

INSPECTION REPORT

WYBURNS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Nevern Road, Rayleigh

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115302

Headteacher: Mervyn Pocock

Lead inspector: Chrissie Pittman

Dates of inspection: 17th - 19th May 2004

Inspection number: 258521

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	234
School address:	Nevern Road Rayleigh Essex
Postcode:	SS6 7PE
Telephone number:	(01268) 770 914
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Willis
Date of previous inspection:	26 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wyburns Primary School is situated in the town of Rayleigh. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate catchment area, which is a mixture of owner-occupied homes and social housing although a significant number of pupils also come from further afield. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school is about the same size as most other primary schools. There are 234 boys and girls, with slightly more boys than girls. The large numbers of pupils in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 mean that the school also has split age classes in these year groups. The population is mixed and most pupils are white British. The percentage of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is very low. The percentage of pupils thought to be eligible for free school meals is average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is well below average but the number of pupils identified as needing extra help and for whom additional money is provided is at the expected level. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average. Pupils' mobility is high. Many children who are at the school in Year 2 leave before Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18275	Chrissie Pittman	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Citizenship
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23354	Evelyn Adams	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs (SEN)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is an **effective** school which continues to improve. All pupils progress well; achievement is good in most subjects. Pupils are keen to learn and relate very well to each other, in what parents describe as 'a very good family atmosphere'. Most of the teaching is either good or very good. Any minor weaknesses are dealt with efficiently. The school addresses the needs of all its pupils effectively and is highly inclusive. There is a good learning ethos and pupils' personal qualities are developed well. The headteacher's leadership is strong and other senior managers are quick to identify and tackle any weaknesses. Strong leadership and management have kept the school on an upward track. The school cares well for its pupils, has a very strong partnership with its parents and offers **good value** for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards have risen in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The headteacher provides clear and purposeful direction for the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour towards each other are very good. The school is excellent at promoting good relationships, including racial harmony.
- Parents have very good links with the school and pupils are cared for well.
- With the exception of English and mathematics, assessment is not used well enough to plan the curriculum.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning by most subject co-ordinators.

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in 1999 and its response to the key issues raised then has been positive. Pupils' standards have improved in ICT and religious education. Higher attaining pupils are now well challenged in English and mathematics and are achieving higher than average standards. All pupils are now better challenged to work independently. Leadership and management are more effective in that the governing body is more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is better longer-term strategic planning. The school still has not focused enough on raising standards by consistently assessing and monitoring teaching and learning; this is good in English and mathematics, but is insufficiently developed in other subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Pupils achieve well. Most children when they enter the school are attaining standards in line with what is expected for their age. When they leave aged 11 pupils' attainment is above average overall. This is good achievement. When pupils' results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools, standards are above average overall despite difficult circumstances; such as the large numbers of pupils who move schools and the increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) who join the school.

The school exceeded its challenging targets in English and science last year but just missed them in mathematics. The trend in the school's results has been broadly in line with the national picture

over a number of years but has recently improved significantly. This is largely the result of the successful targeting and monitoring of pupils. Overall, there is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls, although girls achieve slightly better results in English and boys achieve better results in mathematics. **Pupils' personal qualities are developed very well.** Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour in and out of the classroom is very good. Attendance is good and lessons start on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is predominantly good throughout the school with many examples of very good teaching. Pupils learn effectively and make good progress because very good relationships, interesting activities and attention to individual needs underpin their learning. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6 where teachers are particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils, regardless of what is being taught. There is also very good teaching in ICT and mathematics where a positive ethos for learning is always created and good planning produces interesting lessons in most year groups. Teaching of pupils with SEN is particularly effective. Teaching is less effective in some lessons throughout the school where assessment is not used effectively to plan what is taught next. The curriculum is broad and balanced with an appropriate range of learning opportunities, which meets the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. There is a good range of activities outside the school day to enrich the curriculum. The school provides well for the health, safety, care and welfare of its pupils. Support, advice and guidance for pupils are good. They feel valued and are involved well in their learning. The school works well in the community and very effectively with its parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is good. He knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them. Senior managers are appropriately focused on improving standards and supporting all pupils but subject coordinators are not as effective as they should be in monitoring teaching and learning. The governance of the school is sound. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses, monitor the school's performance appropriately and ensure that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school and have no significant concerns. A small minority of pupils feel that other children do not always behave well. All the parents and pupils interviewed thought that the school deals with rare incidences of oppressive behaviour very effectively. Inspectors saw no occurrences of bullying during the inspection. Most of the pupils interviewed think that the school is good and they are very happy with it.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve how teachers use assessment to plan what is taught next.
- Define how teachers use marking to help pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Develop the monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve **well** throughout the school. Standards are **above the national average in English and science**. They are **average in mathematics**. Standards range from below to above average in different year groups depending on the proportion of higher and lower attaining pupils and when they joined the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- The above average standards in English and science have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Standards obtained in the national tests in mathematics last year were lower than in English and science.

Commentary

1. Children start school with average levels of attainment. When they leave aged 11 pupils' attainment, overall, is above the national average. Standards in mathematics are lower than in English and science and are in line with the national average. Consequently, the challenging targets set were just missed in mathematics but surpassed in English and science. These results are in line with those of similar schools for mathematics and above average in English and science. The trend in the school's results has been better than average at age seven and broadly in line with the national picture at age 11.

Foundation Stage

2. At the time of the inspection there were 19 children on roll. Standards on entry are generally in line with those expected for children of this age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well during their time in the Reception class because of the good teaching and the interesting, relevant curriculum which meets their particular needs.

School results in national tests

3. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in the Year 2 national tests were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools results were average. What the table does not show is the notable difference in the results achieved by the higher attaining pupils in reading and writing with many more pupils reaching the higher level in reading than writing. Girls are doing better in writing and boys are doing better in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	85 (100)	84 (84)
writing	85 (97)	81 (86)
mathematics	97 (97)	90 (90)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In the Year 6 national tests, below, most pupils achieved above average results in English and science and average results in mathematics. More able pupils did better in English and

science than the national picture but fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5 in mathematics. What the table does not indicate is the good progress made by these pupils, since their tests in Year 2. This year in 2004, there is every indication that pupils will maintain the progress made and sustain the above average standards in English and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	88 (70)	75 (75)
mathematics	79 (70)	73 (73)
science	91 (67)	87 (86)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards seen in lessons

- Pupils achieve well in most year groups. Currently standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average for both seven and 11-year-olds. Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Conversely, in science, standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils' attainment at the higher Level 5 is above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Standards are also above average in ICT, art and physical education. They are broadly average in the few lessons seen in other subjects.
- Teachers give good emphasis to the teaching of vocabulary needed in other subjects and, many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. The emphasis the school places on reading is reflected in the pupils' enthusiasm for books. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to record events and information in history, geography and religious education. The standard of written work in these subjects is good. The use of pupils' mathematics skills in other subjects is good. Incidental use occurs frequently, for instance, the use of measuring skills or understanding of graphs in a science experiment. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. Pupils make good gains in the development of their ICT skills in science, history and geography.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good and parallels the achievement of all pupils. They are supported effectively in their learning by both teachers and teaching assistants. The school's strong, shared commitment to inclusion is realised in the good provision for pupils with SEN. As a result, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and their individual education plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are **very good**. Personal development is **good**. Provision is **very good** for pupils' moral and social development, **good** for their cultural development and **satisfactory** for their spiritual development. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour throughout the school is very good and there have been no exclusions for many years.
- The very good attitudes and relationships of pupils have a significant impact on the progress they are able to make.
- Pupils respond very well to the responsibilities of living in the school community and develop a good awareness of traditions in other cultures.

