

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTH CRAWLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL

Newport Pagnell

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110406

Headteacher: Mrs Kathryn Breeze

Lead inspector: Ms Margaret Julia Goodchild

Dates of inspection: 6 – 7 October 2003

Inspection number: 259772

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	26
School address:	Church Walk North Crawley Newport Pagnell Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	MK16 9LL
Telephone number:	01234 391282
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andrew Tusting
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is very small compared with primary schools nationally. There are 26 pupils on roll, aged from 4 to 8. Controlled under the Oxford Diocese, the school has a religious character and provides denominational religious education. The school serves the villages of North Crawley and Little Crawley but also attracts pupils from further afield. A third of pupils come from outside the immediate area, including some from Milton Keynes, making for a fairly mixed intake socially. Economically, many pupils come from relatively advantaged backgrounds; eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils are white; three pupils are of mixed white and Asian heritage. All pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need. Attainment on entry is average: some pupils enter with little or no pre-school experience, others after attending a private nursery. The school received a Schools Achievement Award in 2003 in recognition of the improvement in its Year 2 National Curriculum test results. Its level of success means that the school is subject to a significant increase in projected numbers.

During the mornings, there are currently two teachers, one of whom is part time, supported by a nursery nurse who works full time. In the mornings, pupils in Years 2 and 3 are taught together by one teacher, and the reception children and Year 1 are taught together by the part-time teacher and nursery nurse. In the afternoons, Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught together with the aid of a learning support assistant, while the reception children remain with the nursery nurse and a parental helper.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15918	Margaret Julia Goodchild	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Geography History Music Religious education
1166	Rosemary Hussain	Lay inspector	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6-7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8-10
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10-16
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16-17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18-28
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is highly effective and enables pupils to reach standards that are well above the national average. Pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching, and they make very good progress in their personal development. The care and support pupils receive and the school's partnership with parents and the community are excellent. The school is led and managed very well. **It gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science, as reflected in the excellent test results in 2003.
- The headteacher and governing body provide very good leadership and set high expectations.
- Teaching is very good; lesson planning and the matching of work to the needs of individual pupils are particular strengths.
- Excellent provision for pupils' care and for their moral and social development gives rise to pupils' very positive attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Partnership with parents and the community is excellent; the materials that are given to children to prepare them for starting school are exemplary.
- Teaching arrangements in reception are not as good as they are in Years 1 to 3 and higher attaining pupils in reception are not always challenged enough.

The school has made very good improvement since it was last inspected, in October 1998. Standards have risen so that they are now very high, the school is led and managed very well and the quality of teaching has improved. In most respects, provision for children in the reception class is now good but teaching could be improved further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	C	A	A	B
writing	E	C	A	B
mathematics	B	A*	A*	A*

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

Pupils achieve very well overall. Children in the reception class achieve well in most areas of learning; their achievement in mathematical development and writing is satisfactory. They are likely to reach and in some cases exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve very well and reach standards that are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In 2002, the school's test results were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. In the last three years, the school's test results in mathematics have placed it in the top five per cent, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Test results in reading and writing rose in 2003 and the high standards in mathematics were sustained. The school's 2003 results in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average and are likely to be well above those of similar schools. In 2003, the school received a School Achievement Award in recognition of its improved results.

Pupils are highly enthusiastic about school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average and pupils are always punctual in getting to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The best teaching is found in Years 2 and 3, where pupils are enthusiastic and try hard. Teaching is sometimes very good in Year 1 and when pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught together in the afternoons. Teaching in the reception class is good overall but teaching arrangements are not entirely satisfactory¹. As a result, higher attaining children are not always challenged enough, especially in mathematical development and in writing.

The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities. Arrangements for the care and support of pupils and for partnership with parents and the community are excellent. Links with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and ensures that the school is very well managed. As this is such a tiny school, the headteacher has a substantial teaching timetable; she manages this situation extremely well and turns it to the school's advantage by acting as a role model and source of inspiration for other teachers. She receives good support from staff in positions of responsibility. The governing body fulfils its role very well, supporting and challenging the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views about the school. Pupils are unanimous in their praise of the school. They all like coming to school and find other pupils friendly; their comments show that they recognise that they are fortunate to have such a good school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important measures the school should take to build on its success are:

- To ensure that the teacher in the reception / Year 1 class teaches some sessions of literacy and mathematical development for the younger children, and that higher attaining children are challenged appropriately;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Monitor the implementation of the Race Equality policy and report findings to parents.

¹ Pupils in Year 1 and children in the reception share a classroom. The teacher works regularly with Year 1 pupils, of whom there are five, while reception children (of whom there are ten, spanning a wide range of prior attainment) work mainly with the nursery nurse.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the reception class is good overall but higher attaining children could do better in mathematical development and writing. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve very well. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over the last five years, National Curriculum test results have shown a rising trend and, in 2003, the school received a School Achievement Award in recognition of its improved results.
- The school significantly exceeded its targets in National Curriculum tests in 2003.
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and above average in art, information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Children in the reception class achieve well overall but the most able children are not currently achieving as well as they could.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, especially in English.

Commentary

1. Standards have risen since the last inspection and the school now enables pupils to reach standards that are well above average, representing very good achievement. In 2002, the school's overall test results were well above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Results in reading and writing were well above average; the school was in the top five per cent, both nationally and when compared with similar schools, for mathematics. It has sustained this situation since 2001 and test results in reading and writing rose in 2003. All pupils gained Level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science in 2003, which was well above the national average. Forty per cent of pupils gained Level 3 in English, mathematics and science, which is again well above the national average and may well place the school in the top five per cent nationally. The consistency of results between subjects in 2003 shows that pupils were challenged equally well in English, mathematics and science. These results are particularly good, given the local education authority's prediction that 2003 results would drop below those of previous years based on pupils' lower than average prior attainment. Test results show that the school is doing well by its higher attaining pupils and particularly well by average and lower attaining pupils.
2. The school significantly exceeded its targets for the number of pupils reaching Level 2 in National Curriculum tests in 2003. The local authority also set targets for Level 3 in 2003, which the school exceeded in writing and mathematics and met in reading and science.
3. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 reach standards that are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and above average in art, ICT and music. They do so well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science because teachers have high expectations, know the strategies for literacy and numeracy and National Curriculum requirements in precise detail, plan lessons very thoroughly and match work closely to individual needs. The very good contribution that homework makes is also a major factor in their achievement: clear homework activities encourage parental support and involvement in their children's learning and parents receive a great deal of advice on what is expected of homework. Standards are above average in art because pupils have good opportunities to work with a range of materials and techniques and are clearly motivated by the subject. Standards in ICT are above average because pupils make good use of computers and practise their skills in the learning of other subjects. Standards are above average in music because the teacher who takes pupils in Years 1 to 3

for the subject is a specialist who has high expectations and provides exciting tasks that are well matched to pupils' prior attainment.

