

INSPECTION REPORT

YELVERTOFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121877

Headteacher: Mr C Gynn

Lead inspector: Keith Sadler

Dates of inspection: 17th - 19th May 2004

Inspection number: 258531

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:	104
School address:	School Lane Yelvertoft Northampton Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN6 6LH
Telephone number:	(01788) 822 498
Fax number:	(01788) 822 498
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Nicholas
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small village primary school with 104 pupils on roll from Reception to Year 6. The school is over-subscribed and situated within the village of Yelvertoft, Northamptonshire, which is close to Rugby in Warwickshire. Pupils come from the village itself and other hamlets in the area. They come from a variety of home backgrounds and their socio-economic circumstances are above average. Almost all are of white British heritage and all have English as their first language. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than those expected is below average. Less than one per cent of the pupils claim free school meals which is well below the national average. Attainment on entry varies year on year. It is usually similar to that found nationally, though this year the intake has above average attainment. The percentage of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national average.

The school currently has four classes. The year groups in each class changes year by year according to the size of the cohort of pupils. Currently, each class has two year groups with one infant class having all Reception Year and some Year 1 pupils, and the second infant class accommodating the remaining Year 1 pupils and Year 2. There is a lower junior class with Year 3 and 4 pupils, and an upper junior class with Year 5 and 6 pupils. The school gained the *Sports Activemark* in 2000 (Gold), and the *Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark*, the *Investors in People* standard and a *DfES Schools Achievement Award* in each of the past three years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16405	Keith Sadler	Lead inspector	English Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Art and design Music Physical education English as an additional language
9942	Mrs S Stevens	Lay inspector	
2229	Mrs D Hansen	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	8 - 12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12 - 13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	14 - 25
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Yelvertoft is a very successful school. It is **very effective** and provides **very good value for money**. The quality of teaching is very good and helps the pupils to learn very well and achieve well. The new headteacher has made an excellent start in the short time he has been at the school and has already had a very positive influence. There is an outstanding ethos for learning. The impact of all these factors leads to the well above average standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The outstanding attitudes and very good behaviour of the pupils who love both the school and learning.
- The school includes all pupils in activities outstandingly well and they are helped to thrive.
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science and above average in most other subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good with over half of the teaching being very good.
- The very good curriculum is outstandingly well enriched by visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
- The leadership of the headteacher has helped to cement very strong relationships, develop further a sense of purpose and, above all, create an outstanding ethos for learning.
- Management is very effective and the school runs smoothly.
- There is a very strong emphasis on the development of the arts which has a very positive impact on pupils' achievement.

The school has shown very good improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teachers' planning is now excellent. There are very good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. The arrangements for provision for pupils with special educational needs are now very good and the school's provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good. The school's effectiveness has improved since the previous inspection when the school was found to provide good value for money.

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

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

Caution is needed when interpreting data in this school which has some small year groups. National test results fluctuate depending on the number of pupils in any year group and those with special educational needs.

Pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. Children enter the school with above-expected attainment levels particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. They make good progress due to the very good provision in the Reception Year, with almost all children attaining the goals in all areas of learning. By the time that they reach the age of seven, standards are generally above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress, achieve well in the two junior classes and, by the time that they leave the school, standards are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The A* represented in the table above show standards in tests that are in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards are above the national average in all other subjects and the strong emphasis

on the arts provides opportunities for pupils to excel in a wide range of activities particularly music, dance and drama.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Their attitudes to learning and each other are outstanding, their behaviour is very good and the pupils love schooling and learning. The school has nurtured outstanding confidence and self-esteem in the pupils. Attendance is well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The **quality of teaching** and learning are very good with over half of lessons seen being very good or better and nearly all being at least good. Pupils learn very well because the teachers provide an exciting range of activities that are very well planned. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good. Above all, the staff create a very effective climate for learning in which all pupils, whatever their abilities are helped to feel included. The curriculum is very good and there is an outstanding range of opportunities, including extra-curricular activities and a very good range of visits and visitors bringing their expertise into the school. These factors make a very strong contribution to the pupils learning, particularly in the arts. Learning support staff make a very good contribution to the educational provision. The school is very caring and the pupils are looked after very well. Pupils' education is aided by the very good links that the school has with the parents and local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The new headteacher has built on previous successes very well and has already made a positive impact. Subject leadership by all members of staff is very good. The teamwork within the school is very strong. The school ensures that all pupils are included in activities. This is an outstanding feature. Governance is good, financial management is secure and the school runs smoothly. There are good self-evaluation processes in place. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and have positive views. In particular, they say that their children love attending the school and they make good progress. They also think that the teaching is very good and the school is well led. Pupils are very proud of their school, have a love of learning and they feel secure and happy.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no areas that require additional focused attention.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils enter the school with above nationally-expected levels of attainment. They achieve well, make good progress throughout the school, and by the time that they are 11, the pupils' attainment is well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. These high standards are due to the very good quality of the provision in most subjects and the very positive ethos which helps the pupils to become enthusiastic learners who thoroughly enjoy lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests for 11-year-olds in English have been consistently very high in comparison both with all schools nationally and similar schools.
- Standards in most subjects are above nationally-expected levels.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the very good provision.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with above-expected levels of attainment, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. The children's speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. The pupils make good progress in their learning throughout the school, and achieve well. Although in the national tests in 2003 standards, in comparison with similar schools, were well above average in English and were below average in mathematics and science, inspection findings are that standards are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Standards are above the national expectations in all other subjects inspected. These are ICT, art and design and music. There are indications that standards are above expectations in history, geography, design and technology and religious education. These subjects were sampled during the inspection.
2. The number of pupils in each year group is small and hence, to compare the school's results with national results is likely to be misleading. This is because one more or one less pupil achieving a given level could have a profound impact on the results for that year group. The numbers of boys and girls also vary widely from year to year. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003 results were comparatively low in mathematics and science. Over the past three years, both in comparison with all schools and similar schools, standards have been generally well above the national average. Standards are particularly high in English with the school being amongst the five per cent of highest achieving schools in the country in three of the past four years.
3. In English, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills very well. This is due to the very good teaching provision. Pupils love books and are enthusiastic readers. Standards in writing are well above the national average. Pupils enjoy writing for a range of purposes and audiences. They discuss their work and enjoy reading each other's extended writing. Since the last inspection, there has been considerable improvement in standards in ICT. No judgement was made previously for pupils aged seven and standards for 11-year-olds were found to be in line with expectations. However, now, due to the very good provision, standards are above-average for pupils at both ages. In most other subjects, standards are above the national expectation.
4. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. Their progress is good and matches that of other pupils because of the effective support and the very good provision. Individual education plans are well conceived with realistic targets which are carefully reviewed by staff on a regular basis.

