

INSPECTION REPORT

HADRIAN LOWER SCHOOL

Dunstable

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109505

Headteacher: Mrs Wendy Jenkins

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th November 2003

Inspection number: 259795

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	224
School address:	Hadrian Avenue Dunstable Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU5 4SR
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing body Hadrian Lower School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Bottoms
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hadrian Lower School serves an area of mixed housing to the east of Dunstable centre. The school is about the same size as most similar schools and has broadly equal numbers of boys and girls on roll. Although the school's socio-economic circumstances are broadly average, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. This disadvantages the school when similar schools comparisons are made. Thirty-three pupils are on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register (14.7 per cent), which is below average. The proportion of pupils with SEN statements (1.3 per cent) is also below average. The most common aspects of need are physical and difficulties with literacy and numeracy. Almost all pupils (94 per cent) are from the white British ethnic group. The most common other ethnic groups are Mixed, White and Black Caribbean, Black or Black British African and other White backgrounds. No pupils who speak English as an additional language are at an early stage of learning to speak the language. When they enter the school, most children are achieving standards that are well below those expected for their age. The school received an Achievement Award in 2001, and in 2003 one teacher from the school won the regional final of the New Teacher of the Year competition. The school has a satellite class from the neighbouring Glenwood School for children with severe learning difficulties. This is known as Hummingbird class. This is financially and organisationally separate from Hadrian Lower School, but pupils from the Hummingbird class are integrated into the mainstream school wherever possible.

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16760	Dorothy Latham	Team inspector	English, art and design, design and technology, music. Children in the Foundation Stage.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hadrian Lower School is a good school where the care and welfare of pupils are a high priority. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are very good. She is well supported by other senior teachers and the governing body. An important strength is the way in which she ensures that the school's ethos, combining the full development of each pupil with their full inclusion in all its work, is promoted very effectively. The integration of pupils in the Hummingbird class is excellent. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is also excellent, and teaching and learning across the school are good. Standards in Year 4 are above average in music and average in all other subjects where judgements have been made. The school adds significant value to pupils' personal, social and emotional development and most make good progress as they move through the school. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is excellent and provides them with a very good start to their time at school.
- The excellent integration of pupils in the Hummingbird class promotes all pupils' social and personal development very well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and she is well supported by a knowledgeable deputy and effective subject managers.
- By the time they leave the school, pupils achieve standards in music that are above those expected for their age.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and the very good relationships evident throughout the school positively support their learning.
- The quality of teachers' planning and the positive way that pupils are managed are important features of the good teaching across the school.
- Although literacy skills are taught well across the school, the application of writing and recording skills, especially in mathematics and science are not developed sufficiently.
- Across the school, pupils have insufficient opportunities to investigate in science and to solve problems in mathematics.
- More able pupils are not consistently challenged in mathematics.

Overall the school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in October 1998. Good progress has been made in improving the quality of teachers' planning and in extending the rich experiences in the four plus unit. The very good strengths in leadership have been maintained well and the proportion of good teaching has been increased. The school has been less successful in raising standards, especially in relation to similar schools. But the average standards which most pupils still achieve should be seen in the context of good improvement from a low base when they enter the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table below shows that in 2003 pupils achieved above average standards in their writing, average standards in mathematics and below average standards in reading. However, standards were lower when compared with similar schools. Although the school's socio-economic circumstances are broadly average, the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. This continues to place the school at a disadvantage when compared with similar schools.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001]	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	C	D	E
writing	A	C	B	C
mathematics	A	C	C	E

*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 make good progress across the school and they achieve well. Currently children in the Foundation Stage attain standards in all areas of learning that are below average and standards in their personal, social and emotional development that are well below average. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 attain average standards in all subjects except for geography and art and design which were not inspected and in music in Year 4 where standards are above average. Standards are average in literacy and numeracy. There is evidence to show that the good and very good teaching seen in Year 4 is accelerating the progress that pupils make but this has not yet had time to impact significantly on raising overall standards. Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress towards their own learning targets.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well and promotes the important sense of community in the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good across the school but very good in the Foundation Stage. Here, the leader and her team have a very clear understanding and appreciation of the needs of these young children and provide rich experiences to interest and challenge them. Strengths in teaching in Years 1 to 4 are in the quality of teachers' planning and their positive management of pupils in their class. Teachers share the learning intended in the lesson with the pupils and set them clear targets. This involves pupils well and improves their learning. Assessment procedures are thorough and effective. A strength is the way in which they are consistently applied across the school. Very good levels of care help pupils to feel safe, secure and valued. Effective links with parents, and very good links established with the community and other schools, positively support the school's work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The very effective leadership of the headteacher and the well established management systems she has devised contribute significantly to the school's success. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's development and her management of the satellite class has been excellent. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Governance is good. Governors are involved well in the life of the school and individual governors use their interest and expertise very well. They are beginning to evaluate the school's work critically.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and are happy with its work. Pupils also feel valued and well supported. Most like being at school and are confident about approaching an adult if they are worried.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

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

- Ensure that pupils use writing and recording skills more effectively across other curriculum areas, especially in mathematics and science. *
- Continue to develop pupils' investigative skills in science and their problem solving skills in mathematics. *
- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged in mathematics.

* Priorities already identified in the school improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain standards that are below those expected for their age in all areas of learning, except in their personal, social and emotional development where standards are well below average. In Year 2, pupils attain average standards in all subjects where it has been possible to make judgements in this inspection. Standards are also average in Year 4, except in music where pupils attain standards above those expected for their age.

Most children enter the school attaining standards that are well below those expected for their age. This is an important difference from the judgement made at the previous inspection where attainment on entry to the school was judged to have been average. Since 1998, there has been a significant drop in the standards children achieve when they come into the school. When the current Year 4 pupils took the national tests at the age of seven, most achieved standards that were below and well below those expected for their age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across the school, pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning because the teaching and the curriculum meet their needs very well.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress towards their own learning targets.
- Across the school, pupils make good progress in their acquisition of literacy skills.
- Pupils in Year 4 attain above average standards in music.
- The needs of pupils of all abilities are met well in most subjects, but not fully in mathematics.