4. Children in the reception class are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals² in personal, social and emotional development, in their communication and language development and in reading. Children achieve very well in these areas because they benefit a great deal from the small adult to child ratio, which enables them to receive a good deal of individual attention. Staff provide very good stimulation for language development and encourage children to talk about their ideas and experiences. The teaching of reading is very good and there are excellent opportunities for higher attaining children to join with Year 1 pupils for guided reading sessions. As a result, some pupils who have just come up from reception into Year 1 are reaching standards that are well above average for their age. Such good arrangements are not currently available, however, for higher attaining children in mathematical development or in writing. A small number of children who have just entered the reception class are already far in advance of what is required by the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development but teaching is not taking this sufficiently into account. These children are, therefore, not achieving as well as they could. The school also needs to be more aware of the differing prior attainment of children in writing; some are ready to move forward at a faster pace than the majority and are only making satisfactory progress at present. In all other areas of learning, all children are achieving satisfactorily and are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.
5. In Years 1 to 3, the excellent attention to pupils' individual needs - and provision of regular support for pupils who need it - benefits all pupils and contributes to the very high results in National Curriculum tests. It particularly helps lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, and there are examples of individual pupils who have made excellent progress from admission into the school with very low prior attainment to average or better results in National Curriculum tests. The school quickly enables pupils to catch up and to learn alongside their peers; as a result, there are few pupils identified as having special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. All pupils are happy and want to come to school. They enjoy excellent relationships with one another and with the staff. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes have a positive effect on their learning.
- The school has high expectations of behaviour and fosters excellent relationships; all pupils are valued equally, regardless of their race, background or ability.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to work together and they are very co-operative when working in pairs or groups.
- Pupils' social and moral development is excellent.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Commentary

6. According to parents, their children are so happy to come to school that they run to school in the mornings. Pupils confirmed this view in the questionnaire that they completed: every pupil in the school strongly agreed with the statement that they enjoy school. They relish learning and are eager to succeed because the school emphasises that learning is a shared experience to be enjoyed. Most are attentive in lessons, though one or two find it hard to concentrate for long periods without direct supervision. This is partly because they are used to a high degree

² The Early Learning Goals are the goals children nationally are expected to reach by the end of reception.

of personal attention in the small classes. Pupils normally behave very well because the staff have high expectations, which are appreciated and supported by parents. Pupils are justly proud of their school and feel it is important that their behaviour is a good reflection of this. They obey the simple rules, based on politeness and respect for others, that they devised themselves. The rules work well, as confirmed by a parent who was amazed by the positive changes in her child's behaviour after just a few days in the reception class.

7. Relationships are excellent as a result of the friendly and supportive atmosphere generated by the headteacher. Parents say the school is like one big happy family. There are few if any disputes and pupils are very caring towards each other. At lunchtime, without prompting, a child in reception was seen to offer another child his chair so that he could sit at the table of his choice. In the playground, pupils enjoy each other's company and look out for one another. The school fosters a spirit of co-operation when pupils are working together, and many examples of good co-operation were seen during the inspection. All pupils are valued equally, regardless of their race, background or ability.
8. Pupils' moral development is excellent due to the very good adult role models and the Christian values promoted by the staff. Their social development is also excellent. Pupils are taught to be responsible members of the school, village and wider community. They are also encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves. In their prayers, one pupil had written, 'God please help the poor children to have a school like ours'. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. The strong and close relationship with the church, and opportunities for reflection in assemblies make a strong contribution. Cultural development is good, fostered by visits to sites of cultural interest and through taking part, for example, in musical events with other schools. The school rightly recognises that more could be done to promote multicultural understanding, although a range of cultures is celebrated in displays, in music and through learning about Barnaby Bear's travels around the world. The school has recently employed a teacher experienced in multicultural issues but it is too early to assess the impact of this development on pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

9. Attendance is very good; it is well above the national average. Pupils are very punctual to school and quickly settle to work on arrival.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities. Arrangements for the care and support of pupils and for partnerships with parents and the community are excellent. Links with other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The best teaching is found in Years 2 and 3; teaching is sometimes very good in Year 1 and when pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught together in the afternoons. Teaching in the reception class is good overall but teaching arrangements for these children are not entirely satisfactory. As a result, higher attaining children in reception are not always challenged enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.
- Lesson planning and the matching of work to the needs of individual pupils are particular strengths.
- Pupils and parents express very positive views about teaching.
- Teachers assess pupils' work very carefully using an assessment system finely tuned to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the National Curriculum.
- Teaching arrangements in reception are not as good as they are in Years 1 to 3 and higher attaining pupils in reception underachieve to some extent.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 10 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	3	2	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. Very good teaching is central to the high standards and to pupils' very good achievement; improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection has enabled the school to improve its National Curriculum test results. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science. It is good in art and design and in music, enabling pupils to achieve well in these subjects and reach standards that are above national expectations. Teaching is good in ICT and satisfactory in religious education; limited evidence suggests that it is at least satisfactory in other subjects. It was not possible to form any judgement about teaching in physical education.
11. All teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly and manage pupils' behaviour effectively. This ensures that pupils learn in a harmonious and orderly environment, where they know what is expected of them. The best teaching is found in the class for pupils in Years 2 and 3, where the headteacher is a very effective role model for other staff. The very good teaching in this class is the main reason for the high standards in National Curriculum tests and for the very good achievement in English, mathematics and science. Very good teaching is found not only in this class, however. Teaching is sometimes very good in Year 1. For example, a literacy lesson during the inspection showed high expectations, thorough planning and very good matching of tasks to prior attainment. When pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are taught together in the afternoons, teaching is sometimes very good in lessons that are led by subject specialists. In a music lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and high expectations were evident in the challenging tasks that were set for pupils.
12. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is based on meticulous planning and a thorough knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy, National Numeracy Strategy and National Curriculum levels. The aims of lessons are communicated clearly to pupils and teachers use assessment information to identify what individual pupils need to learn next. Learning objectives are precise and work builds systematically on pupils' prior attainment. In English, mathematics and science, work is matched very carefully to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils; this is why achievement is so good and standards are high in these subjects. It is also why pupils achieved very well in a music lesson that spanned Years 1 to 3. The matching of work to the different needs of pupils is less well developed in other subjects, although there are usually different tasks for different year groups.
13. Parents all believe that teaching is good and know that staff expect their children to work hard. Most parents praise the way teachers explain how they can help their children at home and the

homework that is set. Not all parents realise, however, how good these arrangements are and how detailed the guidance is compared with that provided in most schools. Homework makes a definite contribution to pupils' achievement. Pupils are very positive about teaching and learning. They say that they nearly always find out new things in lessons, that learning is interesting and usually fun. They are clear that teachers expect them to work hard and say that they show them how to improve their work. Most pupils feel confident that a member of staff will help them if they are stuck.