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

Standards in	School results	National results
English	30.3 (30.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (31.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils enjoy coming to school and overall attendance for the last year was very good. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and because of the very good moral and social values promoted by the school their behaviour and personal development are very good. There are very good opportunities created for spiritual development and pupils' self-awareness increases well as they mature. Cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like school; they attend regularly and arrive at school on time. This has a positive effect on their achievement.
- There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves.
- There is outstanding promotion of pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem by the school; pupils are very keen to learn.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- The genuine kindness and care shown by older pupils towards those younger make a very strong contribution to the quality of school life.
- The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is very good.

Commentary

5. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high level of attendance and overall punctuality. Because of the very good relationships between home and school, almost all pupils arrive at school happy, confident and on time. The impact of this is that pupils learn well. They settle quickly to their work: they concentrate and persevere and as a consequence their achievement is enhanced. Parents are very good at notifying the school of reasons for absence and there is very minimal unauthorised absence. Pupils speak with pride about the work they do and the activities in which they are participating. They work hard in lessons and show interest and enthusiasm for what they are doing. One particular feature of the excellent relationships is how the pupils support and help each other. Pupils of different ages and differing abilities relate extremely well to each other, and the highly inclusive ethos of the school is a particular strength.
6. Although some pupils feel that a few of their classmates do not always behave as well as they should, behaviour in and around the school is very good and pupils work and play together in a friendly atmosphere. Adults expect high standards of behaviour and pupils respond positively. They move around the school in an orderly and considerate manner, being respectful and polite to each other and adults. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
7. Pupils welcome opportunities to talk about issues important to them during 'class time', in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and through the school council. This is a good development which helps pupils to develop a very good social and moral understanding. Parents feel the school does a good job in helping their children to become mature and responsible. Inspection findings confirm this view. This is reflected in the eagerness with

which all pupils accept responsibility, the way they conduct themselves and in their interaction with others. Assemblies and charitable work provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own and others' behaviour and to gain an understanding of the plight of others less fortunate than themselves.

8. Because the school is successful in promoting Christian values, pupils develop very good levels of spiritual awareness that is enhanced through areas of the curriculum. For example, during a Year 2 science lesson, pupils expressed complete delight and awe when they understood how to break an electrical circuit hence extinguishing the light bulb. Boys and girls get on well together and pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all activities and friendship groups. Pupils develop into well-motivated learners who understand and value the purpose of their lessons. They have many opportunities to listen to music in the school, to look at displays of artwork of their own western culture and of other cultures and to learn about other religions and beliefs. All these activities encourage pupils to be sensitive towards the different values and beliefs of people from other countries. They also further an understanding of different groups and communities and their place in the world in the 21st century.
9. Most children in the Reception class are on course to exceed the desired goals in the area of personal, social and emotional development. They are encouraged to work and play happily and constructively together, learning to share and make sensible choices. They listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teacher and other adults who work with them. They behave very well, discussing their actions and choices clearly. They are happy to be at school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2002-2003) (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum is very good and is outstandingly enhanced by an excellent range of enrichment opportunities. Care, guidance and support are very good and partnerships with parents and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning and the teachers' assessments of pupils are all very good and make a key contribution to high standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Almost all the teaching seen was good or better.
- Teachers' planning is excellent.
- Teachers engage the pupils very well, their questioning is good and they create a very effective climate for learning in which pupils thrive.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	15 (50%)	12 (40%)	2 (7%)	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.

10. Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage and in the infant and junior years. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Over half of lessons seen were very good or better and over 90 per cent good or better.
11. In the Foundation Stage, both the teacher and the assistants give very good attention to developing the children's personal and social skills whatever the lesson focus. Planning is excellent and practitioners have very high expectations of the children's behaviour. They make activities exciting and interesting and they support the children very well.
12. Teaching in the rest of the school is also very good. There are a number of outstanding strengths in the teaching. In particular, throughout the school, teachers plan lessons exceptionally well and they give outstanding encouragement to the pupils, listen very carefully to what they have to say, value these contributions and then make very good use of responses to push learning forward. For example, a very good lower-junior science lesson concerned the filtering of materials. The teacher quizzed the pupils about their work in such a way as to make the pupils think carefully and then to give complex answers. These responses were then used by the teacher for the next learning steps in the class. The pupils listened well and as a result of the teacher's questioning and encouragement they learned and achieved very well. Resources are particularly well used. Apart from mathematics, where resources are adequate, teachers enrich lessons very well by making very good use of a wide range of equipment and resources. However, the key to the very successful teaching is the very strong relationships that all the teachers secure with the pupils. The teachers know the pupils very well and have strong inter-personal skills. As a result a very strong ethos of learning and enquiry is created in all the classrooms which helps the pupils to feel very secure, love lessons and build their capacity to work both independently and collaboratively. This in turn helps them to achieve well.
13. Teachers use assessments very well. Through questioning, very good marking and helping the pupils to understand how they can improve their work, all staff support learning very well. This shows an excellent improvement since the last inspection where a weakness was identified in this area.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Activities are carefully planned to match these pupils' needs and good support is given. Since the last inspection, a wide range of new strategies have been put into place to support these pupils. Teaching assistants work very effectively with small groups and individuals, learning plans are of high quality and the pupils themselves have very high self esteem and a 'can-do' approach. All of these factors are key in the very significant improvement in the quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. It is broad in its coverage of subjects, well balanced in terms of the time allocated to each subject and is outstandingly well enriched through the provision of a broad range of high quality extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and very well planned.
- There are outstanding enrichment opportunities available and these are enthusiastically grasped by the pupils.
- Staff plan carefully to ensure that there is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and shows excellent improvement since the previous inspection.

