils access the curriculum.
61. The co-ordinator for English is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She sets a good example through the quality of her own teaching. She has seen through a number of major changes in the way English is taught in the school over the last few years but she has not always had a clear overview of the effect of these changes on teaching and learning and her monitoring role is underdeveloped. Resources are broadly satisfactory, although the library is in the process of reorganisation and needs further development. There are insufficient sets of good quality children's fiction to extend opportunities in guided reading sessions.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Many opportunities are provided to use speaking and listening skills across the curriculum and this has been a particular focus in Key Stage 1. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in other areas of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 where the majority of the work in geography, history, science and religious education is recorded through labelled drawings rather than extended pieces of writing. In Years 3 to 6 there are examples of more extended writing in other subjects, particularly in science; however, this work could still be improved further. There was evidence of history and geography topics used as a focus for work in literacy lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at Year 2 and broadly average at Year 6. Standards are generally similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- Based on their prior attainment, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
- Some pupils in Year 2 are less confident in tackling work that is presented in the form of words.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is generally good, with teachers making particularly good use of mental sessions to develop pupils' skills and understanding.
- Teachers throughout Years 1 to 6 make limited use of assessment to provide work that is suited to pupils' differing needs.
- Pupils generally show good attitudes towards the subject.
- The role played by the coordinator is satisfactory.

Commentary

63. By Year 2, pupils are confident in handling numbers in relation to addition, but a minority are less secure in tackling subtraction exercises. Similarly, whilst many know the multiplication facts relating to 2, 5 and 10, others find this more difficult. Pupils successfully identify halves and quarters and most can name a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They make appropriate reference to right-angles when necessary. Many successfully measure using standard units. Pupils readily collect information, for example on favourite food items and they successfully display their findings in block graphs. However, many pupils have difficulties in understanding and answering questions that are written in the form of words and this is having a significant effect on standards.
64. By Year 6, most pupils confidently undertake work in all four aspects of number, including those involving decimals. They have a clear knowledge of place value to six figures and, although some find it difficult, most pupils are able to recall individual multiplication and division facts to 10x10. Many pupils have a clear understanding of fractions and they

readily identify equivalent fractions and find a fraction or percentage part of a whole number. Higher attainers can accurately measure angles in different shapes and they know the sum of the angles in a triangle. Most pupils are increasingly confident in tackling problem-solving activities, including where more than one step is required.

65. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are now carefully planned, based on the pattern of the National Numeracy Framework. Lessons start with lively mental sessions and teachers are most careful to involve all pupils. This develops pupils' enthusiasm for the lessons. Teachers make careful allowance for the provision of problem-solving activities, being aware that this is an area of weakness for some pupils and this clearly benefits their learning. Suitable assessment procedures are in place, but teachers do not always use the information gained to provide work that most adequately suits pupils' different needs, especially the higher attainers'. However, teachers generally have high expectations of the pupils and the activities provided, together with the good support given by both teachers and teaching assistants, allow pupils, including those with learning difficulties, to achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, whilst teachers provide a suitable range of instruction, learning activities and help, pupils are provided with limited opportunities to tackle more demanding work in written form. This limits pupils' confidence in attempting such work, as well as their understanding of mathematical terminology and means that whilst pupils are making satisfactory progress, they are not challenged to develop their skills further.
66. Pupils clearly enjoy the work, especially that relating to the mental sessions. They usually settle to their written tasks with interest and enthusiasm, they work well with other pupils, when required and most make suitable efforts to complete their tasks. They are generally well behaved and this enables them to concentrate well and make suitable progress. Just occasionally, when they are not fully involved in the lesson, a small number of pupils become inattentive. Most pupils take care with the appearance of their books and take a pride in their work. Whilst some teachers provide detailed comments of encouragement and advice in their marking, others provide little more than ticks. Opportunities are then missed to help pupils improve their work further.
67. The coordinator supports his colleagues appropriately when required and his leadership is satisfactory. He sometimes monitors the work being produced by the pupils and he has some opportunities to observe lessons in other classes and to see the work being undertaken. The link coordinators are beginning to develop their role within mathematics and they are currently looking at ways to further improve standards in Years 1 and 2, being aware of the lower standards currently being achieved there.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. The basic skills of numeracy are appropriately taught in mathematics lessons. These skills are also suitably developed in subjects such as design and technology and science. However, little use is currently made of ICT to enhance work in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the age of 11 are in line with the national average, but well above those in schools of a similar type.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6.
- Emphasis is given to the development of pupils' investigative skills.
- Pupils enjoy the subject.
- Assessment is insecure and does not help teachers match activities to pupils' ability.