14. Teachers assess pupils' work very carefully using an assessment system finely tuned to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and to the National Curriculum. They keep very precise records of pupils' attainment and progress and use these in their planning. Day-to-day assessment and marking are thorough, especially in English, and pupils nearly always respond well to this, although they do not all do their corrections without further prompting. Teachers keep portfolios of work in English, mathematics and science, having carefully moderated their assessment to make sure that all teachers are making similar judgements. Teacher assessments arrive at similar levels to those reached in National Curriculum tests, showing that assessment is accurate. Assessment is generally good in other subjects.
15. Through a substantial amount of staff training and the employment of a qualified nursery nurse, the school has successfully eliminated the unsatisfactory teaching found in the reception class at the time of the last inspection. The teaching of these children is generally good, with some very good features in particular areas of learning, but arrangements for this age group are not as good as those for pupils in Years 1 to 3. As a way of managing the combination of reception children and Year 1 pupils in one class, the teacher spends most of her time with the five Year 1 pupils and the nursery nurse works exclusively with the ten reception children. The teacher and nursery nurse plan together regularly and the arrangement works well enough for many activities. Reception children join pupils in Year 1 for short periods of time each day. This benefits their learning and certainly has a very good effect on their personal, social and emotional development. They do not, however, have any sessions where the teacher focuses on them as a discrete group and this particularly affects the achievement of higher attaining children in their mathematical development and writing. Staff are also unsure about how far they should go in matching tasks to the prior attainment of higher attaining children, largely because they were criticised at the last inspection for providing a curriculum that was too formal for children of this age. As a result, activities do not always enable these children to build on their existing skills.
16. Although the best teaching includes excellent features, no examples of excellent teaching were seen during the inspection; this is partly a result of the teachers' tendency to direct pupils' activities quite closely and to hold back from putting pupils 'on the spot' by providing them with really challenging questions.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and caters well for pupils' interests and needs; it supports pupils' overall achievement well. There are good enrichment opportunities, including a range of extra-curricular activities. Although the accommodation is very small, the learning environment is of good quality and the school is well resourced to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities, alongside the National Curriculum and religious education, enriches pupils' learning.
- The school provides very well for pupils with a wide range of prior attainment through its focus on the individual child.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, and good opportunities to develop skills in ICT.
- The school makes very good use of the limited space at its disposal; attractive displays and stimulating resources provide a stimulating environment; a good level of staffing supports learning.

Commentary

17. The school meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. It provides very well for pupils' personal development and makes appropriate provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship. A good range of visits and other forms of enrichment support pupils' learning, especially in English, history, music, personal, social and health education and physical education. The headteacher ensures that pupils have opportunities to join with other schools - for example, by taking part in an annual music festival - to widen their social horizons and give them some preparation for the experience of moving to much larger schools at the beginning of Year 4.
18. The school's capacity to provide for pupils of different prior attainment and needs, and its focus on the individual child is partly a result of being such a small school. Pupils and their needs are known intimately and teachers have more time to spend with each child than in a school with around 30 pupils in each class. This is clearly a major benefit and improves pupils' learning opportunities. Furthermore, the curriculum is planned so that pupils are able to achieve very well in English, mathematics and science regardless of their prior attainment. Pupils are grouped so that they follow a curriculum that meets their needs, with the exception of a small number of higher attaining children in the reception who could be making faster progress in some areas if they were grouped differently for some activities. Otherwise, the school does very well by its higher attaining pupils – as evidenced by the high proportion of pupils gaining Level 3 in National Curriculum tests, and exceptionally well by its lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
19. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy effectively and provides very well for the acquisition of basic skills of literacy and numeracy. This supports pupils' learning across the curriculum and helps to explain their very good achievement. ICT makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in a number of subjects and pupils make good use of the Internet to research information.
20. The accommodation is cramped but it is used very effectively and is just about adequate for the current number of pupils. Staff have worked hard to make the learning environment stimulating with attractive displays and lively resources that are easily accessible to pupils. A good deal of work has been undertaken to improve the outdoor area, especially with the construction of a verandah for use by children in reception, and the school has exciting plans for developing an adjoining field so that it supports a number of curriculum areas. Although the headteacher is the only full-time member of staff and the school relies on a number of part-time teachers, it has turned this situation to its advantage and attracted teachers with particular skills that complement those of existing staff. As a result, the school is well staffed to teach its curriculum and to develop further. Curriculum provision is further enhanced by a group of very skilled teaching assistants, an experienced nursery nurse and parent helpers, all of whom contribute significantly to pupils' learning and are used effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The school offers its pupils excellent care and guidance in a safe and supportive environment. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The monitoring of personal development and achievement is very effective. Pupils new to the school benefit from excellent induction information and arrangements. Pupils' relationships with teachers are excellent and the school is very active in seeking pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well cared for and receive a high level of individual support and guidance regardless of ability.
- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the staff.
- Pupils achieve very well partly because their personal development and achievement are monitored carefully.
- Pupils' views are sought on aspects of school planning and they feel that their contributions are valued.