- The school has taken effective action to improve attendance from its below average levels last year.

Commentary

8. The high standards of behaviour reported at the last two inspections have been maintained and there continue to be no exclusions. This is a notable achievement for the school, particularly as its intake is average and includes a small number of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In the Reception class, even with a new teacher, the children quickly learn the behaviour expected of them. Teachers and other staff from Year 1 onwards have very effective strategies to remind pupils of how they should behave and pupils are motivated very successfully by the use of praise and rewards. They are very polite and friendly to visitors. Pupils behave very well at lunchtime because they are well supervised, have plenty of things to do and are involved in making further improvements to the facilities available. Parents and pupils are confident that there is very little bullying and when a rare incident occurs it is dealt with immediately. There have been no racist incidents and the few pupils not of white British background are fully included in pupils' games and activities.
9. Pupils like coming to school because other children are friendly, they enjoy finding out new things in lessons and teachers treat them fairly. In the Reception class, the children are making good progress in listening to their new teacher and are very successfully motivated to learn through the interesting topic of animals. In many lessons seen, pupils of all abilities in Years 1 to 6 showed high levels of enthusiasm for learning and very good relationships with adults and each other. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils worked very well in their groups on writing sentences with capital letters in the correct places and were very proud and keen to show off their work. Similarly in a Years 5/6 numeracy lesson, pupils worked very hard and effectively in pairs to measure and draw angles in a challenging mathematics game. A notable feature of the inspection was the way in which all pupils sustained their attention and concentration throughout a period of very warm weather. Attitudes and relationships have improved further since the last inspection and make an important contribution to pupils' good achievement.
10. Pupils' personal development has also improved since the last inspection and is greatly fostered by the strong family atmosphere in the school which has been successfully created and sustained by the long-serving headteacher. Pupils know they are valued as individuals and so make good progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem. The open-plan design of the accommodation obliges them to learn to be aware of others and understand, for example, the impact that any noise or disruption might have on adjacent classes. Staff encourage the pupils from the youngest age to contribute to decision-making in the school and pupils in Year 6 take leading roles on the school council.
11. Parents appreciate the 'buddy' system which provides opportunities for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to look after younger ones. Pupils celebrate their own culture, for example St George's Day, but also festivals and traditions from other cultures, such as Chinese New Year. They raise funds on their own initiative for a Romanian orphanage. Provision for multicultural education is strong in the Reception class and continues well throughout the school; for example, pupils in Year 4 were eager to learn about the Hindu faith and taste some of the vegetarian foods that Indians eat. Spiritual development is promoted well when visitors from a church group come to take an assembly but opportunities for reflection are sometimes missed in the assemblies led by school staff. Pupils experience moments of spiritual awareness at times in lessons when they are excited about what they are learning, but these occasions are not planned for.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.5%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.2
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.

12. Attendance last year was below the national average, partly because a very small number of pupils were frequently absent and partly because parents took their children away for a significant number of term-time holidays. The school has successfully and rigorously implemented a range of procedures which have raised attendance rates so far this year to 94.5 per cent. The attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good and the new temporary Education Welfare Officer is providing effective support for the very few families who still find ensuring regular attendance difficult. Punctuality has also improved through stricter procedures, the support of parents in operating two 'walking buses' to school and the very welcoming and productive atmosphere at the start of the school day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **good**. Pupils achieve well because they are taught **well**. The curriculum is **sound**; opportunities to enrich the curriculum outside of the classroom are **good**. Pupils are **well** cared for and the school's links with parents are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good overall**. Assessment is used well to respond to pupils' individual needs in English and mathematics. However, it is insufficiently developed in other subjects because whole school procedures have not yet been fully established in every subject and teachers do not sufficiently plan their future lessons on what has already been learnt.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is of a consistently high quality, characterised by high expectations and a thorough understanding of how children learn.
- All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and positively reinforce good learning.
- Teachers usually use time and resources well to develop pupils' learning.
- Pupils with SEN are very well taught; teaching assistants support them effectively.
- Work is not well matched to pupils' capability in a few lessons.
- There is an inconsistent use of assessment to guide teaching and learning in some subjects.
- Teachers' marking is sometimes cursory and does not help pupils understand how to improve their work.

Commentary

13. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching and learning between the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 and the overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection it was evident that a few teachers were not relaxed enough to teach to their normal standard. Both parents and pupils feel that teachers help the children to learn effectively.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	11 (28.2%)	20 (51.3%)	8 (20.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The teaching is good overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6 where teachers are particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils, regardless of what is being taught. Teaching is also very good in ICT, English, religious education and mathematics in Years 1, 3, and 4, although there is good teaching and a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms.

Characteristics of teaching and learning

15. There are certain features that are common to many of the very good lessons and they underpin the good quality of learning. These include high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which ensure that pupils concentrate on the task. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils trust the adults in the school and consequently tackle work with confidence and good self-esteem. The start of the most successful lessons is particularly significant. The beginning of the lesson is usually brisk, lively and challenging; it immediately makes pupils think. In mathematics, where many of these lessons are found, the teacher's interest and good subject knowledge are used to set the scene and engage pupils in thinking about the objectives of the lesson. Teaching is less effective in a few lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5/6 where work is sometimes not well matched to the pupils' ability or where outcomes are not assessed rigorously enough to plan what pupils should learn next.
16. Teachers' high expectations and good questioning enable pupils to think carefully and develop their understanding. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5, the pupils who had special educational needs were obviously confident when challenged to think by the high quality questioning of the teacher. A sense of fun was inspired by the teacher and the lesson encapsulated a love of learning among the pupils. All achieved the objective.
17. Once teachers have gained pupils' attention, they keep up the momentum, often with a series of short, focused tasks, so that there is no opportunity for concentration to flag. This was demonstrated in a very good ICT lesson in Year 4 where the teacher encouraged pupils to take their learning one step further by challenging them to investigate different ways of defining musical instruments on a database. The pupils' contributions were valued and good opportunities provided for all pupils to take responsibility for their work. Usually there is little need for obvious management of pupils; behaviour is very good and there are very good relationships based on mutual respect between pupils and teachers. When necessary, however, teachers are quick to deal with any straying of attention or lack of effort. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and say that the teachers do well to help them become mature and responsible.
18. Lessons usually provide a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils have the confidence to try things out, attempt an ambitious answer or put forward an opinion, secure in the knowledge that the reactions of both the teacher and fellow pupils will be supportive. Most teachers use resources well in their lessons. In a Year 4 religious education lesson, on why Hindus are vegetarians, Indian food was used inventively to make pupils' learning more meaningful; however, this is not always the case. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 1/2 the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged and soon lost interest in the task.