Commentary

1. Analysis of the school's results in the recent national tests for seven-year-olds shows that there has been a significant fluctuation between different years and across different subjects in the same year group. Overall trends since 2001 show that standards have dropped, especially in reading and mathematics. In 2003, pupils achieved above average standards in their writing, average standards in mathematics and below average standards in reading. Comparisons with similar schools continue to be unfavourable. Standards have risen in writing as a result of the initiatives which the school has introduced.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Despite maintaining important strengths in the overall leadership of the school and the management of the curriculum, the school has been unable to make significant improvement in the key issue from the last inspection which encouraged it to improve attainment in national test results especially in comparison with similar schools. The school remains disadvantaged because the relatively high employment locally means that the proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is unusually low. This does not represent the true socio-economic situation of the school. There has also been a significant drop in the standards achieved on entry to the school. This has made improving standards achieved in national tests more difficult.

3. Analysis of the comparative data from the most recent profile of children in the Foundation Stage shows that standards at this school are well below those of most other schools when they begin. Most children are likely to still be achieving below average standards in all areas of learning when they begin Year 1. Standards in their personal, social and emotional development are well below average. However, this represents good progress in their learning. All children, including those with special educational or language needs, are appropriately challenged and achieve well.
4. In the current Year 2, standards are average in all subjects except in geography, art and design and design and technology where no overall judgement could be made. Where it is possible to make comparisons, these judgements are in line with those made at the last inspection. In Year 4, pupils attain above average standards in music, and average standards in most other subjects. It was not possible to make judgements about standards in geography and art and design.
5. Across the school, pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Good progress is achieved in all aspects of English, science, religious education, history and physical education across the school, and in music and design and technology in Years 3 and 4. Pupils make the best progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 4 where the proportion of good teaching is highest. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve particularly well as a result of the excellent provision and very good, focused teaching they receive. The progress that pupils make is accelerated in Year 4 as a result of the good teaching there, but this has not yet had time to impact on raising standards significantly. Pupils in Year 4 have made good progress from the below and well below average standards that they achieved in the national tests as seven-year-olds.
6. Across the school, the needs of most pupils are met well. Provision for pupils with SEN is good and these pupils make good progress towards their targets. Most support is given by withdrawing a few pupils at a time, but some focused support is provided within lessons. The school makes sound provision for gifted and talented pupils through the organisation of separate curriculum groups in literacy and numeracy. These extension group programmes have been organised and taught by the deputy headteacher and the English co-ordinator. Across the school, teachers' planning makes reference to activities which are organised for pupils of different abilities. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily overall, but not fully successfully in mathematics. Literacy skills are taught progressively and successfully across the school. However, pupils in Year 4 still have difficulty in predicting what might happen in stories they are reading or to discuss what they like about different authors. Standards in music in Year 4 are above average. Here, pupils sing tunefully, with enthusiasm and clear diction. They have good opportunities to listen to a wide range of music and of producing their own compositions and accompaniment. Computers are used well across most subject areas. Their use is not fully established in science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour overall are very good. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' confidence and self esteem are very good and they are willing to, and enjoy taking, responsibility.
- Parents and pupils appreciate the caring, family atmosphere.
- Pupils show a high interest and enjoyment in learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- The school sets high expectations and most pupils strive hard to achieve them.
- Relationships between all pupils, and between pupils and all adults, are very good.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of right and wrong and show respect for others' feelings and beliefs.
- Pupils' appreciation of their responsibilities of living in a community is very good and their appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions is good.
- Pupils have many opportunities for taking responsibility, including an active school council.
- Four pupils were excluded in the past school year.

Commentary

7. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national median. During interviews and discussions with pupils, it was very evident that they enjoyed school. Many commented that they wanted to come to school because they enjoyed their learning so much. The fact that there have been no unauthorised absences reflects these positive attitudes. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	211	10	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	2	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

8. Although there was a relatively high number of exclusions in the past school year this was not typical of other years and the school clearly followed the correct procedures.
9. Most pupils show great interest in their lessons and strive hard to achieve the high expectations of their teachers. The very good methods of behaviour management adopted by the whole school staff have a positive effect on pupils' learning and, where there is good teaching, excellent learning attitudes are generated. Overall, behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and on the playground. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are all aware of the school and class rules and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good with moral and social understanding being particularly strong and encouraged at every opportunity. The culture promoted by the school is one of a large and happy family where everyone is valued and respected. The outstanding manner in which Hummingbird pupils are integrated into mainstream lessons and the care shown by all pupils towards them is one example of this. The very strong personal, social and citizenship elements of PHSCE curricular lessons reinforce this caring culture on a regular basis. Both parents and pupils confirm how much they enjoy and benefit from this caring environment.

10. Pupils have many opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond well to them. The school council ensures that pupils' views are heard and listened to. Every class from Years 1 to 4 is represented on the council. School council representatives interviewed during the inspection demonstrated mature, articulate and very responsible attitudes. A council meeting observed reinforced these findings with the participants taking their duties very seriously. Other routine responsibilities are also carried out quietly and without the need for supervision. The school ensures that every pupil, regardless of age, gender or ability has some opportunity to enjoy responsibility.
11. Pupils have a very good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and are given many opportunities to reflect on these feelings. The regular involvement of pupils from Hummingbird class in activities encourages pupils to be very aware of children with very different needs from their own. Regular whole school and class assemblies ensure pupils receive recognition of their efforts and the 'Friends' assembly invites parents and friends to share this. Pupils are constantly encouraged to think of others by means of Hummingbird pupils, the school council and many other volunteer duties. This activity, coupled with the family atmosphere that permeates the school, ensures that pupils' social development is very good, Relationships between pupils and with all the staff are very good and pupils are able to work and play together collaboratively. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture and opportunities are taken to widen their knowledge of other cultures by visits to local churches, a Hindu temple and places of historical and cultural interest. Visitors of various faiths take assemblies and are involved in class lessons where pupils have the opportunity to discuss cultural differences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is excellent and this is an important strength of the school. The support of pupils with SEN is good. Across the school, literacy skills are taught well and numeracy skills are taught soundly.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This confirms the very positive views of both parents and pupils. They are very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 4. Assessment procedures are excellent in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All the adults in the Foundation Stage have a very clear understanding of how young children learn and provide a rich variety of experiences across all areas of learning.
- Across the school, teachers' lesson planning is detailed and thorough and shows clearly the learning and activities planned for each session.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and literacy skills are taught well.
- Pupils are managed very well and the effective learning environments which teachers create help to encourage and motivate pupils to do well.
- Teaching is imaginative and resources are used well.
- The assessment procedures, which are excellent in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 4, are applied consistently across the school.
- Higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged in mathematics.
- Teachers do not emphasise sufficiently the importance of detailed, clear recorded work, especially in aspects of mathematics and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	7 (14%)	34 (68%)	8 (16%)	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.