Commentary

21. The mission of the school gives paramount importance to caring for and guiding the pupils - and this shows in all aspects of the school's life. Pupils know that they are important and matter as individuals within the school community because the emphasis is on caring for each individual pupil's needs. Support for pupils is excellent. The school works closely with parents from the outset. Parents' responses to the questionnaire and their comments at the meeting confirm that they appreciate and have confidence in the school's high levels of individual care and support for their children. Clear guidelines support the policies and ensure consistency across the school in matters such as child protection, discipline and first-aid procedures.
22. Support for pupils' personal development and achievement is excellent: this ensures that pupils are happy and feel secure and has a positive effect on their achievement. The high staff-to-pupil ratio enables teachers to know their pupils exceptionally well and they use this knowledge to encourage pupils to develop confidence and high self-esteem. Circle time is used effectively to discuss areas of personal development and pupils may request extra circle time if they want to discuss a particular issue. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for younger ones by acting as 'guardian angels'. Each week a pupil is selected for a 'special week' in which they have certain duties and other pupils highlight the chosen pupil's qualities. In the pupils' questionnaire, all pupils confirmed that there is an adult they can go to if they are worried at school. Academic achievement is supported closely through pupils' individual targets. Pupils know these well and their progress is monitored rigorously and effectively through detailed records of achievement.
23. Pupils know their views are important and respected because they are encouraged to partake regularly in discussions about aspects of school development. For example, they are currently involved in the planning of the school field, which is to include a nature garden and play area for sports, based on pupils' ideas.
24. Induction arrangements for new pupils are excellent, as the focus - which is on the child's welfare and ease of settling in - has been very carefully thought through. Parents at the meeting praised the pre-school visits, the open days and the fact that younger siblings are invited along with parents to attend reading mornings on Fridays.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the local community are excellent, founded upon strong, well-established partnership arrangements and the recognition of the importance of the parents' role in their children's learning. Parental involvement - both with work at home and support for the school - is also excellent, as is the quality of information for parents. Links with other schools are good: they are very good through the local support networks but less well established with pre-school provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided to parents about the school and their children's standards and progress is excellent.
- Links with parents contribute extremely well to pupils' learning at home and at school.
- Parental involvement through the Parent Teacher Association and help in school is excellent.
- The school plays a vital role in the village and in turn is very well supported by the community.
- The materials that are given to children to prepare them for starting school are exemplary.

Commentary

25. Parents at the meeting were highly positive about the school, and the responses to the questionnaires were very positive overall. However, the response of some parents shows that they may not realise just how fortunate they and their children are. Parental links are excellent. The school places significant importance on the partnership between home and school and encourages parental participation in several ways. Parents are consulted through questionnaires on school development, a feedback page on the website and the opportunity to put questions forward to be discussed at the governors' annual meeting. Their views are sought on a variety of topics. The school has acted upon several suggestions including, for example, the introduction of milk and fruit at playtime. As a result, parental support is very strong because parents know that their views are valued. Several parents help regularly in school and on trips. The Parent Teacher Association seeks ideas for fundraising from all parents and has raised substantial sums to enhance the outdoor play areas for the benefit of all the pupils.
26. The school prospectus is very comprehensive and provides an excellent range of information. A parents' guide to the curriculum contains additional information stressing the importance of partnership between home and school. The website and regular newsletters, which are sent out well in advance of any special activities or developments, keep parents up to date with what is going on. Parents are invited to share in their children's achievement through many opportunities to attend school events. It is clear that homework is a significant factor in pupils' progress, and parents are provided with very specific guidance on what is involved, expectations for homework and how they might help. Consequently, parental support for pupils' work at home is very good indeed. The information for families new to the school is excellent and an example that other schools could adopt.
27. Parents are encouraged to meet class teachers as soon as possible if they have a concern so that any problems can be ironed out quickly. Parents find the teachers approachable and very willing to share any concerns. The teachers act upon this quickly and effectively. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress through the detailed school reports, which are personal to each child and show the great extent to which teachers know the pupils. Parents praise these highly for their personal comments and details of how pupils can improve.
28. Community links are excellent because the school takes its role in the community very seriously and tries to involve villagers as much as possible. The school website has a link to the village website, and the school makes a monthly contribution to the parish magazine providing news and information to the wider community. Governors have invited local people

for open door discussions on areas such as the development of the school grounds, and the school is currently exploring ways to make the ICT facilities available for village use. In turn, villagers support the school very well and see it as an important village link. Some enrich the curriculum for pupils by sharing their local knowledge and expertise, and many attend school events. The link with the local church is also strong because the rector and his wife, a lay preacher, take assemblies every week and important Christian dates are celebrated in the church.

29. Links with local schools are good. The local small schools support network enables the sharing of knowledge, expertise and workload, bringing the teachers and pupils some of the advantages that larger schools enjoy. Transition arrangements for Year 3 pupils transferring to middle school are very good because North Crawley works closely with the main school for transfer. Several initiatives such as a bridging project and induction visits to and from the school help to ensure a smooth transition for pupils. The school has some links with pre-school providers but these are less well established and the school has recognised that this is an area for further development.
30. The excellent links established between the school and the local community and with parents benefit pupils in several ways: they not only support and broaden pupils' experience but enhance their sense of belonging and reinforce the important part they have to play both within their families and in the wider community.

Example of outstanding practice

As part of its induction arrangements, the school has produced an exemplary booklet that shows children exactly what they will experience when they start school.

The booklet, which is given to each child before s/he joins the reception class, contains a series of photographs of the teachers and support staff who will work with the child, the school uniform, the reception classroom, the toilets and cloakroom. It shows what happens at lunchtime and includes pictures of special celebrations. Each picture is accompanied by a simple description and resembles a child's storybook. There is a timetable for the school day written in a child-friendly way and photographs of daily activities. The booklet, to be shared by parents and their child, enables all members of the family to become familiar with the school routines and share the details that will become a daily part of each child's experience. In addition, children are given a personalised activity book for completion in the weeks before they start school, along with information for parents on how to support their child's early learning. These materials are highly appreciated by parents. As a result, children settle into school very quickly and parents say that they delight in pointing to pictures in the booklet and talking about their experiences. As a means of forging a powerful partnership with parents and helping young children to feel confident about school, this booklet is worthy of publication to inspire similar practice in schools across the country.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and ensures that the school is very well managed. She receives good support from other staff in positions of responsibility. The governing body fulfils its role very well, supporting and challenging the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and her input has been crucial to the school's improvement.
- As this is such a tiny school, the headteacher has a substantial teaching timetable; she manages this situation very well.
- The governing body provides a very good level of support and challenge to the school.
- The head and governors have a clear vision and take effective actions to improve the school.