Other strengths

19. Classrooms are usually well organised and include colourful displays of work. Teachers often teach from their strengths for example by swapping classes to teach music and ICT.
20. There is a fully inclusive approach to teaching. All pupils including those with SEN and higher and lower attaining pupils are given the support they need. Pupils with SEN receive good support in class and they are well supported by teaching assistants to enable them to understand and make good progress. Teachers set tasks to match their needs in literacy and numeracy lessons and individual targets on individual action plans are precise, but lesson planning does not always show what particular targets pupils with SEN are working towards in the lesson. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality and provide effective guidance on dealing with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Teachers throughout the school know these pupils well and use this knowledge to effectively provide for their needs. There is also effective support within the class from well-briefed teaching assistants.
21. Teaching assistants work well with small groups or individuals and focus on developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, in a small minority of whole class lessons teachers do not match work accurately enough to pupils' individual learning needs when there is no targeted, additional support. This slows pupils' access to the task. The teaching in the set groups is well planned, sensitively delivered and effective. For example, the individual education plans of pupils with SEN are used effectively so that their learning in the targeted groups is very well focused and sensitively delivered to ensure they achieve their full potential. The progress of all these pupils is closely monitored and support deployed appropriately.

Assessing pupils' progress

22. Assessment is good in English, mathematics, the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs, but is still underdeveloped in other areas.
23. The progress of children in the Reception class and of pupils with special educational needs is assessed well and the key staff are clear about what these children have to do to reach the next step in learning. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 are being guided effectively by the senior management team to keep good records of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and to track attainment against targets. Nevertheless, apart from Year 6, teachers' knowledge of National Curriculum levels is not sufficiently secure, with the result that there were discrepancies last year between teachers' assessments in Year 2 and the national test results.
24. In the best lessons, staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work and they are told how they can improve, but the marking of work by some teachers is not always as helpful. Most teaching assistants make useful notes on what pupils can do. Some teachers' marking of work is not always consistent or useful in helping pupils to know what they need to do next. Although teachers keep notes of what pupils have done in other subjects, there are no formal whole-school systems of assessment for these which can influence the planning of the curriculum, for example, in science.
25. The statutory test results are very thoroughly analysed and targets set so staff have a clear picture of different groups of pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. However, although there is a clear understanding of the purpose and use of assessment and teachers' plans show that they will assess learning in the light of the objectives they have set, this data is not used rigorously enough to plan subsequent work in other subjects. The school is aware of shortcomings in assessment, which is not as strong as it was at the last inspection and is appropriately planning to review some arrangements as part of its participation in the Primary Leadership Programme.

Timing

26. In some of the satisfactory lessons teachers spent too long talking to the pupils and, although the pupils listened well and made steady progress, the time left in the lesson for them to work productively was too short. In a number of these lessons the conclusion was rushed, limiting pupils' capacity for learning.

Homework

27. Most teachers set homework and pupils usually complete it conscientiously. However, in the questionnaires they completed and at the parents' meeting some parents were not clear as to when homework was expected to be done. Teachers differ in their requirements regarding the quantity and quality of the work expected.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with learning opportunities that meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. Opportunities for further learning in activities outside lessons are **good**. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- The school is committed to ensuring all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- There are good opportunities to enrich learning outside the school day and to extend pupils' interests.
- Participation in sport is good.

Commentary

28. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides a sound basis for pupils' learning. Plans for literacy and numeracy are based on the national strategies and those for other subjects follow the National Curriculum guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This ensures skills are taught progressively and all teachers in each year group plan their work to cover the curriculum appropriately.
29. There is an extensive range of activities before and after school and during lunchtimes. There are various sporting activities and pupils have the chance to represent the school in many of these. There is also good participation in the arts and in sport. Pupils' social skills are well developed and this results in very good behaviour and attitudes.
30. The headteacher is committed to running a school where every individual matters and has an equal opportunity to succeed. This is achieved by active intervention through catch-up programmes and the good support provided by teachers and teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils with SEN have full access to the curriculum. This supports their progress well. Group work is sensitively matched to pupils' abilities and teaching assistants support them effectively. The good provision for SEN has been maintained since the previous inspection. It complies with the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice. All pupils on the special needs register have well written individual action plans highlighting their individual needs.
31. There are ample well-trained and experienced teachers. They know how to use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well to raise standards and have also kept abreast of developments in other subjects, including the use of ICT. Teaching assistants are adequate in number, well trained and appropriately deployed for the pupils to gain maximum benefit from their contribution.

32. Accommodation is satisfactory. Staff continue to work very successfully to overcome the difficulties of teaching in the open-plan classrooms. Parents are rightly full of praise at the way in which teachers create a calm and focused learning environment where pupils learn to behave quietly and appreciate their fellow pupils. Satisfactory improvements have been made to the accommodation since the last inspection, such as the creation of a separate classroom for Year 6 and a computer suite and there are appropriate plans for further developments, such as the erection of internal walls in the area serving the youngest pupils. The outside areas continue to be a good resource for learning and play. Resources for the curriculum are good.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, support and guidance is **good**. Pupils are involved well in the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for health and safety have improved since the last inspection and are now good.
- Parents are very pleased with the way their children are helped to settle in and guided to make good progress during their time in the school.
- Pupils feel that their ideas are listened to and valued.