- There is a very good emphasis placed on the curriculum for the arts.

Commentary

15. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good. It is broad and balanced and securely based on the required goals for pupils in the Reception Year. The staff work very well together, plan a rich range of very good activities which, when taken together, prepares the children well for moving into the Year 1 curriculum.
16. There are schemes of work for all subjects of the curriculum which shows a good improvement since the last inspection where there were weaknesses identified in the curriculum for ICT.
17. The school is highly successful in ensuring that all pupils gain equal access to the curriculum. Teachers and support staff meet the needs of pupils of differing ages and abilities very well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this shows excellent improvement since the last inspection. These pupils' education plans are clear, focused and include appropriate short- and medium-term targets.
18. There are a number of strong features in the curriculum. First, long and medium term plans are very well thought through to provide a progressively more difficult range of activities as pupils move through the school. This is a particular challenge because each class contains pupils from two age groups. Second, opportunities for enrichment are outstanding. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities provides high quality opportunities for pupils. Hence, pupils are able to take advantage of the skill and expertise of both the teaching and non-teaching staff who devote significant amounts of time to providing additional activities. These are usually held during lunchtimes due to the high proportion of pupils that are bussed into the school from surrounding hamlets. This, too, enables all pupils to access the activities. The range includes very good provision for the arts and sports as well as other practical activities. Third, pupils visit local museums, theatres, environmental centres, and other places to support and enhance their learning. Additionally, many visitors support curricular studies. These include the local policeman, the school nurse and villagers who regularly visit the school to talk about various aspects of their work and life.
19. Teachers use a good range of educational resources to support pupils' learning. For example, the book stock is good, the range of ICT equipment is very good and resources for all subjects other than mathematics are good. There are clear spending plans to ensure that mathematics resources are improved.
20. The accommodation is very well used. Staff work hard to make the classrooms and corridor areas colourful and attractive with displays that promote learning. Some rooms are limited in size, particularly the Year 5 and 6 classroom, and there are no areas outside the classrooms that can be used for small group work.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures and practices to ensure that pupils are well cared for, and to secure their protection, health and safety are very good. The advice, personal support and guidance they are given are also very good. Pupils of all ages are fully involved in all that the school provides and their views are sought and valued by the staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a fully inclusive, safe and secure environment where pupils' views are sought and valued by a committed, knowledgeable staff.
- The school has established strong and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This excellent feature is a particular hallmark of the school.

- Teachers track the progress of pupils' personal development very well and the support and guidance given, based on careful monitoring, help pupils to improve in their academic work.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

21. The school has established firm foundations to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. There are clear health and safety procedures, including risk assessment, which are implemented well. Child protection procedures follow clear guidelines and staff know what they have to do if they have any concerns. The school is very clean, bright and clutter-free. Pupils are supervised well at playtimes and during the midday break. Older pupils keep a watchful eye on younger ones and set a good example.
22. There are excellent, trusting relationships between pupils and teachers. The teachers and support assistants have a very good understanding of pupils' personal skills and enable duties and responsibilities to be undertaken well by allocating them accordingly. This climate of mutual respect between staff and pupils, based on warmth and understanding, enables open communication and develops rapport and co-operation very well. In the Reception class, data on children's progress is collated and used to very good effect, enabling very good support and focused guidance. Teachers track the progress of the pupils' personal, social and emotional development by listening to pupils, for example in class time and in PSHE lessons. Support staff, midday supervisors and outside agencies work closely with teachers in raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence to encourage independence. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and fully involved in all school activities.
23. Parents praise the very good induction procedures for new arrivals and the warmth and care shown to new arrivals and the smooth induction into the Reception class. They express confidence in the high standards of care provided by the school, and the close liaison they have with the staff. The pupils talked about making new friends quickly and feeling able to ask teachers if they have any worries or want to share news from home. In Year 6, pupils carry out their responsibilities very well behaving maturely and sensibly. The school council reviews pupils' ideas and suggestions and the school has endorsed their desire for playground equipment to be purchased through fundraising enterprises.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school is at the heart of the community. It has a very successful and effective partnership with parents, the local and wider community and good links with other schools and colleges in the area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides many opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning and in school life.
- Parents are consulted regularly about organisational arrangements and the school's administration and management.
- Events organised by the hardworking school association and the Friends of the School are all supported very well by parents and the community. Substantial sums of money are raised for extra resources.
- The school deals very effectively with any concerns or complaints.
- Parental support has a very good impact on their children's academic progress and personal development.
- The pupils' annual reports to parents give clear information about the areas studied. Targets are given for improvement.