Commentary

31. The headteacher provides very good leadership and her input has been key to the very good improvements that have been made since the last inspection. Since she took over the headship three years ago, she has worked systematically to raise standards and improve the quality of education. Being the only full-time teacher, she necessarily carries the leadership of most of the subjects – English, mathematics, science, humanities and ICT – as well as being responsible for special educational needs and assessment, and overseeing the curriculum. This has enabled her to focus very strongly on getting the teaching and curriculum right, as a means of raising pupils' achievement. In most areas, she has been very successful. She manages a number of part-time teachers effectively and works closely with members of staff on an individual basis to develop their skills.
32. The fact that the headteacher has to teach for much of the week could so easily be a disadvantage, weakening the leadership and management of the school, but she has turned it into an advantage by, as she puts it, 'leading from the front'. Her teaching has become an exemplar for other staff; she has used her own practice as a way of improving teaching throughout the school and conveying high expectations. The effect of this is particularly evident in the detailed way that most teachers plan their lessons, in the way that work is usually matched to different needs and in the way that pupils' work is assessed in English, mathematics and science. The head's heavy teaching commitment also means that she knows the pupils and their parents well, and she is in a position to make a very real impact on raising standards. Together, the head and governors have made careful appointments of a number of very part-time teachers to complement existing skills – again turning what could amount to destabilising fragmentation in the staffing into a means of enriching pupils' experience.
33. The governing body is heavily involved in the strategic development of the school and is involved in all key decisions. Governors are not at all complacent but actively seek to develop the school further. The Chair of Governors works in close collaboration with the headteacher and makes an excellent contribution by exploring the feasibility of possible developments and liaising directly with the local education authority and other interested parties. Governors discuss the school's effectiveness, contribute to policy development, monitor the budget closely and ensure that money is spent on the school's real priorities. They pay very good attention to best value and monitor in detail the effectiveness of spending, with a clear understanding that all spending should have a direct impact on pupils' academic or personal progress. The Chair of Governors has a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and its relative weaknesses, while a number of governors help in class or with practical tasks. Statutory requirements are met, except that the school has not yet monitored the implementation of its Race Equality policy or reported findings to parents.
34. Teamwork between the staff, governors and parents is strong: all share a commitment to providing a high quality experience for the pupils, and the shared vision of the headteacher and governors inspires others in the school community. School improvement planning is exceptionally well focused on raising standards and supports coherent development.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	122173
Total expenditure	111275
Expenditure per pupil	5058

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	13884
Balance carried forward to the next	22501

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Children in the reception class are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in their communication and language development; they achieve very well overall in these areas. Many children should exceed the Early Learning Goals in reading, where some children achieve very well. They are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development; for most children, this represents satisfactory achievement but higher attaining children are not currently doing as well as they could in this area of learning. Children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals in other areas, where their achievement is satisfactory.
36. Teaching in the reception class is good overall but teaching arrangements are not entirely satisfactory. Through a substantial amount of staff training and the employment of a qualified nursery nurse, the school has successfully eliminated the unsatisfactory teaching found in the reception class at the time of the last inspection. Teaching for these children is generally good but it is occasionally merely satisfactory and in need of some improvement to bring it up to the quality of provision in the rest of the school. The teacher and nursery nurse plan together regularly, and planning is very thorough. The teaching arrangements work well enough for many activities, and reception children join pupils in Year 1 for short periods of time each day. This benefits their learning and is certainly having a very good effect on their personal, social and emotional development. They do not, however, have any sessions where the teacher focuses on them as a discrete group, and this particularly affect the achievement of higher attaining children in mathematical development and in writing, although the nursery nurse works to good effect with most of the children in these sessions.
37. A good range of learning opportunities and resources is provided, which gives children an appropriate balance of focused activities and imaginative play. They have the chance to make choices, to work independently and in groups, and they benefit enormously from the small numbers and the skills and enthusiasm of the staff and afternoon helpers. Much improved access to outdoor play supports their learning and personal development.
38. The excellent induction arrangements, already detailed in this report, and satisfactory assessment arrangements mean that staff have access to reasonably detailed information about children's prior attainment but this information is not being used well enough to match work to individual learning needs. It has to be said that the inspection took place early in the autumn term and staff were necessarily concerned to settle children in and to integrate them socially. The high prior attainment of a small number of the children means, however, that they are ready to surge ahead in their learning at a faster pace than the others. Staff are unsure about how far they should go in matching tasks to the prior attainment of higher attaining children for fear of making learning too formal. As a result, activities do not always enable these children to build on their existing skills and the very good practice of matching tasks precisely to prior attainment – used to such good effect in Years 1 to 3 - has not been translated into practice in relation to mathematical development and the promotion of children's early writing. The wide range of prior attainment amongst the children who have just joined the school means that tasks need to be planned with particular care to take account of the abilities of individuals and groups. The most able children are clearly ready to undertake some work in mathematics and writing alongside Year 1 pupils if their potential is to be properly realised.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are achieving very well and should exceed the Early Learning Goals.
- Induction arrangements are excellent and enable children to settle in quickly.
- Children behave well and enjoy very good relationships.

Commentary

39. Children in the reception class are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end the year and are achieving very well in this area of learning. They benefit a great deal from the small adult to child ratio, which enables them to receive a good deal of individual attention. Staff are warm, sensitive and caring towards them, and children also benefit from interacting with pupils in Year 1 who serve as very good role models.
40. Induction arrangements are excellent and children settle in quickly. They are lively and confident, happy and secure. Parents speak very positively about the effect the school has on their children, noticing distinct improvements in their behaviour, manners and emotional well-being from an early stage.
41. Staff manage behaviour well and the behaviour of most children supports their learning. Higher attaining children show very good application and other children learn to concentrate on activities. All the children relate very well with one another, whether at work or play, and clearly trust the adults who work in the class and those with whom they come into contact in the school as whole. As a result, children make definite gains in confidence and self-awareness.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in communication and language development.
- The teaching of reading is very good and children achieve very well in this aspect of literacy.
- Most children achieve well in developing writing skills but higher attaining children are not doing as well as they could.

Commentary

42. Children achieve well in communication and language development because they benefit a great deal from the small adult to child ratio. Staff provide very good stimulation for language development and encourage children to talk about their ideas and experiences. The teaching of reading is very good and there are excellent opportunities for higher attaining children to join with Year 1 pupils for guided reading sessions. As a result, some pupils who have just come up from reception into Year 1 are reaching standards that are well above average for their age.
43. Such good arrangements are not currently available, however, for higher attaining children in writing. A small number of children who have just entered the reception class have already reached aspects of the Early Learning Goals in aspects of writing, whereas others have much ground to cover during this year. The school needs to be more aware of the differing prior

attainment of children in this aspect of literacy; one or two children are ready to move forward at a faster pace than the majority. These children already know the alphabet. The most able children can write simple sentences, forming letters with reasonable accuracy. Teaching and activities are directed more at the needs of the majority who are at an early stage in learning their letters and who cannot yet write their names. As a result, these children make good progress, whereas higher attaining children are under-performing in writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children achieve at least satisfactorily and should reach the Early Learning Goals.
- Higher attaining children are underachieving.