Commentary

69. In the 2003 teacher assessments, Year 2 pupils' standards were well below average, a reduction since the last inspection. However, this indicates satisfactory progress given their well below average attainment levels on entry to the school. An examination of pupils' current work indicates that very little is recorded and that work is insufficiently challenging for the Year 2 pupils and those of above average ability. Discussions with pupils reveal that they know much more than their written work suggests. The lack of written work means that teachers have very little evidence on which to base their assessments. As a result, they tend to be over cautious and so the school's results do not accurately reflect the standards attained. Current Year 2 pupils' knowledge is close to the national average.
70. In the 2003 national tests, Year 6 pupils attained average results. However, standards are well above those of schools of a similar type maintaining the standards of the last inspection. Year 6 pupils have done a lot of work in the time available and they have taken care with its presentation. They have well developed investigative skills. Their written work contributes well to the development of their literacy skills and they have frequent opportunities to use their numeracy skills. Pupils make good progress as soon as they enter Year 3 and this continues through Years 4, 5 and 6.
71. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall, but good in Years 5 and 6. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall because expectations of pupils' written work are not high enough and the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they could. However, the teaching is very successful in stimulating pupils' interest and gives them a real enthusiasm for the subject. All teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. They plan their lessons carefully, providing interesting activities, which pupils enjoy. Not enough thought is given to providing different levels of challenge in the work set. Consequently the oldest and most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and achieve less than they could. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, so that they provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. This leads to positive attitudes and behaviour in the vast majority of the pupils. Questioning is used well by teachers to find out what pupils already know and to get them to apply what they know to new situations. Teachers plan interesting activities, linking them to continuing work in other subjects whenever possible. Teachers are aware of the need to make greater use of ICT in science lessons and plan to do so now the computer suites are operational. The subject also contributes positively to pupils' social, moral and personal development.
72. Assessment is being developed, but, as yet, is insufficiently rigorous and is not generally used by teachers to help them plan their work or to set individual pupil targets. The quality of marking is variable. All teachers mark work frequently, but comments are generally positive rather than evaluative. Consequently, pupils are not clear about what they have done well or how they can improve.

73. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear vision for the future development of the subject, particularly the environmental area. He is conscientious and enthusiastic and has introduced some successful new assessment strategies recently. He knows these now need to be extended and applied throughout the school in order to raise standards. He has significantly improved resources to ensure that teachers have everything they need to plan an interesting range of investigations. Monitoring of teaching and learning is usually undertaken by the deputy headteacher as part of performance management and is not done on a regular basis by the co-ordinator. This means that the coordinator is not fully aware of the affect improvement initiatives are having on teaching and learning. However, questioning skills and investigations have been identified as areas requiring improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards which are below average for their age.
- Pupils' progress has improved since the opening of the new ICT suites.
- Assessment is not yet in place and therefore does not help teachers plan their work.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

74. Standards in ICT appear to have declined since the previous inspection. This is due largely to the lack of availability of modern equipment during the rebuilding phase of the school. Pupils now have full access to suites of computers located in each of the three teams in Key Stages 1 and 2. There are also good resources available to Foundation Stage pupils. Throughout the school standards are improving and pupils enjoy their lessons in the ICT suites.
75. Standards in Year 6 are below expectations. Pupils work enthusiastically, both independently and in pairs. They share ideas and information and are quick to help one another. Year 6 use the Internet confidently for research purposes. They are able to save, retrieve, print and word process their work on the new computers. They can enter information onto databases and produce graphs. However, the lack of reliable computers over the last few years and lack of access to computers during the building work means that Year 6 pupils have not experienced the full curriculum. They cannot use formulae on spreadsheets or produce multimedia presentations. They do not yet have the skills needed to combine text and graphics from a range of sources. Pupils have not had the chance to develop skills in control, nor have they used data-logging equipment.
76. Standards in Year 2 are also below expectations because there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge due the lack of resources. Pupils are making good progress on the new computers now they are working. They word process their work competently, changing size, colour and layout. They combine text and graphics to make their work look more interesting. Pupils use an art program effectively to draw pictures and patterns, changing the colours and methods of applying them. They also know how to access the Internet.

77. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge and are able to teach their lessons confidently and clearly. Their planning is detailed and work is frequently linked to ongoing work in other subjects. Behaviour management is secure and pupils know exactly how they are expected to behave and respond well. Pupils whose behaviour can be challenging like using computers and they generally try hard to complete their tasks. Teaching assistants are well briefed by teachers and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
78. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the subject in the school. She has achieved a lot since she took on the role in September and is having a positive impact on teaching. She has produced a detailed action plan which identifies appropriate areas for development and has organised in-service training for all staff in order to further develop their skills and confidence. She has yet to adopt an effective assessment strategy and use the information to improve standards.
79. Provision has improved significantly this year. The school now has a computer area for each of the three teams, Year 1/2, Year 3/4 and Year 5/6. There are also computers available to the reception pupils. This gives pupils greater access to computers and a better range of software to use. Each class has at least one lesson a week in the appropriate area. This means that new skills can be taught to the whole class. The co-ordinator is updating the scheme of work to ensure that the statutory requirements are fully met.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. Pupils are now using their ICT skills to support a range of subjects. They draw graphs and enter information onto databases. They practise their literacy skills as they produce word-processed work. They carry out research to support work in science, history and geography. Pupils produce some interesting artwork on the computers.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

81. No **history** lessons and only one **geography** lesson were observed during the inspection and the scrutiny of work yielded very little evidence and so overall judgements on standards and provision are not possible. The newly adopted 'joint' lessons with other subjects are an innovative attempt to improve curriculum coverage and there is evidence of both history and geography being planned for. It would appear from the scrutiny of teachers' plans that all pupils, whatever their age or ability do the same work and that there is insufficient focus on the progressive development of pupils' understanding and skills. In the geography lesson observed in a mixed Year 1/2 class the subject matter was too abstract for the younger pupils and little was learned.
82. **Geography** has been a focus in the school development plan for the last two years but due to the absence through illness of the coordinator initiatives have been delayed. The new coordinator has only recently picked up the role and is in the process of reviewing the subject with senior colleagues.

83. The **history** co-ordinator has completed a scheme of work in her subject area but there has been insufficient monitoring of its implementation. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of the local museum to provide artefacts and visitors to supplement lessons.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards have improved in Years 3 to 6 since the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils now have a sound knowledge of a range of different faiths.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the need to be tolerant of others.
- The attitudes of pupils towards the subject are generally good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although little use is currently made of assessment to provide more challenging activities when appropriate.
- The role played by the coordinator is satisfactory.

Commentary

84. By Year 2, pupils are familiar with three major world faiths: the Christian, Hindu and Islamic faiths. Pupils understand that religions have various ceremonies and special occasions and they can describe in detail why Easter is so important to Christians, Holi is important to Hindus and Eid-ul-fitr is important to Muslims. Pupils recognise that there are both differences and similarities in people's life-styles and they readily compare Christian and Hindu weddings. Pupils understand the need for belonging and they recognise the importance of their own families in this regard. They are also aware of the need for friends and they confidently tell the story of Ruth and Naomi from the Bible.
85. By Year 6, pupils are suitably informed about a number of world religions, successfully discussing, for instance, many aspects of the Christian and Jewish faiths. Pupils identify the Bible and the Torah as books special to these religions and they recognise the importance of religious figures such as Jesus and Moses. Pupils are also able to discuss the different parts of the church and the synagogue. Pupils in Year 3/4 are aware of the need for rules in our lives and they recognise and explain the importance of the Ten Commandments to the Jews. Pupils in Year 5/6 identify how Christian practices have changed since Tudor times. Pupils are aware of the need for love and care, in their dealings with others and they recognise the importance of sharing. Pupils, throughout the school, clearly understand the need to be tolerant of other people's dress, lifestyle and ritual.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with teachers now showing more confidence than at the time of the last inspection. Lessons throughout the school are suitably planned and interesting ideas and information are presented to pupils. Appropriate time is also now allowed for the subject. The teachers have sound subject knowledge and through suitable activities, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding. The teachers make appropriate use of religious artefacts when necessary and they often ask

suitably thought-provoking questions. However, on occasions they tend to ask for answers from the same pupils and others are less able to contribute. Those who answer often produce most sensible responses. Fewer opportunities are provided, though, for pupils to further extend these thoughts and ideas through tackling more challenging activities, such as undertaking more work in extended writing.