Commentary

24. The overall quality of the information provided for parents is very good. The annual reports on pupils' progress give specific information about attainment but there is some variation in the quality of the information about the subjects studied. Some subjects are covered more thoroughly than others. Weekly newsletters are sent to all parents and others in the community. Consultation with, and involvement of, parents are important elements in planning the future development of the school. This is accomplished through formal questionnaires as well as through informal discussion. Parents like the level of involvement and respond well. The events organised by the parents and friends provide substantial funds for additional resources in the school and they and the Friends of the School organise activities which provide a forum for social interaction between parents, staff and the wider community. For example, the forthcoming May Day celebrations, including maypole dancing by the pupils, is a highlight of the area's summer season.
25. Parents give willingly of their time to support teachers and pupils and play a vital role in helping and encouraging their children with their homework and topic work. This has a major impact on the high standards the pupils achieve. Parents are mostly very supportive of the school and strongly approve of the values it promotes. They are confident that the school does its best for their children. Many parents, grandparents and community members provide regular help in the school listening to readers, assisting in classrooms or organising extra-curricular activities, such as the gardening club. Their contributions are valued by staff and pupils alike and add to the quality of the learning provided by the school for its pupils.
26. The school receives very good support from the local community and works closely with the secondary school. Curricular links, such as ICT initiatives and master classes for more-able pupils, smooth transfer arrangements for Year 6 pupils. Regular meetings are held between members of staff and the pupils, aiding the transition process. Pupils participate successfully in sports events and local music and drama festivals and enjoy entertaining local senior citizens at Christmas concerts and harvest festival celebrations. Representatives from many different religious groups in the community visit to take assemblies, all of which give pupils a link to different areas of their own and neighbouring communities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both the leadership and the management of the school are **very good**. Good governance is provided by the school's governing body.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recently-appointed headteacher has made an excellent start, working with the staff to build up a highly effective team which makes very good use of the skills of each member of staff. He already provides very good leadership.
- All staff have access to a very good system of continuing professional development and the school's effective performance management strategies for teachers have had a good impact upon the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are committed to the school, and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Subject management is very good.
- The nominated teacher provides very good leadership in the areas of assessment and the support of pupils with special educational needs.
- The governors' arrangements for overseeing financial management are not appropriate.

Commentary

27. In the two terms since starting at the school, the headteacher has had a very positive influence upon the teaching and learning across the school. He has worked hard to understand each member of staff's individual strengths, and has made changes resulting in a clear structure of responsibility. He is already providing very good leadership. All subject areas have a

designated co-ordinator and they have drawn up individual action plans. In some areas, such as science and special educational needs, leadership is excellent and it is consistently very good. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection. Subject leadership is a particular challenge because there are many more areas to cover than the number of staff. In addition, two teachers have taken up subject responsibility in this school year, having completed their induction year into teaching last year. Given these circumstances, the high quality of subject leadership is a testament to the staff's commitment and ability.

28. The school has a clear performance management structure and very good programmes for the continuing professional development of all staff. This is having a very good effect upon the quality of teaching and learning. Good induction arrangements help new staff to settle in quickly. In addition, the support provided by teaching assistants is of a high quality and they are an asset to the overall teaching provision.
29. The school improvement plan covers governors' intentions for the next three years. The plan addresses priorities identified by the headteacher for raising standards. These include revising the curriculum programme for most subjects, improving monitoring processes and the special educational needs provision. The plan is a very good working tool in promoting improvement. Attention has been given to obtaining the best value for money and tracking the impact on standards of various purchases, such as the ICT suite. Overall, the governing body makes good use of a very clearly-defined structure for the recruitment and deployment of new staff.
30. Although the school has to manage a fluctuating budget year on year due to the number of pupils on roll in different year groups, the budget shows a surplus at present which is earmarked to provide teaching for a fifth class from the start of the next school year. This is in order to provide the best opportunities for a larger year cohort than is usual for the school.
31. The school is in a favourable financial situation at the moment and funds are generally well managed. The school is fortunate to benefit from the additional funding raised by the parents and other friends of the school. However, until recently, arrangements for the allocation of parts of the school budget to differing subject areas have lacked clarity. The governors now have a plan to address this which will involve staff more fully in this aspect of school management. Governors are clear about how funding for pupils with special educational needs is allocated and have a structure for ascertaining the value for money gained from the use of these funds. Currently, the headteacher is the chair of the finance committee and this is in need of review. This is because it is not appropriate for the head, as a governor, to monitor and evaluate the work that he carries out as head of the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	300,341
Total expenditure	290,142
Expenditure per pupil	2,568

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year (01-02)	26,690
Balance carried forward to the next year	36,889
Capital balance carried forward	11,760

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

In the Reception Year, standards in all areas of learning show most children are on target to meet, and some to exceed the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception Year. When they enter the school, most children have already had some pre-school experience and their standards of attainment are generally above the nationally-expected level, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. The Reception Year comprises of a small cohort of children who are taught in a mixed-age class with some Year 1 pupils. The overall provision is very good because both the teaching and learning are very good and also the curriculum is broad and rich and very well planned. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed and the two staff work together very closely as a team. Accommodation, too is very good. The impact of this high quality provision is that the children thoroughly enjoy their lessons and they achieve well. This shows a significant improvement since the last inspection where the provision was found to be good and the children made satisfactory progress in their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children are guided sensitively to consider the impact of their actions on others.
- The relationships between adults and children are very good; adults provide good role models.
- There is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed lessons and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves.

Commentary

32. Many of the children enter the Reception class with good social skills. They are taught very well and they make good progress in their learning so that by the time that they enter Year 1 most children are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area and a majority exceed them.
33. Children are sociable and confident and interact well with other children and adults. A few are more confident and are ready to voice their ideas and opinions. This is often achieved with feeling, or awareness of others around them and the very positive and supportive ethos of the Reception class supports this well.
34. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are very good. The staff provide very good role-models. The practitioners work very well together as a team to provide a calm, well ordered and secure learning environment. This helps children to settle into the Reception class quickly and helps build their confidence and ability to adapt to others around them. The teacher and teaching assistant provide a variety of interesting lessons and follow-on activities to engage children's concentration and imagination. They successfully gain children's confidence to respond to them and to other children. The reception teacher and the assistant intervene well with groups of children at play, talking to them and posing thoughtful questions designed to make children think and consider. When they introduce new ideas, this often sparks off more talking between the children themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching and classroom support for the children including those with special educational needs.
- Children enjoy looking at books and handle them with care. They show a love of books and enjoy listening to stories.
- They are encouraged to speak clearly and listen attentively.