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage ranges from good to excellent and is very good overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn are excellent. As a result, planning is also excellent, as are assessment procedures. Teachers have high expectations of the children, and give them very good encouragement. Children are involved very well, and excellent use is made of first hand experience together with a high level of interaction with adults. This is accompanied by skilled use of language to enhance learning. Resources are excellent and time is used very well. Assistants are very well trained, and very well deployed. Children learn very well from their teaching and their experiences, against their previous learning, and they are interested and apply themselves well for their age.
13. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 4 are good. Strengths in teaching have been maintained and extended since the last inspection. Teaching was good overall, but the proportion of good teaching has been increased. An important current strength is the quality of teachers' lesson planning. The school has worked hard to ensure a consistency of approach and this has now been achieved very well. This has represented a good response to a key issue identified at the last inspection. Planning now successfully takes account of pupils' knowledge and skills, objectives for learning are explicit and assessment is used to inform planning. Teachers' plans now show clearly the learning intended in the lesson and how the activities planned support and encourage pupils' learning. Plans are clear and detailed and set out the context and conduct of each lesson well. A further strength is the way in which the learning intended is shared with the pupils at the beginning, during and at the end of the lesson. This helps to keep all pupils focused on what they need to know and do.
14. Teachers show good, confident subject knowledge. This is particularly strong in the important area of their literacy work. Teachers are able to introduce concepts and skills progressively and to answer confidently pupils' questions. This improves pupils' learning. Teachers use imaginative approaches to interest and involve pupils. A further strength is the way in which activities are practical wherever possible. This ensures that pupils are encouraged to learn by doing. Pupils are managed well. They are given clear instructions, their responses in class discussion and the work they produce are valued and they are encouraged to work co-operatively in some activities. These features all help to improve pupils' motivation and commitment to their own learning.
15. Literacy skills are taught well. Several features of very good, effective teaching were observed in a literacy lesson to pupils in Year 4. The focus of the lesson was based on work being done on the book 'Henry's Boot'. Pupils had read the story and were being encouraged to plan their own stories that were similar but different from that in the book. The teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge as she introduced the lesson by helping the pupils to identify the different aspects of the story and to use these as a structure for their own work. A very concentrated time of writing ensued, as the pupils were fully committed to their task. As they worked, the teacher provided very important support as she both encouraged pupils and suggested improvements that they could make. The results at the end of the lesson showed that pupils' writing was more imaginative and vocabulary was chosen well for particular effects. Pupils had made good progress in their learning.
16. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils who have SEN is good. Teachers provide suitable work so that these pupils are able to join in lessons fully. Support assistants are good and provide the extra help that is needed. When pupils are withdrawn for extra help, teaching is also good.

17. Shortcomings in teaching are where higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in mathematics and where teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to record work they have done, especially in mathematics and science. This does not provide sufficient opportunity for pupils of all abilities, but especially higher attainers to apply and develop their literacy and recording skills sufficiently.
18. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection report, when they were sound. They are now good. A strength is the way in which procedures have been agreed and established consistently across the school. Data from the national tests are analysed and used well. Any areas that need extra emphasis are found, and teachers address these in their lessons. For example, a focus was made on trying to increase the number of pupils gaining level 2C to 2B in writing. Pupils' progress is tracked very well, and the information is used well to make predictions about the possible outcomes of their national tests. Although there is a good marking scheme, it is not always used well enough. In particular, when teachers mark pieces of work set especially for assessment, they do not always grade them according to the National Curriculum levels. There is a very good system for pupils to record their own progress against the National Curriculum criteria in writing, but this very good practice has not been extended to the other subjects of the curriculum.
19. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are excellent. They are based on careful observation and enable children's attainment to be accurately judged against their expected goals. Assessments are carried out regularly and routinely, often by a member of the teaching team specifically detailed for observational and recording duties. Good use is made of the data from the Foundation Stage Profile, a national assessment carried out at the end of the Reception year. This is beginning to build up a detailed record of each child's achievements.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is good. It is excellent in the Foundation Stage. Very good enrichment opportunities are provided and the school ensures very well that all pupils have access to all that is provided. Accommodation is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage meets the needs of all children very well.
- The accommodation in the Foundation Stage is very good and excellent learning resources are provided.
- The opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are very good.
- The school ensures that all pupils have full access to all curricular opportunities.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- The school offers equality of access to the curriculum very well.
- Extracurricular activities are good.
- The school's accommodation is attractive and supports the curriculum well.

Commentary

20. Overall, the school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum that is open to all pupils on an equal footing. The overall balance has been improved since the last inspection. It is given much more life by the very good enrichment activities that are included. For example, theatre groups visit, and the Year 4 choir goes out to sing in festivals and at the carol service. There are plans to visit a pantomime this year instead of the usual Christmas party. Pupils' personal, social and health education is very well planned, with plenty of links to citizenship, religious education, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Clubs and activities in out of school time and at lunchtimes are good. The arts, sports and other activities provide a good range. These include origami, computers, Saturday morning football for all years, recorders and an after school club open to all ages.