87. Many pupils are keen to provide a variety of thoughtful answers and observations during lessons, although those who are less involved tend to lose some attention. However, they work well with other pupils when necessary and most try hard to complete the tasks set. Discussions with pupils show good attitudes towards the subject. They generally find the study of other religions interesting. When producing writing and illustrations most pupils take care with the presentation of their work, although a number are sometimes less careful.
88. The coordinator provides suitable support for colleagues, when necessary and her leadership role is satisfactory. She has assembled a folder of pupils' work to illustrate the standards being achieved, although she does not yet have the chance to observe lessons to see for herself the work being covered. Through her meetings with the link coordinators, however, she has been able to identify the need for teachers to improve and make better use of, assessment, to provide more challenging activities for pupils when appropriate. The opportunity for pupils to tackle more extended writing activities is seen as one way of doing this.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

89. Only two lessons were observed in each of the following subjects: art and design, PE and music and none in design and technology (DT). It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in these four areas. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work and looked at planning and pupils' work.
90. The two **art and design** lessons observed and evidence from displays around the school indicate that standards in art are satisfactory across the school. The co-ordination of the subject has just changed but schemes of work are in place along with a resources database. Certain elements such as painting are covered well, although there was insufficient evidence of observational drawing, textiles and three-dimensional work. Art is used well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. Where 'joint' subject lessons are planned the coordinator has yet to ensure that the links are meaningful and valid although is aware of the need to audit coverage of the curriculum in order to ensure the progressive development of discrete subject skills across the school.
91. Staff are generally confident and enthusiastic when teaching art and design and this results in positive attitudes from pupils. An after-school art club is led by a parent.
92. In **design and technology**, pupils enjoy their work and find the activities interesting. They have the chance to work with the full range of materials specified in the National Curriculum. Pupils' designing and making skills improve as they move through the school. At the ages of seven and 11 pupils' work is of an average standard. Teachers often link work to continuing activities in other subjects, for example in art, geography, history and science. Teachers' planning is detailed and activities are interesting. However, linking work to other subjects sometimes means that skills are not developed in

a logical order. It also leads to very similar work being undertaken in different year groups, for example houses in Years 1 and 2, Tudor houses in Years 3 and 4 and castles in Years 5 and 6. Where this happens, not enough thought has been put into ensuring that the skills and knowledge required are at different levels, depending on the age and ability of the pupils. There is sound leadership and management of the subject and a relevant action plan for its future development.

93. During the inspection only two lessons were seen in **physical education** and no overall judgement is made. However, in the lesson seen in Year 1/2, pupils showed satisfactory control and coordination in carrying out various games activities. In particular they showed suitable accuracy and skill in throwing and catching. In the lesson seen in Year 5/6 in dance, pupils showed appropriate 'robotic' movements when developing a sequence to music. The overall quality of teaching was good, as was the pupils' behaviour. The teachers took care to coach and demonstrate the different skills and this clearly benefited pupils' learning. The school currently makes no provision for swimming and statutory requirements are not being met for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Planning for the subject shows that all other areas of work are tackled during the year. Provision is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities that are well supported by pupils.
94. In the two **music** lessons observed teaching was good overall and standards satisfactory. The progress pupils were making in the Year 5/6 class was very good and this was linked to the very good teaching of the music specialist. Judging the work seen in these lessons, the detailed scheme of work and the quality of singing and music in assemblies and with the peripatetic teachers, standards are at least satisfactory throughout the school. Resources are adequate but some of the chime bars and percussion instruments are at the end of their useful life. ICT resources are underdeveloped and unsatisfactory. The rebuilding has provided the school with the resource of a separate music room able to house one class at a time. This is an excellent resource although ventilation is poor which makes the air stuffy and can adversely affect pupils' work. The subject is well led by a capable and knowledgeable co-ordinator.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

95. No lessons were observed and so no judgements can be made about overall provision. Information was obtained in discussions with staff and pupils. The school sees this area as an important part of its work. There is a good programme of activities including work on diet, health, sex and drugs education and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and interact with others. It is well supported by visits from outside agencies and by the staff the school pays for to provide counselling and speech therapy services.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3

How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).