Commentary

35. Children start school with speaking skills and attainment in listening, reading and writing slightly in advance of those expected for this age group. The teacher and teaching assistant provide a very good range of interesting opportunities for the children to develop their communication skills. As a result, progress is good, the children achieve well and almost all exceed the early learning goals in this area.
36. Many children arrive at school able to communicate in some way using pencil and paper. They are encouraged to make marks and write from the first day in the Reception class. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Initial letter sounds are taught methodically and letter-recognition games played. Letter formation is being taught consistently in preparation for work in Year 1. Few children confuse capital and lower case letters because they are well taught. Children are able to copy words written by the teacher and teaching assistant. Their independent writing skills are also encouraged and the resulting 'writing' praised.
37. Most children are making a very good start with reading skills and say they enjoy reading their books at school and at home.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and skilfully engages children's curiosity about numbers. Teachers capitalise very well on opportunities for counting.
- Most children start school with an interest in numbers, shapes and sizes.
- Children are well prepared for mathematics by the time they transfer to Year 1.

Commentary

38. Many children enter school with mathematical skills that are slightly in advance of those expected nationally. Most children can count objects accurately up to 30 and some can count beyond to 100. Most children can accurately identify basic shapes such as squares and triangles. Some children can accurately write the numbers 0 to 50.
39. Very good teaching ensures children make at least good progress in this area of learning and they achieve well. The teacher plans interesting activities that encourage children to achieve well and develop their mathematical skills by using appealing child-centred themes. Children reinforce their recognition of numbers and size by modelling play dough, making peg patterns and printing repeat patterns. The adults use questions well to encourage, extend and reinforce learning.

40. Knowledge of mathematical terms is increasing. Children know that a square has four sides and a triangle three. The children enjoy the regular sessions of singing number action rhymes. These have a positive effect on achievement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A designated outside play area has been provided since the last inspection and this is well used for structured and free play.
- Opportunities to use ICT are an important part of the daily programme.
- The teacher's planning involves the use of a wide range of resources to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children are very enthusiastic and enjoy the activities provided for them.
- The school grounds and the adjacent village provide excellent teaching and learning resources.

Commentary

41. Children enter the Reception class with varying levels of general knowledge. The school's attractive learning environment, together with the high quality of lesson planning and very good support provided by the teaching assistant, help them to build successfully on their knowledge and understanding of the world. As a result of this very good provision, including the very good teaching and learning, most children exceed the required learning goals in this area by the time that they enter Year 1.
42. The children achieve well. For example, in one very good lesson, they shared their ideas predicting 'What might happen if...'. The teacher collected together a number of battery-operated toys which could perform different things such as moving arms or legs, or 'speaking'. The children showed delight in the diversity of the battery-operated toys and were fascinated by the things the toys can do! After learning the importance of switching off powered toys to conserve the battery when not in use, they carefully investigated torches to discover the battery power source. They noticed the positive and negative symbols and learned very well how to match the battery polarity in order to re-assemble the torch correctly.
43. Children are also developing a good knowledge of basic computer skills. One child showed outstanding skills using the 'drag and drop' facility and manipulating the scroll bar. The other children are also developing these skills and say they love using the computers. The two practitioners provide many stimulating activities and topics for investigation by the children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Very good opportunities are provided for children to develop their movement skills indoors and outdoors.
- Very good use is made of the outdoor area.

Commentary

44. Children enter Reception with physical skills as expected for their age. The teaching observed in this area of learning was excellent and the children achieve well. For example, most hold pencils and crayons with confidence using an appropriate grip. The children are encouraged to develop their physical skills because the teacher plans a very good range of activities. Children are able to select and place shapes and jigsaw pieces in the correct spaces and they develop their hand strength and control by squeezing, rolling, pressing and shaping play dough.
45. The equipment for use outside provides very good opportunities for children to develop their confidence. There is scope for them to run, skip, explore and clamber in the designated safe outdoor area. In addition, there are appropriate opportunities for children to develop their co-ordination and control. Children develop running, skipping, balancing, and turning skills very well.
46. In one excellently-taught games skills lesson the children achieved particularly well. They developed their skills using a range of small apparatus including ropes, bats and balls. On the slightly sloping playground their control of the bats and balls was remarkable and their concentration never wavered. At the end of this lesson on a very hot sunny day the class gathered together in the shade cast by a tree and cold drinks were poured out and handed around by a child. This demonstrated the children's innate good manners and their developing social awareness as they accepted a first drink then politely requested or declined the offer of a second.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good opportunities to experience a range of good quality resources and materials.
- Teaching and teaching support are good.
- All creative work is highly valued within the Foundation Stage and the school.

Commentary

47. Provision in this area is very good because the teaching and learning are good and the curriculum to support the children's creative development is broad and rich. As a result, the children achieve well. They demonstrate appropriately-developing skills in the quality of their artwork and they paint pictures carefully using a range of paint colours. Inspection and photographic evidence shows the very good range of opportunities for children to develop their design and creative skills using bricks and boxes to make models, and fabric and thread to sew bags, purses and simple dolls clothes.
48. Children greatly enjoy singing and most already know the words of several songs and nursery rhymes. Teaching in the musical aspects of the children's creative development is very good. The children have learned how to correctly handle percussion instruments with care and self-control. The teacher and the teaching assistant use every opportunity to reinforce learning with simple songs and actions linked to the focus of the activities. Children enjoy taking part and achieve well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the national average in comparison with all schools.
- Teaching and learning is very good.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils love reading and thoroughly enjoy English lessons.
- There are very good arrangements for promoting literacy skills across the whole curriculum.