Commentary

33. Governors have successfully tackled the key issue at the last inspection to ensure that formal procedures for monitoring, recording and reporting matters of health and safety are securely in place. The policy is regularly reviewed and updated, risk assessments are carried out and premises and incidents are regularly checked. Members of the governors' working party have significant expertise in health and safety and teachers pay good attention to health and safety in lessons. Midday supervisors and other appropriate staff have had training in first aid and good care is taken of pupils at lunchtime. The designated teacher for child protection is extremely experienced and ensures that staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. The result is a safe and secure school in which individual pupils' well-being is paramount.
34. Parents are extremely satisfied with the arrangements for when their children start school. The reception staff go out of their way to provide an induction programme for new children, based on parents' wishes, visits to pre-school settings and home visits by request. They gather information about the new pupils in profile booklets annotated with parents' and children's comments. Parents and carers of pupils who join after the Reception class and also of those with special educational needs, disabilities and in public care, are full of praise for the way the school supports their children so that they become fully integrated, develop in self-confidence and overcome any difficulties. The headteacher knows the personal and academic profiles of all pupils in the school very well, as do the teachers of the pupils in their class. Teaching assistants and other helpers provide effective support within and outside lessons, especially for the lower attaining groups and pupils with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils are guided satisfactorily to fulfil their potential. The school does not have a formal register of pupils who are gifted and talented, but individual members of staff have identified some gifted and talented pupils in areas of their expertise, for example in ICT and devised activities to stretch them further.
35. Pupils know that their views matter and feel comfortable in approaching staff with any concerns. They appreciate the improvements made over the past year to the school council which gives them a formal structure in which to put forward their ideas and suggestions. The representatives from the Reception class are very successfully supported to enable their views to be heard in front of older children. Pupils have made important contributions to the bullying policy, the development of strategies to encourage healthy eating and ideas for

improvements to the playground. They are not as strongly involved in setting and reviewing their own personal targets.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**. Links with the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are highly satisfied with what the school provides and achieves for their children.
- Parental support helps children make good progress in the personal and academic development, especially with reading.
- The school is proactive in working with other schools and providers to share ideas and ensure that pupils transfer in and out of school smoothly.

Commentary

36. The school's partnership with parents has improved still further since the last inspection. The headteacher and staff have successfully secured and developed the confidence of parents so that their support for the school is almost total. Parents are particularly pleased with the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching, the range of activities offered and the approachability of staff. They appreciate the way in which the teachers are accessible at the end of the school day and that the management of the school is visible and can be contacted easily. They like being invited to class assemblies when they can stay on afterwards and meet the staff over coffee. They feel that any concerns or questions they may have are very quickly and effectively dealt with. For example, a parent of a child with a handwriting difficulty requested more homework, which was given and the parent feels this has helped the pupil's ability. Staff record contacts with parents very well so that they can have a more complete picture of the child.
37. In return, parents support the school in a great number of ways. They back up the staff over matters of behaviour and discipline, with the result that exclusions have not had to be used. They have responded well to the school's drive to raise attendance levels towards its target of 95 per cent. A significant number of parents (and grandparents) help in classrooms and on trips, including swimming. There is a thriving parent teacher association which runs popular events and raises a lot of money which has helped improve resources, for example in the library. Parents are able to help their children at home because they are given good information about what their children are doing, for example, through the home-school reading record book, weekly newsletters, an up-to-date website and useful annual reports on pupils' progress. Parents are given good guidance about how to help with reading, including provision of a reading group and this enables them to make a valuable contribution to their children's good achievement. Guidance on how to help with mathematics is not as extensive.
38. Senior staff at the school have taken a lead in setting up consortia of primary schools and early years providers in the local area. The consortium involving pre-schools has worked effectively to improve the provision of information passed on to the Reception class and staff learn from each other through a programme of exchange visits. The local consortium of primary schools has become firmly established in its first year and provides a useful forum for headteachers to advise each other on matters such as term-time holidays. Subject staff have already been able to meet and share ideas, for example in design and technology. Pupils benefit from joint events with other schools in sport and music. There is good liaison with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Staff from the secondary school not only visit to meet prospective new pupils but also contribute to the curriculum by running a modern foreign languages club.

39. The school makes sound use of community resources to enhance aspects of the curriculum such as history, geography and assemblies. The open-plan design of the school makes it difficult for the community to use the school's facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Governors' understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school **well**. The headteacher's leadership is **good**. Senior managers are appropriately focused on improving standards. The school is managed effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses; they challenge and support senior managers appropriately.
- The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school are very good.
- Senior managers have established a good learning ethos for both staff and pupils. Inclusion is good.
- Teaching and learning are well monitored in English and mathematics, but insufficiently monitored in the other subjects.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is good. Data is used well to monitor the school's performance. However assessment is insufficiently used in other subjects to change what is taught next.
- The school manages its finances well.

Commentary

40. The governors are knowledgeable, experienced and committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. With the help of regular reports from the headteacher they monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses well. This gives them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making. Governors appropriately challenge the senior management team to account for weaknesses and plan for success. The governors ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements. The headteacher provides good leadership. The feature that stands out in the leadership of the school is the absence of complacency. Parents say that the headteacher is not easily satisfied and is always seeking to improve the school. He knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them and has established a good ethos of striving to improve. This is one of the main reasons for the school's increasingly good reputation in the community.
41. The staff work well together. They believe that they are appropriately supported by senior colleagues in their efforts to raise standards. Monitoring reports show that the school is self-critical and evaluative of its practices. There are many examples of this approach in action. Each year co-ordinators are held accountable for examination results in their subjects. In areas where there have been relatively less successful results, such as standards in mathematics for older more able boys, the school is quick to take action. Curriculum co-ordinators effectively evaluate their subjects and areas for development are included in the school's improvement and management plan, so that priorities can be established over the long and short term. This has given clear educational direction to the work of the school. Effective monitoring is clearly defined by the headteacher. It is aimed at helping the school to be clear about how well the teachers teach and how well the pupils are learning. However, although co-ordinators monitor teaching well in English and mathematics, this is insufficiently developed in the other subjects.
42. The SEN department is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is not class based. Special needs assistants and teaching assistants are suitably trained and deployed. All teaching staff have been trained in the use of the current Code of Practice and keep careful

track of the progress of pupils with SEN. Records are regularly updated by the special needs co-ordinator and are readily accessible and used by support staff. The special needs programme is very well supported by good resources and good support from the local authority.