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities at the Foundation Stage are excellent. The curriculum is appropriately based on the required six areas of learning for five year olds. The curriculum is adapted very effectively for groups and individuals to meet the needs of all children. It is based very effectively on talk, enquiry and play, and provides a very broad range of valuable activities that cater for the interests and aptitudes of children, ensuring progression in their learning. Resources in the Foundation Stage are excellent. They are accessible, of good quality and provide very well for a wide range of activities and learning situations. All aspects and needs are catered for very well. Resources include simple but effective computer programs with which children can sing along, or create their own simple tunes, contexts for small world play that include items such as castles as well as dolls' houses, and an exciting and well maintained range of dressing up clothes to encourage role play. Book resources are also very good.
22. Pupils who have SEN have full access to the school's curriculum. Individual education plans are good and focus well on the needs of the pupils. Targets are appropriate and achievable. They are securely matched to statements of SEN where necessary.
23. The school identifies and provides for pupils who are considered more able. Extra work and lessons are given to pupils in Years 2 and 4 who are placed on this list. For those in other classes, extension work is provided. For example, when Year 2 were classifying animals and placing together those which have fins or those which have fur, the more able pupils had to find reasons for these features. This more suitable work, which stretches the more able pupils, is generally provided well and in most lessons.
24. The school's accommodation is good and supports the teaching of the curriculum well. Outside provision is very good. Several aspects are very imaginatively developed. Picnic tables have been placed in several of the shady areas for summer use. There is an attractive climbing area which has been recently fitted with an appropriately soft landing base. Strengths in the inside accommodation are the new library and patio area, the recently opened Hummingbird class extension and upper classrooms. Limitations are a small staffroom, lack of space for a computer suite and the location of the administrative office which is remote from the main entrance.
25. The accommodation in the Foundation Stage is very good. The classrooms are set out to allow flexibility of use, and for children to move freely from one area to another. There are plenty of bays and areas for individual and small group activities as well as large ones. It also provides for sufficient space for two separate 'lessons' or large activities to be conducted simultaneously when required. There is also an enclosed "quiet room" with glazed door and wall panels for observation. The outside area is large and well planned, with a big space for wheeled toys, an attractive landscape area, an agility area, and a roofed section where small world and construction toys may be used even when raining. This area is used as an exemplar for other schools by the local authority.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Relationships with adults in school are very good.
- The school has good systems to monitor pupils' academic standards and progress and these are well used to provide pupils with advice and guidance.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is very good.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good.
- All staff know pupils very well.
- Pupils' contributions to school life are valued.

Commentary

26. Overall, the school has very effective systems for ensuring the care, safety and well being of its pupils. The school has very good health and safety procedures in place with the headteacher as health and safety co-ordinator. The site manager makes informal checks on a daily basis. The emphasis the school places on safety is exemplified by the provision on lesson plans for notes on health and safety risks that could arise in the planned lesson. This very sensible precaution ensures constant risk awareness. There has been a recent health and safety audit and no health and safety issues were apparent during the inspection. A number of staff members are qualified first aiders. There are very full child protection procedures with both the head and deputy headteacher having received the appropriate training. The health and safety and child protection policies are updated annually.
27. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know them well and provide very good role models for behaviour. Discussions with pupils show that they feel very safe and secure and would turn to any adult in school should they need help, comfort or advice. The views of pupils about different aspects of school life are welcomed both on an informal basis and also through the school council. Teachers and support staff value the contribution pupils make to the life of the school.
28. The school has very good systems to monitor pupils' standards and progress that allow accurate and agreed challenging learning targets to be set. Pupils are involved in the setting of their personal targets to improve their academic standards and, therefore, become more committed to the successful improvement of their work. Learning objectives are also made clear for all lessons and effective lesson plenaries provide information for planning future lessons. Induction arrangements for pupils are very good. Home visits, meetings with parents and close liaison with local nurseries ensure a smooth start to children's education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good and with the community are very good. There are very good links with other schools and pre-schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- Parental involvement is very good and their contribution to learning at school is good.
- Procedures dealing with complaints and concerns are very good.
- Very good links are established with Glenwood School and training links with secondary school and colleges.
- The school continues to build very good links with the local community.
- Not all parents respond to the school's efforts for help with their children's homework.

Commentary

29. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and the school works very well with parents, encouraging them to support the school through the Parent Teacher Association and to help their children at home. Parental help in school is very good and they support the school well in many differing ways. However, not all parents appreciate the need to assist their children with homework. Parents appreciate the speedy and effective response they receive to any concerns and complaints they might have. The school provides a good range of information for parents about the curriculum and how they can help their children at home. In addition to very informative annual reports, there are regular newsletters and parents agree they are kept well informed about their children's progress.
30. The school operates a genuine open door policy and parents take advantage of this to meet staff informally. There are two formal parent/teacher meetings a year plus the opportunity of

another discussion at the end of the summer term. The school is always quick to respond to any parental requests for information and any additional contact and is pro-active in arranging parental contact when pupils cause concern with academic or behavioural problems.

31. There are good links with local pre-school groups and they ensure a smooth start for children beginning their school career. The school has very good links with Glenwood School and provides mainstream school experience for the Glenwood pupils in the Hummingbird class. The school provides work experience for secondary pupils and is also a member of the 'Pilgrim Partnership' group of Bedfordshire schools who provide post-graduate teacher training.
32. The school has very good links with the local community and this has improved since the last inspection where it was judged to be satisfactory. The school has a very active letting policy and many local organisations take advantage of this. A ballet class, dance club and the Christian Fellowship meet at the school and use the school facilities. A football club run by parents for pupils of the school has been very successful in local competitions. The school enjoys visits from clergy from the local church and the Christian Fellowship who take part in school assemblies and lessons. The school has plans to extend its links with the community still further. The Hadrian Lower School Association raises considerable sums of money in many different ways. These range from summer fetes to Christmas bazaars and have enabled the school to subsidise outside educational visits and the supply of additional resources. At present the Association is working towards providing a sensory garden. Their efforts greatly enhance the school environment and the learning of pupils at the school.
33. Parents of those pupils who have SEN are involved very well in their children's education. They receive details of individual education plans, and these include things for them to do at home so that they can help pupils. There are good opportunities for parents to talk to teachers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher works hard and effectively to encourage and support a strong staff team and the way that she has continued to share and implement her vision for the school has been impressive. Governance of the school is good. Governors are knowledgeable and involved well in the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher encourages a very clear school ethos where all pupils are fully included in all its work.
- The impact of Hummingbird class in the school is excellent.
- The school has maintained important strengths in its leadership and management since the last inspection.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work as an effective team and co-ordinators lead their subjects well.
- The governance of the school is good.
- The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good.

Commentary

34. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. A major strength in her work is the way in which her vision for the school is successfully implemented and has been strengthened since the last inspection. The school has a strong, caring ethos where the needs of individual pupils are met very well. The headteacher has been instrumental in developing the very effective partnership with Glenwood School. This aspect of her work has been excellent. All staff work hard to ensure that opportunities are open to all pupils and the school meets the needs of all pupils well. A further aspect of the ethos of the school, which is encouraged well, is the way in which the school's work is clearly 'child-centred'. This is evident from the way in which practical, first-hand learning experiences are promoted, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The school

enhances its curriculum well with a good range of imaginative visits and visitors to the school. The other main aspect of the school's ethos, which is clearly promoted, is in relation to its position within the local community. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure that school events are recognised and celebrated locally and a good number of local groups have been encouraged to use the school's premises.