Commentary

44. Most children's mathematical development is at least satisfactory because activities are matched to their relatively undeveloped mathematical skills. They have appropriate opportunities to learn the language of mathematics, to compare and contrast, to sort and sequence, as well as to learn about counting and numbers.
45. Based on the one lesson seen, talking to children, scrutiny of the teacher's planning and discussion with staff, it is evident that the most able children are not achieving as well as they could do in mathematical development. A small number of children who have just entered the reception class are already in advance of what is required by the Early Learning Goals. Two children can count quite competently up to around 30; the most able child can count very confidently to 40 and beyond. These children have grasped the underlying concepts needed to surge ahead in their work with number and other aspects of mathematical development. The planning of activities and teaching do not take this sufficiently into account, although children are grouped for activities according to ability within the reception class. These children are, therefore, underachieving and are not currently likely to far exceed the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development – which should be easily within their grasp.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

46. No sessions were observed where knowledge and understanding of the world was the focus. Scrutiny of planning and discussions with staff suggest that achievement is at least satisfactory in this area and that children should reach the Early Learning Goals. Their understanding is supported well by enrichment activities such as organised visits and through joining in with older pupils in the school for assemblies and special events. They achieve satisfactorily in their learning in religious education and attractive displays familiarise children with the traditions of some other cultures. They have good opportunities to use ICT and are already competent in moving the cursor around the screen, showing good mouse control and a growing familiarity with a number of simple and stimulating programs, so that they are able to make things happen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

No sessions were observed where physical development was the focus. Scrutiny of planning and discussions with staff suggests that achievement is at least satisfactory in this area and that children should easily reach the Early Learning Goals. Children have good access to a range of equipment to develop their hand-to-eye co-ordination; they have equally good access to a number of wheeled toys – which they pedal and steer with great delight at break times.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

No sessions were observed where creative development was the focus. Scrutiny of planning and discussions with staff suggests that achievement is satisfactory in this area and that children should reach the Early Learning Goals. They have satisfactory opportunities to engage in artistic activities and good opportunities to experience music and singing, especially when they join with other pupils in daily assemblies. They learn the words of a range of songs and are beginning to accompany these with actions. Opportunities for imaginative role-play are good, supported by a range of commercially produced toys and props, including the chance to dress up. Opportunities for children to use less clearly defined props or spaces symbolically to represent imaginary scenarios are more limited; this is an area of potential development of which the school is aware and is trying to build into its plans for the school field.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection and the school now enables pupils to reach standards that are well above average in reading and writing.
- Pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching and very effective leadership of the subject.

Commentary

47. In 2002, results in reading and writing were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. Test results in reading and writing rose in 2003: all pupils gained Level 2 in reading and writing, which was well above the national average. Forty per cent of pupils gained Level 3 in English, which is again well above the national average and is likely to place the school in the top five per cent nationally. These results were particularly good, when pupils' prior attainment is taken into account. Test results show that the school is doing well by its higher attaining pupils and particularly well by average and lower attaining pupils. The school exceeded its targets at Level 2 in reading and writing and at Level 3 in writing; it met its targets at Level 3 in reading.
48. The small classes mean that pupils have very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They are keen to answer questions and teachers use pupils' own questions very well, by turning them around and inviting other pupils' responses. Teachers extend pupils' vocabulary well, as in a Year 1 literacy lesson when the teacher showed pupils a globe to put the big book about Africa into context and provided an opportunity to introduce them to words such as 'continent'. In a literacy lesson in Years 2 and 3, the teacher knelt down on the floor amongst the pupils as she listened to their experiences of dressing up for special occasions.

They were confidently letting their ideas flow and listened very carefully to others' personal stories.

49. Pupils achieve very well in reading. Those who have just moved into Year 1 are able to read single-syllable words and use picture clues to read more difficult words. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 are able to use their knowledge of the alphabet to order such unfamiliar and complex words as 'plaintain' and 'apkasa'. In a guided reading lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3, the teacher used probing questioning techniques to prompt pupils to talk about their characters, successfully eliciting considerable detail. The learning support assistant, who was very clear about her role, quickly engaged pupils with the text and got them to interpret not only what was being said but also why a particular character was speaking in this way. Pupils have a lively interest in reading; all but the very lowest attainers read fluently and with expression. Older pupils are able to select words from a text and explain the meaning of particular phrases.
50. Pupils achieve very well in writing because teachers match work precisely to their prior attainment, and pupils' work shows that they are making rapid progress. Older pupils have a very good grasp of a range of punctuation, including apostrophes, speech marks, question marks and exclamation marks. Pupils quickly develop fluent handwriting and most present their work very well, clearly taking pride in their written work.
51. In any given lesson, at least three different writing tasks are provided, matched to different learning needs. A range of strategies, such as writing frames and a multi-sensory approach³, is used to enable pupils to progress at their particular level. In a Year 2 and 3 literacy lesson, allowing pupils to touch the clothes that are worn on special occasions – including a pair of fluffy and iridescent wings – led them not only to realise how clothes can make us 'feel special' but also to identify words to describe the tactile experience. Once pupils move onto their writing, they benefit enormously from the small number of pupils per adult; the teacher has time to prompt individual pupils to think about the words they are using and to develop their ideas further.
52. Teaching is very good; this ensures that pupils achieve very well and that new learning builds progressively and coherently on what pupils can do already. Lessons are always very well organised and everyone knows exactly what is expected of them. Planning is meticulous and reflects teachers' very good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Curriculum. Work is matched very carefully to pupils' prior attainment, with quite different tasks for different groups of pupils, based on their prior attainment, that are based on precise learning objectives – even if the topic is the same. It is clear that teachers know exactly what work pupils need to cover to move up through the National Curriculum grades and to be fully prepared for the tests at the end of Year 2. Pupils have targets in the front of their books and thorough marking makes clear to them what they need to do to improve. Pupils in their turn want to succeed and readily celebrate each other's success. Teachers encourage pupils and make appropriate use of 'stickers' to reward excellent work, but also challenge them to develop skills of enquiry and to do as well as they can. Homework makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning in reading and writing. ICT makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement and to the presentation of their work.
53. The subject is led very well by the headteacher who provides an excellent role model for other staff in her planning, in matching work to different learning needs and assessing pupils' work using criteria that are skilfully matched to the National Literacy Strategy and the National Curriculum. She has worked very effectively with other teachers to ensure that good improvement has been made since the last inspection, and these features of teaching have been key to raising standards in English throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

³ A multi-sensory approach to learning is when pupils explore ideas using a range of senses and when resources are chosen so that they offer visual and tactile stimulation, as well as relying on words for communication.