43. The headteacher and governors staff the school well, including a good supply of well trained teacher assistants in order to meet the needs of all pupils. There is a good balance of expertise amongst the staff and they are well qualified to deliver the curriculum effectively. The school's strategy for performance management is sound.
44. Financial planning is good and the budget is used well. The strategic use of resources is good. The targeting of funds to areas where there is the most need of improvement has been very effective.
45. Spending is carefully matched to the school's priorities, for instance sums are set aside to train and retain staff. The governing body's consideration of best value is good. The school had a good recent audit and has consulted widely and responded promptly to the few recommendations. Office staff are well organised. They check all information from the local authority against their own records thoroughly and provide the headteacher and governors with the most up-to-date information available so that they can make informed decisions. The underspend is roughly five per cent. The majority of it consists of monies for capital projects.
46. The impact of the leadership and management is such that in this school, the highest standards are sought for all pupils according to their capability. As a result, most pupils achieve well and make good progress. The leadership and management have been successful in establishing a productive climate for learning and promoting inclusion throughout the school. This is an effective school and provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	651,223
Total expenditure	655,801
Expenditure per pupil	2,721

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46,021
Balance carried forward to the next year	41,443*

* The majority of this has been earmarked for future building work.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, as it was at the time of the last inspection. There are 19 children on roll. Standards on entry are generally in line with those expected for children of this age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well during their time in the Reception class because of the good teaching and the interesting, relevant curriculum which meets their particular needs. The accommodation inside is rather small but is arranged with care and attention. Although shared with the main school at playtimes, the outside accommodation is good, but there is a limited range of large outdoor toys to support children's physical development. The recently appointed teacher is managing early years provision well and is keen to continue the good work of her predecessor. She and her specialist teaching assistant work well together as a cohesive team. Children's progress is frequently assessed and this is well used to plan the next step in their learning. Those with special educational needs are quickly identified and are provided with specific support.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching they receive and the positive relationships established.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's social development.

Commentary

48. The development of children's personal and social development is given high priority and underpins all the work in the Reception class. As a result, most children will have achieved the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. Children quickly settle into a caring and safe environment where basic routines and high expectations are fostered. The very good working relationships between members of staff and volunteer helpers are effective in showing children how to relate to each other. The warm welcome extended to them at the start of each school day helps to make children feel secure and confident. Parents are given every opportunity to discuss any urgent matters with a member of staff. Tasks are well prepared so that children's interest is quickly engaged. Care is taken to assess children's different experiences before they come to school and adults work hard to instil a sense of belonging, based on personal care and making children feel comfortable and liked. Good teaching, which emphasises kindness to each other and planned activities that require co-operation, result in good social development. Members of staff place strong emphasis on the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. As a result, most children respond well to new challenges, such as changing independently for physical education lessons and tidying away after activities. All opportunities are grasped to extend children's social development. Eating healthy snacks together, for example, is seen by staff as an opportunity to teach about etiquette and hygiene. Girls and boys are encouraged to play and work together and take part in rich learning opportunities so that they develop a good range of skills across all areas of learning. The well structured induction arrangements, which include home visits, if so desired by parents, do much to ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Amongst staff and volunteer helpers there is a good common understanding of the need to take every opportunity to engage children in meaningful discussion and conversation.

Commentary

49. Individually, children make good progress through the stepping stones (descriptions of what young children are expected to attain at different points in Reception classes), towards the attainment of the early learning goals in this area of learning. In response to the good teaching they receive, most children currently in the Reception class are likely to reach the goals by the end of the Reception Year and a significant number will exceed these. Rich opportunities are provided for children to improve their speaking and listening skills through role-play, stories, poems and rhymes. Effective questioning encourages them to give considered answers and builds on prior learning. The good relationships established between adults and children mean that children grow in confidence because adults are interested in what they have to say. There is good provision for reading development. Children enjoy books and most listen attentively when stories are read to them. They share big books, reading together in groups and engaging in individual reading at home and in school. Children enjoy being told stories such as 'Theseus and the Minotaur', by their 'Year 3 buddies' and this, together with playing a full part in the school's Book Week, enhances their enjoyment in reading as well as their social development. They have a growing number of words they recognise in text and parents are advised on how they can help their children recognise 'key words' at home. Opportunities are frequently taken to emphasise sounds that different letters make and to extend vocabulary. In a good lesson seen, children were confidently using word cards to identify rhyming words such as 'house' and 'mouse'. Work on display shows that, by the end of the year, higher attaining children are able to write phrases or sentences unaided, while most others can do so with help.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good because members of staff have good understanding of how young children learn mathematics.
- Members of staff introduce mathematical language very effectively.

Commentary

50. Many children are on course to reach the early learning goals for mathematics because of the good teaching they receive. However a significant number enter the Reception with standards below those for their age and despite the good teaching, when these children enter Year 1 they still experience difficulties when investigating numbers. Staff use an interesting range of teaching methods and resources, including ICT, so that children develop a practical understanding of all aspects of mathematics. Good links with other areas of learning such as literacy and art make the tasks meaningful to the children. Adults introduce mathematical language very effectively and consequently children name shapes such as squares, triangles and circles and use terminology such as *longer*, *shorter* and *equal to* when comparing size. In a lesson on length observed, very effective questioning resulted in most children confidently using the correct terminology by the end of the lesson. Higher attaining children went on to identify lengths of cubes that were 'sixth' or 'seventh' and 'ninth' longest.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- A good range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Children have many opportunities to use computers during the school day.
- Children are given very good opportunities to gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others.

Commentary

51. Children are provided with a very good range of experiences which help extend their understanding of the world about them. They are strongly encouraged to play educationally and to experience resources that promote good achievement. Well-planned activities, such as walks within the local environment, give children a good knowledge of the area in which they live and an understanding of seasonal changes. During the inspection they were seen closely examining different mini-beasts found in the school grounds and, through very good questioning, could identify similarities and differences. In ICT, they are very well taught to use the mouse to control the screen cursor when moving images across the screen. In lessons seen, they efficiently used computers to order pictures to show the life cycle of a butterfly linked to the text, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. As a result of the good range of activities, children show an emerging scientific knowledge of plant growth and the conditions needed for this. With their 'Year 3 buddies' they have planted cress and beans and observed their growth. They also develop an understanding of their own personal history through the use of photographs of themselves now and when they were younger. Very good questioning during snack times, helps children think about health and safety issues, such as the need for clean hands and a healthy diet. The school's health advisor is invited to speak to children about keeping healthy. Children are very effectively taught that some families within the community have similar beliefs to theirs, but that others do not. They enjoy celebrating festivals such as Christmas, Harvest Festival, Pancake Day, Mother's Day, Sukkot, Chinese New Year and Eid, as seen in photographic records of these events. Children are encouraged to share important events in their lives, such as their baptism and to display memorabilia from these occasions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well managed so that they work and play safely together.
- There is an inadequate range of large, wheeled toys to support physical development.
- There is a lack of focus in many of the outdoor sessions.

Commentary

52. Children receive weekly opportunities for physical activities such as running, jumping, climbing and balancing, during timetabled lessons in the school hall. One such lesson was observed during the inspection in which the quality of learning was satisfactory. This, together with observations made of children in the outdoor play area, indicates that most children are on line to meet the expected goals by the end of the year. Children have regular access to the large outdoor, secure area and they enjoy the times they run about and play together. However, there is often a lack of focus on physical development during these sessions. This, together

with an inadequate range of large wheeled vehicles, limits the progress children make in this area of their learning.