An example of outstanding practice

The development of a satellite class of a Glenwood School for pupils with severe learning difficulties

The headteacher has been instrumental in the establishment of a satellite class within the mainstream school, for eight pupils with severe learning difficulties from a neighbouring Special School. Although run and managed separately, pupils from the satellite class are integrated into mainstream classes wherever possible. Integration is carefully planned and supported. Pupils from the satellite class are aged from Reception year to Year 4. They join the appropriate mainstream class according to a prepared timetable which involves the older pupils joining the class for sessions that may include mathematics, physical education or music. The reactions and the quality of all pupils' learning are carefully monitored and assessed. Decisions are then made to maintain, increase or decrease the level of integration. This procedure is very well conceived and managed and is an excellent example of inclusion which significantly influences all pupils' social, emotional and personal development. All pupils are fully aware that others have different needs and abilities from their own.

35. The management of the school is also very good. The headteacher has created some very effective management teams which have helped to secure the full staff's commitment to the work of the school and is an important reason why morale is good and the whole staff team feel valued and respected. The relationship between the headteacher and her deputy is very effective. They work closely together and share the same views for the school's development. The role of the subject co-ordinators has also been developed well. There is a very good level of consistency in their work and careful thought has been given to the development of their roles. They all have detailed and well organised management files and they have clear monitoring roles. The process of monitoring and evaluating teachers' planning is very thorough. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are less well developed as is the role of the senior management team.
36. The work of the school is clearly planned through a clear and detailed school improvement plan. The school's focus is appropriately on raising standards and the plan is divided into sections which make it easier to follow. An important strength is the way in which personnel involved in the school have had a stake in planning its development. For example, subject action plans are included which have involved most teachers, and governors have been appropriately involved with the drafting process. A further strength has been the way in which the headteacher and her deputy have worked together to draft the current plan. This responsibility has been part of the deputy headteacher's professional development training course. The improvement plan also contains useful analysis of assessment data which sets the priorities within the overall context of standards in the school. The processes of monitoring progress through the plan are secure. They are central to the school's work.
37. Performance Management procedures are effective. The objectives for teachers and the headteacher are set within the context of whole school priorities and teachers' professional development needs. Non teaching staff currently have regular staff development interviews. The school plans to extend the Performance Management procedure to include support staff.
38. Governance of the school is good. The work of the full body and of the several committees ensures that school issues are thoroughly discussed before decisions are made. Individual governors are involved well and give the school good support. The work of the chair, who is also chair of the finance committee, is particularly effective. A strength in their work is the very good relationship built up with the school. Subject leaders provide regular reports to governors' meetings

and are sometimes invited to give presentations of their work. Individual governors have 'adopted' classes and visit them regularly to support and work with class teachers. Others undertake formal monitoring visits which are recorded and reported to the full governing body. In this way, governors are increasing their knowledge and appreciation of the school's work. Governors receive very full reports from the headteacher. These contain sensitive items such as discussion about exclusions and staffing changes and some minor racial incidents that were reported. They also contain detailed curriculum reviews and community outreach. A minor weakness is that governors are not yet sufficiently proactive in challenging the school about the standards being achieved.

39. The management of the school's finances is good. The support given by the school's administrative officer is satisfactory. An LEA auditor's report in January 2003 judged that financial control was satisfactory overall, and the school indicates that the minor recommendations made have been addressed. The work on the budget for 2004/05 has been thorough. Governors resolved that, as a result of less than expected income they would not wish to reduce the level of teaching and support staff across the school. Subsequently they devised a financial plan which would mean a deficit budget for two years, returning to surplus in 2005/06. This has been agreed within the context of a possible reduction in headteacher's salary with the appointment of a new headteacher from Easter 2004, using a previous budget carry forward and a projected increase in the number on roll from new residential developments planned locally. The plan has been approved by the Local Education Authority.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	597304	Balance from previous year	28870
Total expenditure	623727	Balance carried forward to the next	2447
Expenditure per pupil	2465		

40. The work of children in the Foundation Stage is managed very well. The co-ordinator is very able, and a good role model for her team. She engenders a very good atmosphere among her staff members, who work together very well indeed. They support one another and share ideas in planning, and work well together on assessment and evaluation tasks. They have developed good practice in their use of new individual profiles. Good use is also made of the local Early Years Link which provides a meeting point and further training for staff in nearby schools. Staffing in the Foundation Stage is appropriate, with well-experienced teachers and assistants.

41. The SEN co-ordinator manages this provision very well. She is part time, but gives freely of her own time in order to be up to date with administration. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about SEN issues and she is very well organised. She supports class teachers well. For example, by advising on the implementation of pupils' individual learning plans and monitoring the quality of teaching assistants' work.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision overall is **excellent**.

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is excellent. The curriculum meets the needs of these young children very well and the teaching and learning are also very good. These strengths have been maintained very well since the last inspection. Induction procedures are very good and help children to settle into school well. A further strength is the very good way in which the work of teachers and support staff is co-ordinated. All staff work together as a very effective team.
43. When they enter the school, most children are achieving standards that are well below those expected for their age. This represents a drop since the last inspection. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most are on line to achieve standards that are still below average in all areas of learning, except in their personal, social and emotional development where standards are still well below average.
44. Due to the very good teaching they receive, however, they generally make good progress. All children achieve well because the curriculum is appropriately planned to provide a very wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are very well matched to their needs. There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all are well met, and all adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them very well. All staff work very well as a cohesive team and very carefully monitor the progress of every child. Accommodation, both indoors and outside, is very good, and affords flexible use for all areas of learning, as well as for free play both inside and out. Resources are excellent, and are used very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the very good teaching and the high expectations set by staff.
 - Very supportive relationships are quickly established, so that children feel happy, confident, safe and secure.
 - Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development, within a good balance of directed and free activities.
 - Children are able to exercise their own choices on many occasions.
45. Most children are attaining standards in this area which are well below those expected for their age. Despite the very good teaching and excellent curricular opportunities they receive, many remain immature in aspects of their social development, particularly in terms of playing together. Although their behaviour is very good, and they enjoy being with others, many still like to play alone, while others like to play alongside their friends. Very few showed any signs of moving towards collaborative play, although this is appropriately encouraged by staff.
46. Members of staff are excellent role models, and interact with children in a variety of play situations to encourage social development, as well as giving direct guidance to them, for instance, helping them to learn how to take turns. Staff provide an excellent range of curricular opportunities which allows a very good balance between free choice and directed activities. Children are welcomed and helped to feel secure and safe through the very positive and pleasant relationships maintained. Most children show interest in what they are doing, are keen to participate, and show increased interest in what others are doing. They are confident and friendly, they are encouraged to take turns, and are beginning to learn to clear up after themselves. They change their clothes for physical education sensibly, most needing no help, and look after appropriate aspects of their own

personal hygiene. Gains in learning are already evident in this area, as a result of the excellent provision, and children's achievement is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills, and interaction with conversation is at a high level.
- Vocabulary is extended alongside first hand experience, so that understanding is linked to new words and phrases.
- Very careful and thorough teaching takes place in the early basics of learning to read and write, including the links between sounds and their symbols.
- Interest in books is very well promoted.