54. Pupils develop very good literacy skills that support their learning in other subjects. Their early capacity to write and to present information – in flow charts and diagrams as well as in formal writing – opens up opportunities for them to work independently at home and enables them to express themselves clearly. In religious education, pupils' ability to write about their ideas and feelings has led to some touching and affective prayers on the world situation. Their competence in reading means that they are able to use books to find information. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well across the curriculum, for instance, through written work in geography and history, and in recording notes in science and design and technology.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach very high standards.
- They have very good attitudes to the subject.
- Teaching is very good, enabling pupils to learn effectively.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support.
- Management is very effective.
- ICT is used well to support learning in mathematics.

Commentary

55. Standards have risen since the last inspection and the school now enables pupils to reach standards that are very high, representing very good achievement. Since 2001, the school's test results have placed it in the top five per cent both nationally and compared with similar schools. In 2003, all pupils gained Level 2 in mathematics and 40 per cent of pupils gained Level 3. These results are again very high and are particularly good, given the local education authority's prediction that 2003 results would drop below those of previous years based on pupils' lower than average prior attainment. Test results show that the school is doing well by its higher attaining pupils and particularly well by average and lower attaining pupils. The school significantly exceeded its targets for the number of pupils reaching Level 2 in 2003. The local authority also set targets for Level 3 in 2003, which the school exceeded in mathematics. Test results and pupils' work shows that in Years 1, 2 and 3 pupils achieve very well.
56. Teaching and learning are very good. The success lies in the careful planning to cater for the individual needs of each pupil, whether they learn more slowly or more quickly. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress towards their targets. This was evident in the learning about two-dimensional shapes in Years 2 and 3. Pupils enjoyed mathematical games and were able to recognise and name pentagons, hexagons, octagons and even quadrilaterals. There was fun in the learning, in remembering that an octagon is an eight-sided figure, by thinking of an octopus. The teacher related the learning to everyday life. 'Where do we use heptagons every day?' asked the teacher. 'In money,' responded the pupils.
57. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and, even while the teacher is engaged elsewhere, they collaborate and support each other. Careful assessment of each pupil's work ensures that individual targets are set and pupils know what they have to do to improve.
58. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Well above average standards show that management over time has been very effective. The school analyses test results effectively to find what more pupils need to learn to improve. There is a clear plan of action to help raise standards in all areas. Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

Parents are kept very well informed, in helping with homework or being asked to reinforce a particular concept.

59. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Tapes, videos and software are used to support and reinforce learning and pupils have made good use of ICT in work on data handling.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. There is effective use of mathematics in other subjects. Pupils extend their vocabulary through learning mathematical terms. They practise their literacy skills through reading mathematical problems. Findings are accurately displayed in a range of charts and graphs. Pupils measure accurately in design and technology and in science. Younger pupils sing number rhymes and songs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and all reach, or exceed, the expected standard by the end of Years 2 and 3.
- The curriculum is well organised so that scientific skills are developed effectively.
- Pupils are keen, behave well and enjoy the practical activities.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Good use is made of pupils' literacy and mathematical skills.
- The outside environment is used well to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

61. Standards have risen since the last inspection and the school now enables pupils to reach standards that are well above average, representing very good achievement. In 2002, the school's test results in science were well above the national average. All pupils gained Level 2 in science in 2003, which was well above the national average. Forty per cent of pupils gained Level 3, which is again well above the national average. These results are particularly good, given the prediction that 2003 results would drop below those of previous years based on pupils' lower than average prior attainment. Test results show that the school is doing well by its higher attaining pupils and particularly well by average and lower attaining pupils. The school significantly exceeded its targets for the number of pupils reaching Level 2 in National Curriculum tests in 2003. The local authority also set targets for Level 3 in 2003, which the school met in science. Current work shows that standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3, and pupils' practical skills are well developed. This represents very good achievement.
62. Pupils achieve very well in science because of a well-organised curriculum, with a strong emphasis on practical activities. The curriculum is planned using national guidance, which is suitably modified to meet the particular character of the school. The emphasis on practical activities to enhance knowledge and skills was evident in pupils' books and on display. In their work on materials and their properties, pupils in Years 2 and 3 have produced their own information books. They have thought about properties and materials in answering questions such as, 'What am I? – I love rain. I am fabric, wood and metal'. Their literacy skills are developed through the wide range of vocabulary used, and mathematics skills are practised through sorting the materials into different groups.

63. Pupils are keen to learn about science and to get involved with practical activities. When working in groups, they learn to share and collaborate. Higher attaining or older pupils help the younger pupils. This encourages pupils to behave very well and make very good strides in their learning. They talk about their walks around the village and in particular have learnt about the flowers in the church courtyard.
64. Co-ordination is very effective. Assessment at a whole school level is well planned, and pupils' progress is tracked well. Marking is usually detailed and helpful so that pupils know what they need to do to improve. ICT is used well to support learning in science. Pupils have used the Internet for research as part of their work on the eye and they tested their knowledge of parts of a flower by combining text and graphics to produce a labelled picture. The school uses a range of stimulating CD-ROMs to bring science to life.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information and communication technology supports learning effectively in a number of areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils have very positive views about ICT.
- The subject is co-ordinated well and the school has clear plans for developing ICT further.

Commentary

65. Pupils reach above average standards, and achievement is good across the school. Pupils in Year 3 worked with obvious excitement on a simulation adventure game. They carried out a survey of their favourite fruits and used a data base program to study their findings. The Internet has provided a rich source of information to support learning in a geography project on The Isle of Struay and in finding out about life in times past for history. All pupils show improvement in their mouse control, choosing a variety of tools to draw, using computer graphics, and combining images and text. All pupils make good progress in data handling, presenting information graphically using pictograms. Pupils in Year 3 have taken this further and produced a variety of graphs as a way of analysing data, then drawn conclusions from their findings. They have used a digital camera as part of their work on sculpture. ICT supports the good standards reached in their art. In computer art, higher attaining pupils have produced effective figure drawings that show sophisticated understanding of layering techniques and an ability to navigate a menu selecting a number of different effects.
66. The skills of control technology are taught systematically. Pupils have practised putting sequences of instructions together and have devised their own instructions for a programmable toy. They have not yet been able to put their instructions into practice because the school has only recently replaced the control device. Pupils have, however, experienced controlling a robot on the computer screen and successfully devised a sequence of instructions. This work is to be developed further.
67. Pupils are excited about working with computers. In discussion, the main thing they would wish to change about their school would be for each of them to have a computer.
68. A scheme of work is in place and a very good system is used to assess pupils' competency, which makes clear what skills pupils have mastered and what they have still to acquire.
69. The co-ordinator has clear plans for the subject and is creating a good ethos for learning. The school has moved forward since the previous inspection in acquiring new machines. It is now working to increase the use of ICT in a number of subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. ICT makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in a number of subjects. Pupils use word processing to publish their work, for example in English and history, and to create presentations on Viking war boats. Internet research supports work across the curriculum appropriately.