53. Children are given frequent opportunities during the school day to use small tools and instruments, including paint brushes, pencils, scissors, crayons and others to develop their fine motor skills. Management of children is very good, which ensures their safety when using apparatus and tools. Groups of children, both boys and girls, were seen manipulating small and large construction equipment with interest and dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well.

Commentary

54. Children are provided with an environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued. Teaching is good in this area of the curriculum. Members of staff are effective in getting responses from children in relation to what they see, hear, feel and imagine and most children reach the standard expected for their age by the end of their time in the Reception. Their creative development is successfully fostered through a wide range of experiences such as mixing paints, choosing particular colours for a purpose and making constructions, collages and paintings. During the week of the inspection, they were painting tiles they had made for a display in the entrance hall. They were shown how to paint these using a base cover and another colour to bring out the detail of their patterns. In their work they glue, stick and join materials together and enjoy the activities very much. Such experiences enrich children's learning and enhance their spiritual, social and cultural development. In whole class music lessons and in small groups, children explore how sounds can be made, sing simple songs such as 'Love is something if you give it away' from memory and match movements to music. Time is given to role-play allow children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. They extend their language skills by re-enacting familiar situations from stories that have been read to them or by making up their own.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well.
- Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The school's emphasis on good handwriting and presentation supports pupil achievement well.
- The very good relationships between pupils and teachers support learning well.
- Learning objectives are not always shared with pupils.
- Approaches to marking are inconsistent across the school.

Commentary

55. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at levels above those found nationally and this is in line with the results reported following the national tests in 2003.
56. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well developed throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 are confident speakers who listen attentively to adults and other children. Older pupils speak well and put forward their own point of view, while listening to and valuing, the contributions made by others. In a Year 3 lesson, when pupils were asked to identify where apostrophes could be used to shorten or amalgamate words, they were able to correctly identify where they could be used and confidently explain how and why.
57. Pupils' achievement in reading is good, with standards above average by the age of seven and 11. Teachers use carefully structured methods, ensuring pupils develop a wide range of reading skills. This, together with a good range of fiction and non-fiction books, develops an enjoyment of reading. Older pupils read fluently with good expression, bringing the story to life. They can discuss preferences for authors and talk with enthusiasm about books they have previously read. The school has recently relocated and restocked the library, effectively increasing and improving the range of fiction and non-fiction texts available to support pupil achievement.
58. Pupils' skills in writing develop well throughout the school and good standards are evident in all classes. Both boys and girls achieve equally well in their writing. Pupils' written work is well presented and there is a consistent approach to handwriting across the school that supports and enhances pupil achievement. The school is focusing on improving writing across the curriculum and this is beginning to have a positive impact. There is evidence in pupils' work of effective links with religious education, history and design and technology. Pupils also have opportunities to use ICT, particularly computers, to word process their writing or use the Internet to research particular topics in English.
59. The quality of both teaching and learning is good. This, together with pupils' very positive attitudes during lessons, results in good achievement for all, including pupils with special educational needs. The best teaching is characterised by teachers' very good subject knowledge, good pace, work well matched to individual pupil needs, excellent relationships within the classroom and a variety of tasks for pupils to undertake. In these lessons teachers share the learning objective with the pupils, in child-friendly language. This results in pupils understanding and being able to explain, what they are *learning* from the lesson, as well as what they are doing. In some English lessons, older pupils spend long periods of time sitting passively on the carpet listening to long lesson introductions and this limits the time available for independent work.
60. Whilst there are some examples of very good marking of pupils' work, this is inconsistent across the school. All work is marked and there is a plethora of encouraging comments, but not all teacher comments identify exactly *what* is good about a piece of work or what the pupil needs to do next in order to improve. Pupils have individual targets for improvement in English but once these have been set, there are infrequent references back to targets in teachers' marking comments. The school has good systems for assessing progress and analysing pupil performance. The school has plans in place to enable pupils to become more involved in the setting of their own targets for improvement in English.
61. Teachers are aware of higher attaining pupils and they are challenged effectively. Good use is made of teaching assistants, who make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning of pupils of lower ability and those with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

62. The leadership and management of English are good, with the subject focusing strongly in the school development plan. Areas for future improvement are clearly indicated, particularly in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Teachers regularly draw pupils' attention to spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation when writing for other subjects, particularly history, geography and religious education. Standards of written work in these subjects are good. In a religious education lesson in Year 1, the teacher encouraged pupils to label their drawings correctly and use their prior knowledge of spelling to ensure the labels were spelt correctly.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 1 and 2 have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well because of the overall good teaching and learning.
- The subject is conscientiously led and managed.
- Information and communication technology is well used to support learning.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- There is an over dependence on worksheets.
- The structure of some lessons does not allow sufficient time for pupils to work independently and teachers to teach pupils at different levels as they work on tasks.

Commentary

64. Standards attained in mathematics are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. These findings reflect the standards achieved in the 2003 tests. It might seem that pupils in Year 6 are not achieving well in relation to standards attained by pupils in the Year 2 tests. However, when one compares the average standards achieved by the Year 6 cohort in 2003 to the below average standards they attained when they were in Year 2 in 1999, it is evident that they have achieved well. Another factor to be taken into account is the increasing number of pupils who join the school after Year 2. In the current Year 6 class, for example, seven pupils joined the school other than at the normal time, five of whom have special educational needs. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to raise standards and has been particularly successful in Years 1 and 2. Although many pupils enter Year 1 with average mathematical understanding, standards of a significant number are below average for their age.
65. The number of pupils in Year 6 achieving the higher level (Level 5) in 2003 was not as high as in English and science and the school is looking for ways to redress this imbalance. A thorough analysis of test results has been carried out to identify any weaknesses in provision or particular groups of pupils who are underachieving. As a result, there is now a greater emphasis on problem-solving activities. However, there is still some work to be done to:
- reduce the over dependence on the use of worksheets which deprives pupils of opportunities to give information in an intelligible, organised way or discuss their work and articulating their thinking;
 - structure all lessons in such a way as to allow for a good pace to learning by all groups of pupils at all stages of lessons; and
 - mark pupils' work more consistently and in a way which shows them how they can improve.