47. Many children start school with poor language and communication skills, and their attainment in these aspects of their development is below average on entry. Improving these skills is central to the very good teaching and learning of language seen in all sessions observed. All adults in the class model spoken language very well, talk to children constantly, question them and encourage them to develop confidence in speaking. For example, in an activity where children were learning how to make their own jam sandwiches, the names of ingredients and words labelling parts of the process were constantly provided and repeated, so that children became able to use these in their conversation as they enjoyed their task. Words to describe taste and texture were also modelled, and children began to be able to express their evaluative ideas about their own products. They all enjoy simple stories and most children are able to join in with familiar poems, rhymes and songs.

48. Children are given plenty of experience with writing and drawing tools, and pencil grip is individually checked. Some children can already write their names, and many enjoy pretending to write a letter, a menu order or a label. They are beginning to learn to recognise some letters and the simple sounds they stand for, as a start to their reading and spelling development. Letter recognition skills are introduced very effectively. In a group activity the children discussed with the teacher a range of words beginning with either of two sounds. The teacher then withdrew a number of little toys from a feely bag, the names of which began with those of the two letters. Children then took turns in sorting these items into two sets according to their initial sounds. Overall, children make good progress, due to the very good teaching and the excellent curriculum. Although standards of attainment are still below average in this area, achievement is good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities involving first hand experience ensures thorough learning.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Very good teaching results in children's good achievement.

49. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities, based on first hand experience, to promote mathematical understanding well. Most children are able to join in with counting up to thirty but their understanding of mathematical ideas is below average for their age. However, this shows early progress, since some aspects of mathematical understanding were well below average on entry. Plenty of different activities form the basis for later mathematics, such as using construction toys, bead threading, shop play, and playing with sand and water. All these activities prepare the way very well for future learning, and ensure that the children achieve well during their Reception year. However, by the end of the year, overall standards are still below those expected for children's age.

50. Very good teaching was displayed in a lesson, where innovative use of ICT technology was employed to excellent purpose. Digital photographs of the children's 'shape walk' were projected, showing rectangles, circles and triangles in architectural and environmental features encountered on the walk. Detailed discussion with the children enabled some to identify and describe relevant shapes, while others began to appreciate the differences in the shapes as the lesson progressed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of interesting and imaginative activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Adults in the team use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- Children have plenty of opportunities to use computers, and to become familiar with simple keyboards and the mouse.

51. Although children enter school with attainments well below average for their age, they make good progress due to very good teaching and an excellent curriculum. Some have made good progress in a relatively short time. By the end of the year, most children are on course to attain standards which are below those expected for their age. A very good variety of appropriate and interesting activities is arranged to stimulate the children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. During the inspection, children had opportunities to make their own jam sandwiches and eat them, talking about how to do it and what they tasted like. They also made bird feeders to take home and hang in their own gardens, and had made models with recyclable materials.

52. The quality of the learning experiences is particularly enhanced by the ongoing conversation stimulated by adults leading the activities. For instance, children making the bird feeders learned the names of a number of ingredients, and words to describe the process of making, as well as looking at pictures of some garden birds and learning their names. Taking the bird feeders home assists children's consolidation of their learning as they recount to their families what they have done and its purpose.

53. Children go on walks in the school grounds and in the locality, learning names of environmental features, and they talk about growing from babyhood, in the context of their own birthdays and of christenings. The use of computers is very good, with a variety of simple programs well within children's capabilities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of access to an excellent outside area for outdoor play.
- Outdoor equipment includes very good provision of wheeled toys and agility apparatus.
- Very good teaching in physical education, taking place in a spacious hall, promotes good development of larger movements such as running, jumping and balancing.
- Varied activities provide very good opportunities for the development of fine hand movements and dexterity.

54. Although children entered school with physical skills below those expected for age, they are making good progress due to the very good teaching and the excellent opportunities they have,

indoors and out for moving and playing. Children are on track to achieve standards which are still below average in this area of learning by the end of the year. However, from a low starting point most make good progress and are achieving well. Children daily have substantial periods when they can play indoors and out quite freely, and can select their own activities for exercise. The excellent outdoor area facilitates this very well, with plenty of space for tricycles, scooters, carts and buggies, as well as the clambering, sliding and balancing apparatus which children much enjoy. The Foundation Stage has a pleasant landscaped area with walkways, and a covered space where construction toys and dolls houses are sited.

55. Many indoor activities promote dexterity, such as bead threading, small world play, jigsaw puzzles, small construction toys, painting and drawing. In physical education, most children are able to control their movement to stop and start promptly, but making space for others is still difficult for many. Some forms of simple balancing prove difficult for some children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of activities captures children's interest.
- Very good teaching promotes very good learning and good achievement in creative development.

56. Children enter school with skills and understanding in this area that are below those expected for their age. However, they are interested in the activities and experiences provided for them, and do very well in their learning because of the very good teaching. Their progress is good, and though standards are likely to still be below average at the end of the year, most make good progress and achieve well in this area. Children have plenty of occasions to paint, draw and model freely, but they also have the opportunity to receive direct teaching in small groups to learn particular skills and techniques, such as printing using a roller, or making a collage with a variety of materials, using adhesives. Appropriate language is used well by the adults helping them, and adds to their learning. In music, most children enjoy joining in with familiar rhymes and songs, although a few still prefer to listen. They also have opportunities to move to music, listen to live music, and play a range of simple percussion instruments. A simple computer program allows children to sing along with a familiar song, or to use the keys for different notes which helps them to learn to compose a simple musical phrase or tune. This was a very popular choice.