HUMANITIES

71. It was not possible to observe any geography or history lessons during the inspection. Pupils' work in both suggests that they are achieving at least satisfactorily and reaching standards broadly in line with national expectations. They present their written work very neatly and make good use of ICT when researching topics and presenting their findings. Through geography and history, pupils learn to organise information and analyse change; they pose questions and are able to use a range of different sources of information. Attractive displays on the travels of Barnaby Bear and on the local area show that teaching stimulates an awareness of geographical features and makes learning fun.
72. It was only possible to observe one religious education lesson during the inspection but the work in pupils' books and on display provided additional evidence from which to make judgements about teaching and achievement.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is successful in developing pupils' understanding of spiritual and moral issues and in developing knowledge of Christianity.
- It is less effective in teaching pupils about any other major world religions or their traditions.
- Pupils have written prayers that are reflective, sensitive and show spiritual awareness.
- Pupils' work and the one lesson observed showed that teaching is satisfactory but that it could be more stimulating.
- The school recognises that religious education needs to be improved and has appointed a teacher with responsibility for this; it is too early for improvements to have taken effect.

Commentary

73. Developing pupils' understanding of spiritual and moral issues is central to the school's purpose. Pupils are encouraged to think of others, to be caring and develop a code of ethics that underpins the subsequent decisions they make. They learn about the major features of Christianity in religious education and through the school's links with the local church. The rector or his wife comes into school each week to lead assembly and pupils attend special services of celebration in the church. In this way, they develop a knowledge of Christianity and learn something of what it means to be committed to a religious tradition. They learn to respect others' views and come to appreciate that there are times in each person's life that are of special significance. In an English lesson in Years 2 and 3, the teacher emphasised the magic of special clothes that are worn to celebrate special occasions or rites of passage. This enchanted pupils and enabled them to dwell on a sense of 'specialness' and to think about how someone might feel in a special situation. Pupils are open to feelings of awe and receptive to those aspects of the school's ethos that promote spirituality.
74. Pupils write very personal prayers, revealing that they think deeply not only about their immediate experience but also about the world situation. This is evident in their prayers about the war in Iraq and in the comparisons they make between their advantaged lives in the west

and the lives of poor people in other countries. They speak directly and openly to God in these prayers and reveal an understanding of the place of prayer in worship. This is reinforced effectively when pupils say 'grace' each day before they eat their lunch and before they go home.

75. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils have spent little time considering any other major world religion, although they have touched upon small details. Vivid descriptions and definitions of Diwali by pupils in Years 2 and 3 show a good understanding of this festival, and a display in Year 1 gives pupils access to the imagery of Indian religious traditions. Otherwise, there have been few opportunities for pupils to become aware of the diversity as well as unity to be found in religious beliefs and pupils have not yet visited places of worship except those associated with Christianity.
76. In the lesson for pupils from Years 1 to 3, staff had made good use of the local church as a stimulus for pupils' learning. Activities were appropriately different for the three year-groups and there were some good opportunities for pupils to undertake independent learning and research using Bibles and other books. Not all pupils were fully involved in whole-class discussions, however, and pupils tended to reinforce what they had learnt on their visit to the church rather than gaining new skills and concepts. Pupils' work supports the judgement of satisfactory teaching, satisfactory achievement and average standards evident within this lesson. Pupils cover a reasonable range of topics and their literacy skills support learning very well. Teaching is not consistent in bringing the subject to life as much as it could, however, and the level of pupils' awareness - so evident in their prayers - does not come through in most of the other work that they have produced. Their spirituality appears to be fostered more effectively in the school as a whole than in religious education lessons.
77. The co-ordination of religious education is satisfactory. The school has identified that religious education needs to be improved and recently appointed a part-time teacher with expertise in this area. She has begun to liaise with the diocesan adviser on a new Agreed Syllabus that is being introduced. It is too early for this liaison or appointment to have made a real impact on pupils' learning. The school has a good range of books and photographs to support teaching and learning in religious education. Learning materials available within the school are supplemented by access to artefacts within the local church.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. It was not possible to observe any art and design or design and technology lessons during the inspection. In music, one lesson was observed and curriculum plans were examined. Only a few minutes of a physical education lesson were observed so that is not enough evidence to make a judgement about physical education.
79. Pupils' work suggests that they achieve well in art and reach standards that are above national expectations. This is because they have good opportunities to work with a range of materials and techniques and they are clearly motivated by the subject. Collages based on the collection and arrangement of a range of natural objects show good visual and textural awareness. Other work shows that pupils gain a good grasp of the main elements of art – colour, line, tone, form and composition. The drawings they have produced using a computer art package show good control of the mouse and the skilful use of a range of paint effects; the highest attaining pupil has produced a delightful figure drawing using subtle 'washes' of colour that show excellent understanding and technical skill. From these examples, it is clear that teaching and learning are good in art and that learning opportunities are suitably varied.
80. Work in design and technology suggests that pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach national expectations. They learn about mechanisms, such as cams, by making simple models, and join materials to create a range of structures. When working in resistant materials, they use a number of tools competently, as when they made hand puppets. In food technology, they learn

some of the basic ways of preparing food, such as grating, chopping and mixing and enjoy eating what they have made.

81. Standards are above average in music because the teacher who takes pupils in Years 1 to 3 for the subject is a specialist with high expectations who provides exciting tasks that are well matched to pupils' prior attainment. In a lesson observed, the work set for Year 1 pupils – who were supported by the teaching assistant – was highly challenging and enabled pupils to compose music using a range of instruments. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 were equally challenged by the task of interpreting a painting as a piece of music. All pupils learnt very well and reached standards that were above those expected for their age. Daily singing in assembly consolidates learning in music lessons; pupils sing enthusiastically and keep good time.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision or achievement in personal, social and health education; it was only possible to observe one citizenship lesson and to talk with the co-ordinator. Teaching and learning were good in this lesson and pupils were made aware of their role in the local community. The school ethos and assemblies contribute very positively to pupils' development as effective citizens, who have a duty to consider others, as well as to their personal and social education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).