66. The school does well by its pupils with all groups making good progress and achieving well. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good overall. Most teachers structure their lessons so that a good pace to learning is maintained. In the best lessons, all pupils benefit from a high proportion of direct teaching at all stages of the lessons. As a result, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. In some lessons, the pace of learning slows after a stimulating mental session, because teachers give lengthy explanations to the whole class, rather than quietly teaching and challenging pupils at different levels as they work on group or individual tasks. This was seen to result in pupils losing concentration and not readily offering to answer questions. Pupils with special educational needs, well supported by well trained, dedicated teaching assistants, achieve as well as their classmates. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress.
67. The National Numeracy Strategy supports teachers' planning and many features, such as the mental sessions and discussions of strategies, are securely established. An analysis of pupils' books shows that the programme of work is covered systematically and thoroughly. In the most successful lessons, teachers and teaching assistants ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the mental sessions and questions are well used to target particular groups of pupils. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson where the teaching assistant gave very effective support, so that all pupils were fully involved in considering and offering answers during 'number bingo'. During this session and throughout the whole lesson, the pace of learning was brisk and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved highly to understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. By the end of Year 2, most are working within or above the expected range for their age, developing a knowledge and understanding of place value in numbers to 100 and beyond, recalling addition, subtraction and number facts to at least ten. They are taught to recognise number patterns and to describe their strategies for solving number problems. Most use mathematical names for two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, describing properties including the number of sides, faces and corners. The majority of pupils by the end of Year 6, understand and use formulae to calculate perimeter and area and know the sum of the angles of a triangle. Higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of the probability scale nought to one, predict results and test their predictions. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' data handling skills. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were using computers to plot the growth of the sunflowers they were growing in the classroom.
68. The subject is well led and managed. All staff are well trained and use a good range of resources to support pupils' learning. The link governor is very supportive and is familiar with the work of the school. Homework is well used to support and consolidate pupils' learning. Assessment procedures and target setting are well used to measure pupils' progress and to prepare the next step in their learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects such as science, design and technology, geography and ICT. Consequently, they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of their mathematical skills. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills because of the emphasis on teaching the correct terminology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

During the inspection there was no opportunity to see lessons in Years 1 and 2, although the school's timetable confirms that sufficient time is given to these year groups. Provision was discussed with the subject leader, pupils' work was looked at and pupils were spoken to about their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall.
- Standards in 2003 were above average and pupils are achieving well.
- There is good emphasis on the use of specific technical language.
- Good opportunities are now provided for pupils to develop investigative methods and skills in Years 3 to 6 although there is still insufficient emphasis on investigation in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment is not used well to change what is taught next.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Marking is sometimes cursory and does not inform pupils how to improve.

Commentary

70. Standards in the 2003 national tests (SAT'S), at Year 2 were above average and at Year 6 were in line with the national average. In lessons standards in Years 2 and 6 are above the national average. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils' standards on entry to the school are average. By age 11 they are attaining standards that are above average and are making good progress. Standards have improved significantly last year for all abilities. Higher attaining pupils are reaching above average standards throughout the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
71. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 2 shows that teachers are providing opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations. For example pupils are beginning to investigate how force is exerted and how gravity always pulls things down. Year 6 pupils correctly describe the principles that make scientific testing fair and can clearly explain the need for repeating measurements to ensure the accuracy of their results. This builds well on work in Year 5, where pupils tested electrical circuits in various conditions and could explain how to carry out a fair scientific test. Year 6 pupils' written work shows they are given good opportunities to plan, carry out and make sense of their own investigations. Pupils also have a secure understanding of life processes, materials and physical forces.
72. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and they give precise explanations. As a result, pupils understand exactly what is required of them. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and good support is provided for those pupils with SEN. Lessons proceed at a good pace and, consequently, pupils concentrate well making good use of the experiences offered. In a good Year 3 lesson, the teacher provided pupils of all abilities with good opportunities to take responsibility for their own work. Some higher attaining pupils were able to predict what would happen if the head of a celery plant were to be put into a beaker of coloured water instead of the root. The objectives of the lesson were shared with all the pupils at the start so that they all understood what they were meant to learn.
73. Teachers give good emphasis to scientific vocabulary and terminology although pupils' responses are sometimes too readily accepted and they are insufficiently challenged to remember the 'right' vocabulary. Whilst pupils' written work is marked regularly and supportive comments sometimes added, feedback sometimes does not indicate where pupils have been successful or where further improvements can be made.
74. Pupils with SEN receive good support from skilled and committed support staff who know them well. The support staff are briefed before lessons and this enables them to help these pupils to play a full part in the lesson and make good progress.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides appropriate support for other teachers. However, he has insufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. There is no whole school policy for assessment and consequently it is not consistently used to change what is taught next.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been very good improvements in both hardware and software since the last inspection.
- Staff have received very good quality training which has increased their confidence in teaching the subject.
- Teaching of skills in the ICT suite is very good and pupils achieve very well.
- The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum has not yet been fully explored and is a focus of the school's development plan.

Commentary

76. Standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations, a very significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. The headteacher has shared his expertise with teachers and teaching assistants and the training he has provided is very effective. The caretaker also gives very effective advice and helps keep computers up and running. The school's own scheme linked to national guidance ensures that all pupils experience the expected subject strands. Examples of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as discussions with staff and pupils, show they are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet and data handling as well as control, monitoring and modelling.
77. Teaching in the three lessons seen in the suite was invariably very good, leading to very good learning and high achievement. In the lessons seen, teachers' very good secure knowledge of the subject allowed them to give clear explanations and demonstrations using an LCD projector. The effective use of this resource and very good questioning maximised pupil input and ensured a brisk pace to learning. This meant that all pupils achieved very well. Teaching assistants are also well trained and give very good support to the learning of pupils with special educational needs who achieve as well as their peers. The school has recently introduced the local authority's assessment procedures and is looking at ways of using these more effectively to measure the rate of pupils' progress.
78. Pupils enjoy ICT and rise to the challenges presented to them in lessons. Pupils in Year 1, for example, worked very well and enthusiastically in pairs as they designed a graph to show the rate of growth of their sunflowers and interpreted the information revealed. The class teacher built very effectively on what she had taught in the previous lesson so that pupils had a good understanding of their own learning. They were further challenged to save, retrieve and print out their graphs, which they did efficiently. This is a good example of how teachers are realising the links that can be made between ICT and other subjects such as science and mathematics. Another very good example was seen in a Years 5/6 lesson where pupils were very effectively taught to interpret information in a database on woodland animals, their food and predators and to interpret whether it was reasonable before amending it where necessary. Planning shows that pupils in Year 6 are taught that PowerPoint can integrate a range of media to present multi-media pages. They used this knowledge to produce a cartoon scenario involving dragons and wizards that could be used for literacy lessons in Year 1 or Year 2 classes. In the popular lunchtime club, Year 6 pupils were making very good progress in learning to set up their own web sites. The pace of learning throughout the session was very high, in no small part due to pupils' own high level of interest.

The use of ICT throughout the curriculum

79. Some very good examples were seen of pupils using computers in mathematics, for example and pupils talk about their use of computers in science, history and geography. The school has come a long way in this respect since the last inspection and the use of ICT across the curriculum continues to be a focus for training and professional development of staff.