An example of outstanding practice

A free-choice activity for children in the Foundation Stage

This excellent activity time provided a very effective balance between free choice and more structured activities. It was organised for a group of 42 children and was led by the team of three staff. A significant amount of preparation had gone into arranging the activities and ensuring that children were well prepared for undertaking them. The children were able to make important choices about the activities which they would follow. These included sandwich making, role-play in a shop area, roller printing, water, sand, construction materials and a wide range of writing and drawing puzzles. There was also a choice to take part in an impressive range of outdoor climbing, riding and running activities. The team supported the activities. Each adult's contribution was very effective. They all interacted very purposefully and productively with the children to encourage and develop their oral work, and collaboration and concentration skills. A particular strength was the way in which children were encouraged to plan their own route around the activities and to evaluate what they had achieved. The result was that all children were fully involved and made good gains in their all-round development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in Year 4.
- Leadership and management in the subject are very good.
- Teachers' planning and assessment are both very good.
- The teaching of phonics, spelling and handwriting is very thorough.
- Provision for speaking and listening is very good.
- Pupils in Year 4 could do better at interpreting and discussing what they read.
- Standards of written work are inconsistent across different subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

57. In Year 2, pupils attain standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening that are average for their age. These are broadly the same judgements as those made at the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities read texts matched to their previous learning well and with accuracy. Very good, thorough teaching of phonics helps pupils in both their reading and their writing, and pupils' work shows that they use this knowledge effectively when working independently. Pupils are well supported and helped in their writing, and are able to think of appropriate ideas for their stories and poems. They learn to write for different purposes, and extend their vocabularies and their use of punctuation, employing appropriately both capitals and full stops. Handwriting is specifically taught and practised, and final draft work is generally neatly presented. Pupils speak confidently and clearly, and can usually express their ideas well, although sometimes find themselves inhibited by their lack of range of vocabulary. They listen attentively and are keen to participate.
58. Standards in all aspects of English are also average in Years 3 and 4. However, as a result of the very effective, focused teaching and good learning taking place in Year 4, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. Standards of reading in Year 4 are average. Pupils read accurately, and very expressively. They understand what they read, and can usually give brief storylines. However, they find prediction in any detailed form difficult, and do not find it easy to recall a few authors or favourite titles and discuss what they like about them. Writing standards in Year 4 are average, and pupils are able to write for a variety of purposes, beginning to adapt their style of work and vocabulary choices to the aim of the writing. More able pupils paragraph their work well, and select specific vocabulary to create particular effects. All pupils write at a good length for their capabilities and their previous learning. Writing is generally neat and well presented. Standards of speaking and listening are average. Pupils express themselves confidently and clearly and talk to each other sensibly in small groups. Most are keen to respond and to use reporting opportunities in plenary sessions.
59. Across the school, pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils of all abilities are provided with well-matched work and are appropriately challenged, and both the more able and those with SEN achieve well for their capabilities and previous learning. Pupils in Year 4 make very good progress as a result of the very good teaching they receive. Inclusion is also very good. For example, Year 4 pupils take turns on a weekly rota to visit Hummingbird class to read to pupils there.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and is very good in Year 4. Strengths in teaching across the school are the teachers' good subject knowledge and the quality of their lesson planning. Lesson planning is thorough and detailed and ensures a clear progression in pupils' learning. Teachers consistently create an effective and challenging environment where pupils are eager to learn. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils were encouraged well to read out their storm poems with increasing expression and attention to detail. They were then able to

express opinions about how others had used words. Teachers' planning is a strength of the subject. It is clear, detailed, reflects appropriate content, places lessons in a step-by-step sequence for learning, uses ongoing evaluations to match work to the different needs of pupils, and includes assessment points to be used.

61. Other strengths are the ways in which specific language skills are progressively taught and reinforced. Reading is taught thoroughly and books are well promoted, although interpretation skills are not very well extended at the top of the school. Writing skills are taught well, and pupils are used to using planning and drafting techniques. Recent valuable initiatives in the teaching of writing include the use of writing frames, talk partners for planning ideas and evaluating outcomes, and in Year 1, the use of "story bags" for promoting the sequencing aspects of story composition. Phonics, spelling and handwriting are taught very thoroughly throughout the school. Speaking and listening are well promoted across the school, and there is a framework for developing and making progress in this aspect of English. Planning regularly includes objectives for the development of speaking and listening. Drama is also involved in assemblies, and in productions at festival times.
62. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well indeed. There has been a good improvement in English since the schools' last inspection. She has very good subject knowledge, planning is checked, lessons monitored systematically, and work sampled. In-service training for staff has been considerable. This is ongoing, and due to this there is a concerted approach to the subject across the whole staff. Data analysis is detailed, and assessment is very good as a result. Individual targets for pupils are working well in the subject, particularly in writing. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of what strategies have moved school practice on, and what to tackle next, which is outlined in the subject action plan. Enrichment in the subject is very good, with drama occasions, theatre groups, book weeks, visits by authors and poetry days. Setting in English takes place only in Year 3 and is in an experimental phase, having only started at the beginning of this term. However, observation indicates that it aids achievement. The school will evaluate it at the end of the year.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is not consistent, and opportunities to extend reading and writing activities are not fully exploited in all subjects, although in one or two, they are well used. The school is aware of this and teachers are starting to think more about ways of combining subjects in this way.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' lessons consistently follow the format recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and their clear understanding of what is expected of them, contribute to the quality of their learning.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunity to apply what they know to solve mathematical problems.
- Activities that challenge higher attaining pupils are not always planned and developed.
- Insufficient attention is given, particularly in Years 1 and 2, to the importance of producing accurate, well presented written work.