Commentary

49. The provision for English is very good. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Standards in tests for reading and writing for seven-year-olds are above the national average and currently Year 6 pupils attain well above expected standards. Standards in tests for 11-year-olds show that for the past four years the pupils' attainment has been amongst the highest five per cent of schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards have been well above average for the past four years. Progress is good in speaking and listening, reading and writing. This is because there are very good strategies to identify any pupils with particular learning needs through the very good monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. The standards attained show a good improvement since the last inspection when progress and standards were satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the junior classes.
50. Almost all pupils develop very strong speaking and listening skills as they move through the school. This is due to a number of factors. Across all subjects, teachers provide a wide range of exciting activities that require the pupils to work collaboratively and this supports their speaking and listening skills. Staff question pupils very well. They have very high expectations of the quality and depth of the pupils' answers and give time to pupils to explain themselves. This creates a strong ethos for learning in which pupils are helped to develop speaking and listening skills through being constantly encouraged to express themselves and explain their learning.
51. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Standards are very high. Teaching assistants play an important part in supporting any pupils that need additional help and this boosts the pupils' confidence and their skills. In addition, the school has very good arrangements for parents to support their children's reading particularly in the infant and lower-junior classes. Reading diaries act as a very good communication channel between staff and parents and ensure that any pupils needing to develop particular skills are supported well at both home and school. Pupils use the library effectively. Older pupils are able to explain how to locate information books from the shelves and they use indexes and the book classification system very well. As a result of the very good provision, almost all pupils develop a love of reading. They talk excitedly about their favourite authors and are very skilled in providing comparisons between different characters in books that they have read or have studied in school.
52. Standards in writing are high. This, too, is a result of the very good teaching where teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to express themselves in most subjects. Pupils are careful in their spelling and presentation, are thoughtful in their choice of words when writing and have an excellent understanding of genre, style, purpose and audience. Pupils in Year 2 organise their writing well. They write purposefully, communicating meaning very well by using a wide range of forms of writing including narrative, reports and letters. By the time that they

reach Year 6, almost all pupils are strong writers. Their work is lively, thoughtful, well organised and interesting to the reader.

53. Teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are invariably very well planned, and teachers encourage and engage pupils extremely well. The teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve are outstanding. As a consequence, the pupils are excited learners. Their attitudes to English lessons are excellent, they concentrate well, love reading and writing lessons and achieve well. The teaching and learning strategies used are very good. The school has made very good adaptations to the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of Yelvertoft pupils and this, too, helps to boost achievement.
54. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. Their needs are comprehensively reviewed and their individual learning plans clearly identify progressive steps in learning in both reading and writing. As a result these pupils achieve well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. This area is a particular strength. Opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills are well developed in most lessons. This is achieved by the teachers good questioning skills and also consistently good teaching and learning styles that require pupils to talk through problems and activities set by the staff. Pupils use the Internet to research, make very good use of the excellent range of information books that are provided for the topics being studied, and use their writing skills very well across most subjects. This is helped by teachers demanding that pupils write in different styles and at length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages have good arithmetic and number skills.
- Standards are well above the national average.
- Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good quality support.
- Assessment arrangements are good.
- The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator.

Commentary

56. Throughout the school, the pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning particularly in the area of arithmetic and number. Results in the national tests show that, in comparison with all schools nationally, there has been a drop in attainment over the past two years, from standards that were well above average in comparison with all schools nationally, to average levels. This is due to the small cohorts of pupils, which makes comparative analysis unreliable as each pupil represents a relatively large percentage of the whole. However, current standards of attainment are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.
57. In the infant classes, pupils achieve well in mental mathematics. They enjoy mathematics lessons and are enthusiastic learners. During the inspection they made good progress when learning to recognise a right angle by using a paper-fold square corner. They then used this to identify other right angles within the classroom. They are able to recognise number patterns and relationships between groups of numbers. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well. For example, in one lesson, pupils were able to use an architect's ground plan of the school in order to plot the way from their classroom to the computer suite, counting the number of right

angles that needed to be negotiated on the way. They learned to use the terms 'clockwise' and 'anti-clockwise' correctly to describe their route. This work was closely linked to their map work in geography and was of a particularly high standard.

58. Pupils in Year 6 are skilled and knowledgeable in their mental mathematics sessions and they thoroughly enjoy the challenge of working quickly and accurately. Year 5 pupils apply their knowledge to problem-solving and achieve good results, becoming engrossed in their work. Pupils understand the need to check their calculations and are aware of the importance of accuracy. Pupils of all ages try their best and concentrate well.
59. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well and understand their needs. Teachers are particularly skilled in planning their lessons to meet these differing learning needs and in adapting them for the different age groups that there are in each class. This helps to ensure that all pupils are working at a suitable level and being challenged by the activities set. As a consequence, the pupils' achievement is boosted as they are motivated to try their best and attempt new work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning owing to the good support that they are given by learning support staff and also because teachers pin-point activities to move their learning forward. Teachers use assessment very well to check and record what pupils know and also to identify what needs to be taught and in how much depth. During the inspection, the Year 5/6 teacher made very good use of the analysis of the previous day's assessment to identify and revisit work which had not been completely understood by the pupils.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator works hard to support her colleagues and is developing a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in mathematics, although opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are limited. She has a clear vision for the subject and has developed a very good action plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils are given very good opportunities to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum. In particular, graphs and charts are used to show findings of data analysis in science, geography and ICT. Time-lines are used to demonstrate the passage of time and the place of notable events in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the national average.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons because they are made interesting and practical.
- The subject is led outstandingly well.