HUMANITIES

80. Only four lessons were observed in geography and history and so there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on provision. Analysis of the work sampled in pupils' folders indicates that they receive an appropriate curriculum and attain the expected standard. Achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to judgements made during the previous inspection. Planning for both subjects is effectively linked to the national guidance documents that cover all the required skills.
81. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning were good. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very positive. They listen attentively and apply themselves well, showing a high level of interest. As a result, their written work is well presented. Good use is made of teaching assistants and this results in pupils with special educational needs achieving well.
82. Pupils' work in **geography** shows that in Year 5 they are able to identify continents and major rivers of the world. The review of pupils' work indicates that pupils, in all year groups, learn effectively about maps and mapping. Their knowledge of maps develops from simple routes to school in Years 1 and 2 through to knowledge of world maps, scales and keys in Year 6. There is sound development of map work, with pupils in Year 4 identifying and drawing features of different countries and places on maps. By Year 6 pupils have developed an understanding of scale and use this knowledge to calculate distances between major towns in Great Britain. In their work on motorway systems, they make statistical comparisons between car ownership in different parts of the United Kingdom, America and Asia although there is insufficient coverage of environmental issues.
83. In **history**, pupils in Year 2 develop a sound concept of time, through a local study of Rayleigh. This includes a pupil-made pictorial time-line of local developments, from the building of the local parish church in the 1100's right through to the erection of the Millennium Clock in 2000. This is used very effectively by their teacher to "transport them back in time". In a Year 6 lesson, pupils demonstrated a sound understanding of ancient Greek theatre and playwrights and produced written work of a high standard.
84. The leadership of history and geography is currently under the stewardship of the headteacher who is managing the subjects until new subject leaders are appointed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Sound lesson planning and teaching results in sound standards of work.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning in religious education.
- An overuse of worksheets in some year groups restricts opportunities for pupils to explore religious concepts in more depth and detail.

Commentary

85. Pupils' attainment is in line with that expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In discussion, pupils are happy to talk about their learning and can remember things they have learned about Christianity and Hinduism. Pupils' achievement is sound throughout the school. The curriculum is heavily weighted towards Christianity but pupils do learn about other world religions, particularly Judaism and Hinduism.
86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall when pupils' work done over time is taken into account. Clear planning enables teachers to teach well and for pupils to achieve satisfactory standards. In one lesson on Hinduism, pupils made a variety of Indian food and were keen to sample the different dishes and to talk about the significance of food in Hindu festivals. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes in lessons are very good. Pupils listen attentively and are confident to offer their own ideas and opinions in a thoughtful and sensitive manner. Pupils' recording of their work is often on restrictive worksheets that limit opportunities for pupils to explore and record their own thoughts, opinions and beliefs. The subject supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
87. The subject is effectively led and managed and there has been good improvement since the last inspection when provision for religious education was a key issue. The subject leader regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' books but does not undertake lesson observations in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. Only seven lessons in total were seen in the following subjects: art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. It is therefore not possible to make firm judgements about provision. In addition inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils about what had been learned and looked at pupils' work from this last year.
89. It is evident from a review of teachers' planning, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and the displays around the school that work planned in **art and design** is varied and interesting. Standards have been improved since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well.
90. From the time pupils start school, they are encouraged to experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. Colourful displays of pupils' work are hung throughout the school. This lively approach to art was evident in the work in the Reception class on jungle animals through to the colourful detail drawn by pupils in Year 6 on their 'faces' in the style of Picasso. There was good development of practical skills in a Year 2 class who had printed poppies on fine silk with an art program in the style of Georgia O'Keefe. All pupils achieve well because of the high expectations and good subject expertise of teachers. The subject co-ordinator plans the art curriculum well. However, there is no whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress and assessment is informal and not used effectively to inform teachers what to teach next.
91. In **design and technology**, two lessons were seen, one in the Years 1/2 class and one in Year 5. Standards of work produced by the Year 2 pupils met those expected for their age. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards in Year 6. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good. This evidence, together with discussions and an analysis of photographic evidence and work on display, shows that pupils are gaining experience of a range of techniques and materials. They are being taught the expected skills of designing, making and evaluating a variety of products such as motorised fairground rides and books with moving parts. Planning shows that food technology is well represented. In the lessons seen, activities were well planned and teachers showed good knowledge of the subject. As a result, explanations ensured that pupils were clear about what they had to do and a good pace to learning was maintained. Teaching assistants gave confident support to pupils' learning.

92. The school employs a specialist teacher for **music**. All pupils and class teachers benefit from the specialist knowledge of this teacher at certain times of the year. Although teachers take their own pupils for music when they are not being taught by the visiting teacher, none were observed teaching the subject during the inspection. In the two good lessons seen the standard of singing was judged to be in line with that expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning shows that the all strands of the curriculum are taught during the year. Extra-curricular opportunities such as the orchestra and preparing for music festivals and public performances enrich the curriculum and support pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
93. In **physical education**, one games lesson was seen in each of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning in these lessons was good. Discussions with staff and pupils and an analysis of teachers' planning, indicate that the school provides its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, which is designed to promote their physical development and social interaction. Pupils in Year 2 to Year 5 attend swimming lessons at the local pool and records show that they achieve very well. Pupils in Year 6 have opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities during their annual residential trip. Very good provision of extra-curricular sport such as dance, football, netball, involving members of staff and outside providers, enhances pupils' learning and their sense of achievement. As a result, a significant number of pupils attain standards above those expected in games by the end of Year 6. The accommodation, both indoor and outside and a good range of equipment, allow the subject to be effectively taught. The knowledgeable co-ordinator manages the subject well and provides good advice for teachers. When teachers feel they need further training, this is quickly provided, as that recently provided by a visiting specialist teacher in gymnastics. In the lessons seen, teachers managed behaviour well so that all pupils worked together happily and safely. Good use was made of pupil demonstration as a stimulus for improvement. Pupils enjoyed the lessons, behaved very well and worked well together.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

94. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education through timetabled lessons and other activities. Teachers follow a scheme of work which covers drug education appropriately and there are satisfactory arrangements for sex and relationship education. One timetabled lesson was seen which was a circle-time activity in Year 3 led by the subject co-ordinator. This was a good lesson because the teacher is skilled and confident in encouraging pupils to work together in games which promote consideration of others. The co-ordinator has led the area well in her first year by focusing on improving provision for healthy living and citizenship. Successes include the operation of two 'walking buses' to school, the introduction of healthy snacks at break-time with the full involvement and support of pupils and parents and the development of the school council so that all pupils can play a part. The co-ordinator has not yet had an opportunity to monitor provision, teaching and learning in other classes and there is no formal assessment system in place.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

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

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

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).