Commentary

62. Standards are well above those found nationally because of the quality of the provision. The very good teaching promotes very effective learning. The curriculum is very good because it is broad and very well planned with a strong emphasis on investigative and practical science. Standards in national tests have been generally well above average, both in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools. Inspection findings are that these high standards are being maintained in the current Year 6 class. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. They thoroughly enjoy science lessons because teachers make the lessons very interesting by first working with pupils to raise questions based on the science content

- being taught, and then providing exciting activities that extend the pupils in finding the solutions to the questions that they have raised.
63. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. For example, in one very good infant lesson the pupils were making electrical circuits. The teacher planned an activity which required the pupils to make a simple series circuit. However, the particular challenge came when the teacher also required the pupils to make a switch to make and break the circuit. Working in small groups, the pupils enthusiastically set about solving the problem. They concentrated very well. Their discussions showed that they could explain observations. They managed to create their circuit and showed complete delight when they found the solution to the problem. In this lesson, the pupils' achievement was very good because of the clever way in which the task had been set and because of the very high expectations that the teacher had of what the pupils could achieve. In a follow-on lesson, Year 1 pupils were able to make circuits whilst the Year 2 pupils were able to draw good diagrams to record their learning. The pupils attained above-expected standards and were able to show what they knew and understood from the activity.
64. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers plan lessons very well, have high expectations and set practical tasks that are made interesting and relevant. Most of all, they ensure that the learning in lessons is consolidated by getting the pupils first to explain the scientific knowledge that is being developed and then to record their work. In consequence, the range and quality of the work in the pupils' science books is of a high standard. The books show how the practical approach to the wide-ranging topics taught develops the pupils' understanding of how to carry out investigations.
65. Science is led outstandingly well. This too makes a strong contribution to the high standards. Although she is only part-time and has other curriculum subject responsibilities, the subject co-ordinator has developed the curriculum very well. She checks teachers' planning and gives appropriate advice. In addition, she teaches science in both the junior classes and this too, has a positive impact on achievement, as her teaching is very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Standards of attainment are above the national expectations for 11-year-olds.
- ICT is used very well to support learning across other subjects.

Commentary

66. The school has responded very well to the serious criticisms made about ICT in the last inspection. Resources have been improved significantly and very good ICT suite has been created. Machines in all the classes have been updated and there has been a good programme of training for staff. The curriculum now covers all the required areas. The subject is now well managed with a very enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a very clear vision of what she wants to achieve and has made a very good start to strengthening all aspects of the work. In addition, the headteacher, mindful of the need to raise standards, is teaching ICT across each of the classes in the school.
67. The quality of teaching has improved substantially since the last inspection. It is now good in both the infant and junior classes. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject, plan lessons well and ensure that the work is made relevant by making very good use of ICT across the curriculum. As a result, standards are now above the national expectations for pupils aged both seven and 11. For instance, in a very effective Year 6 lesson, the teacher

explained that the lesson was about importing still images from the school's digital camera, and video clips into a text-based presentation. The pupils worked very hard and well. They chose the information that they wanted for their presentation, took photographs of themselves and others, animated clip-art, inserted video clips and wrote headings and text to accompany the work. In this lesson, the pupils achieved very well, attained nationally expected standards well and were proud of their work.

68. The organisation of ICT throughout the school is good. Through clear and decisive leadership there have been rapid recent improvements in the quality of the curriculum and in the resources. Teachers are now confident in making use of ICT and, in most lessons, the machines are used to support learning. As a consequence, the pupils are very confident in using ICT. Their enthusiasm and attitudes to ICT are outstanding and they achieve well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. This is a strength. Pupils' skills are developed very well in specific ICT lessons and are then applied successfully across most subjects of the curriculum. ICT is incorporated well into general lesson planning and this makes a good contribution to the quality of learning throughout the school. Teachers use the Internet well for research. They make good use of graphs and charts in mathematics, history and geography and particularly good use is made of paint programs to enhance work in art and design.

HUMANITIES

70. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, with two lessons seen in history and one in geography. The subjects are taught separately in blocks as part of a rolling programme to meet the needs of mixed-aged classes. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects but there are strong indications from the pupils' work that standards of attainment are above nationally-expected levels in both subjects.
71. In both subjects the curriculum is very good and is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors. These play an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 greatly enjoyed a visit from a 'Viking'. Pupils in Years 5/6 tried to imagine how it might have been for children evacuated during World War II. They listened to and questioned local people who lived at the time, read and analysed texts and discussed 'how it might have been'. They decide that life for evacuees and for the families faced with having to accept a stranger was often not an easy or a positive experience and they could identify the main reasons why this was so. From discussions with pupils, many obviously enjoy history and they spoke enthusiastically about their current topics. They can explain that their own school has been in existence since Victorian times and this link is part of their heritage as pupils of the village school in 2004. They have access to photographs of the May Pole celebrations going back over a number of years.
72. Artefacts loaned to support a history topic, together with well-selected video clips, provided high quality resources for a good history lesson in Years 5/6 which helped develop pupils' observational and reasoning skills. In geography, excellent use is made of the village and of the school site. The residential visit to Cromer had enabled pupils to understand some of the physical and human features of a seaside environment, as well as providing an enjoyable mixed activity time. Older pupils go to Sulgrave Manor and, from time to time, other classes visit local museums and attend special study days. Teachers carefully mount displays containing a wealth of original artefacts, large and small, to support learning in the subjects. These successfully enthuse children and bring the subjects alive.
73. In **religious education**, one lesson was taught during the inspection and it is therefore not possible to make an overall evaluation of provision. However, it is evident from the scrutiny of pupils' previous work and discussions with pupils that standards throughout the school are

above expectations. Pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of different faiths, including Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism, and speak about areas which interest them in particular. They are interested in all faiths and traditions taught in the school and greatly benefit from visits such as that to the Mandir in Wellingborough and the Sikh Gurdwara in Northampton. Pupils have a mature and well-balanced way of discussing similarities and differences. The curriculum follows both the locally-agreed syllabus and guidance offered by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standard of attainment are above those expected nationally.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy art and design lessons.
- The curriculum is rich and broad.

Commentary

74. Standards of attainment in art and design are above national expectations for both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. This is a result of the good teaching and the particularly strong and varied curriculum for art and design. In the infant classes, there are very good opportunities for the pupils to explore a wide range of media and processes. Teachers place a good and strong emphasis on collaborative work and there are some good examples on display of art work that enriches other areas of the curriculum, such as geography and history.
75. The quality of displayed artwork also demonstrates the above expected standards. In one very good lesson, Year 2 pupils were skilled when they were making a simple card loom. The teacher inspired the pupils to produce high quality work. The Year 1 pupils, in the same class, were paper weaving and they too were successful in creating a range of different patterns. The pupils made high quality artefacts and were able to explain their patterns and what they were doing to vary the weave.
76. Pupils achieve well and make good progress through the junior years. There are numerous examples of displayed work that show both the wide-ranging curriculum and the good standards achieved. For example, in the Year 5/6 class, pupils have produced large paintings and collage depicting 'Shrek' using a wide range of found materials. In a good lesson, above-expected standards were achieved when the pupils were set the challenging task of producing work to re-tell the story of Noah's Ark. Here, the pupils were provided with a very wide range of materials to create a textile. The pupils concentrated very well (this being a characteristic of all the art and design lessons observed) and they created designs using sketching, painting and cutting and pasting various materials. Selecting and modifying from the best of their designs, the pupils achieved good standards by applying their good creative ideas to the task.
77. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and plan lessons very well from the wide range of curricular opportunities. Very good opportunities are provided for collaborative work. For example, in a lower junior art and design lesson, pupils achieved well when carrying out long-term work on making chairs in groups of two or three. The teacher supported pupils in developing some very creative ideas when designing chairs and these were displayed well. Very good teaching helped the pupils to provide clear explanations of how they drew up and drafted original designs for chairs and why they later made amendments to them.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning are very good.
- The very good curriculum, including the wide range of extra-curricular musical activities and instrumental tuition, enriches the life of the school.
- Pupils love musical activities and have a very positive attitude.

Commentary

78. Music plays a very important role in the school. Many of the teachers are skilled musicians and they successfully nurture the pupils' love of music. In consequence, over half the pupils in the junior classes are learning an orchestral instrument. There are very good opportunities provided for pupils to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular ensemble work and tuition. The pupils are very enthusiastic both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.
79. Two music lessons were observed in which the standards attained were above nationally-expected levels. In addition, a very wide range of extra-curricular activities was observed, both the normal provision and also additional sessions preparing pupils for the local music festival. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were taught very well when learning how to perform together. They carefully followed instructions to combine differing elements of music to change sounds. They showed a very good knowledge of musical terminology when asked 'What does tempo mean?' 'How fast or slow,' came the rapid reply. 'What is duration?' 'Long and short,' responded a number of pupils. In groups, pupils brainstormed ideas about different aspects of musical dynamics and they were able to raise many good ideas, sift through them and then agree a notation that demonstrated their given terminology. This task was very challenging and the pupils responded very enthusiastically and well and learned very well when performing their short compositions using non-pitched percussion instruments.
80. By the time that they reach Year 6, many pupils are accomplished musicians. In one good lesson, the pupils were composing witches' chants based on a witches' scene from Macbeth. They devised a range of menacing verses, selected instruments to accompany their chants and performed them very well. In this lesson, the class was divided into three groups with two teaching assistants playing a critical and very good role in supporting a group of pupils. The pupils loved the lesson. They concentrated very well and were enthusiastic, excited and eager to start their work following the very good introduction from the teacher.
81. The curriculum for music, including the extensive range of extra-curricular activities, makes a very positive contribution, not only to the standards of attainment and pupils' achievements, but also to the strong and positive learning ethos of the school. The very wide range of opportunities to learn to play recorders, strings, woodwind, guitars and keyboards helps to ensure that the school provides a broad range of activities in which pupils of all ages and learning styles can achieve well. As a consequence, very many pupils decided that they wanted to take part in the Northampton Music Festival and they practised both in small groups in the playground and in groups under the tuition of teachers.
82. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about standards or provision in **design and technology** as no lessons were taught during the inspection. However, there are indications from the good range of displayed work, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning that pupils may well attain standards that are above the national expectation. Design and technology projects are often linked to studies in other subject areas,

such as experiments in science on floating and sinking. This supports a cross-curricular approach which supports learning well. Work from different year groups shows that pupils achieved well and made at least good progress in the last school year. There are good examples of pupils writing their own evaluations and collaborating with each other and there is clear evidence of the full range of the design process being effectively taught throughout the school.

83. There was not enough evidence to make an evaluation of standards or provision in **physical education**. Two lessons were taught during the inspection, one in Years 1 and 2 and the other in the lower-junior class. In both lessons, the quality of teaching and learning was good, pupils achieved well and attained standards that were above the national expectation. In each lesson, the teachers were skilled in ensuring that pupils improved their performance and evaluated each other's work. These lessons, focusing on traditional dances – maypole and country dancing – were to prepare for the school's May Day celebrations to be held in the week following the inspection. These two lessons were further evidence of the strong emphasis placed on the development of the arts in the school. This makes an important contribution not only to the pupils achievement and attainment but also to their cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

84. One lesson was seen in personal, social and health education and therefore no overall judgement on provision can be made. However, there is a wide range of indications that this area is a strength of the school. This is an aspect of learning that permeates the work of the school. It is apparent in all lessons through the pupils' outstanding relationships, strong personal development and very positive attitudes. In the one very good lesson observed, Year 6 pupils learned very well when developing their understanding of how non-verbal communication influences others.
85. The school's highly inclusive and outstandingly positive ethos for learning is evident in each classroom every day.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

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

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