Commentary

64. At the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils attain standards that are average for their age. This is similar to the standards achieved by the Year 2 pupils in the national test in 2003, and is in line with the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. Across the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but pupils with SEN make good progress towards their own learning targets.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but with some good and very good features, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Across the school, teachers' lessons consistently follow the format recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. A strength is the way in which the specific learning intended in the lesson is shown in teachers' planning, is shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and referred to constantly as the lesson proceeds. This improves the quality of their learning because they know clearly what is expected of them and their understanding is regularly checked. Other strengths across the school are the teachers' good subject knowledge and the very positive way in which pupils are managed. They are consistently helped by clear explanations and motivated by supportive and encouraging comments. These help to secure pupils' commitment to their learning.
66. A lesson to pupils in Year 4, where they were developing written methods for completing multiplication tasks, showed several features of very good teaching which very positively influenced pupils' learning. The separate warm-up activity was introduced well. The quick-fire task of rounding up to the nearest ten and 100 was done very briskly and the number bingo game which followed was thoroughly enjoyed and gave pupils a good incentive for quickly recalling elements of the three times table. The main activity was introduced well and included very good reference to issues which the teacher had identified through recent marking which needed further reinforcement. In the teacher's explanation she was concerned to ensure that pupils had a full understanding of some of the mathematical short-cuts which they were beginning to use. During the lesson, very good support was given to pupils with SEN who worked on their own programme which was well led by a teaching assistant.
67. Some shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons are where the pace of the introduction is allowed to drop leading to some loss of concentration by the pupils, and where the mental starter does not sufficiently promote and develop the speed and accuracy of pupils' oral skills. There is an over-use of photocopiable worksheets, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Although their use does provide a needed recording structure for some pupils, they limit other pupils' ability to develop their own recording skills and narrows their awareness. There is a very clear and appropriate emphasis on the importance of practical work and the use of apparatus is emphasised across the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 used a set of large display coins and smaller table coins as they worked out money sums. Teachers in Year 3 made good use of attractive displays of pizzas and effective use of dividing a line of ten pupils in different ways to illustrate fractions, including quarters and tenths.
68. A further weakness is that higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged. This was also a shortcoming which was noted at the last inspection. In some lessons, the work planned for them is not sufficiently demanding and these pupils are not encouraged to develop a wider range of recording and presentation skills. Opportunities for teachers to emphasise the importance and value of carefully presented work are not sufficiently taken. Across the school, there is not enough emphasis on the application of skills acquired. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to investigate a range of number patterns or to solve problems, some of which they have devised themselves.
69. The subject is managed well and has made a good improvement since the school was last inspected. The co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher, has a clear view of the working of the subject across the school. The quality and detail of her co-ordinator's files are impressive. She has had good opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. The focus of this monitoring recently has been on the quality of lesson planning with particular regard to the sharing of the learning intended in the lesson with the pupils and the impact of the summing up at the end. These elements were seen to be working well during the inspection. The co-ordinator has analysed recent test data well and has indicated appropriate areas for development in a useful subject action plan. Assessment in the subject is also good. Regular assessments are made of pupils' knowledge and understanding and these data are beginning to be used to set class and individual achievement targets. Two recently introduced initiatives are beginning to raise standards. Some higher attaining pupils have received specifically targeted extension work, and classes in Year 3 are now partially grouped according to pupils' ability.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Overall, mathematics is used satisfactorily across other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers use well the opportunity at morning registration to count the number of pupils present and the number taking school dinners. Large time-lines displayed in older pupils' classrooms help them to locate, for example, when the Great Fire of London took place. Other pupils draw graphs to show the number of pupils in the class with different eye colours and computers are used to generate graphs to show the number and type of vehicles parked in the road adjacent to the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- The topic about life processes and living things is planned and being taught well.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Investigation and recording are not used well enough.
- The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped.

Commentary

71. When they enter the school, children's understanding of the world about them is well below that expected for their age, but by Year 4 most pupils have made good progress in their scientific understanding to achieve average standards. This has maintained the levels of attainment reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have SEN and the more able, achieve well. In the 2003 teacher assessments, at the end of Year 2, pupils were above average for Level 2, when measured against all schools, but average when compared to similar schools.
72. Teaching and learning across the school are good. Teachers generally plan lessons well and provide activities that suit the learning intended in the lesson. For example, pupils in both Year 2 classes were sorting pictures of animals. They found things in common such as those that have fins or those with fur. Some found it difficult to distinguish between scales and the skins of the elephant and the rhino. The work on living things in Year 4 is well planned by teachers and there is a good progression in the work, moving from bones to muscles and on to joints. Having studied the skeleton, Year 4, pupils were seen learning about pairs of muscles that contract or relax in order to move a joint. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of science and they are confident in their teaching of the topics. Pupils learn well and remember related things that they have experienced in the past. For example, in Year 4, one pupil remembered the visit of the 'Life Bus' that is concerned with health education, drugs awareness, and related topics. He remembered the largest muscle in the human body, and even remembered the Latin name for it – the *gluteus maximus*. A weakness more evident in pupils' books is that there have not been enough opportunities for investigations and of recording completed work. In general, scrutiny of work shows that teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations. This leads to insufficient recording of experiments, and the school lacks a consistent and agreed method for pupils to write up any such work.
73. The co-ordinator, who has been in the post for one year, leads and manages the subject well. She has organised the resources so that they are available to all teachers when they are needed. Planning is sound. It is divided into terms, and this term pupils are concentrating on studying living things. Next term they will study materials and their properties. Monitoring of the subject is good, including lesson observations and evaluation of the outcomes of teaching and learning. Information and communication technology is not used enough, but the co-ordinator has already ordered new software and this is in school ready for trials. Future plans include work with the middle school over

agreement of National Curriculum levels for pupils' work. Assessment is good and the trial of a new scheme is under way.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers show good subject knowledge and they make good use of the resources they have.
- Computer skills are being used well across other curriculum areas.
- The ratio of computers to pupils is below the national average.

Commentary

75. Pupils across the school attain average standards which is the same as the judgement at the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily.
76. Across the school, the standard of teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory. In the lessons observed during the inspection, most of the teaching was good. Teachers show good, confident subject knowledge, and use the resources, such as the projectors and the laptops, well. Teachers are careful to introduce new vocabulary and to use these new terms in class discussion. Opportunities to use the class computers to support work in literacy and numeracy are taken well.
77. In an effective lesson to pupils in Year 4, on the usefulness of e-mailing, the teacher cleverly widened the scope of the class discussion to include comparisons between different forms of communication. Pupils were then able to get a balanced view of the strengths and weaknesses of the electronic mail system. The use of interesting and challenging resources assists pupils' learning. For example, during the inspection, groups of pupils from Year 2 were taken into the school hall to practise sending a programmable toy over a predetermined course. The teachers had set up an imaginative trail to hidden treasure and a good number of teaching assistants and other adults supported groups of pupils well as they worked. The pupils showed good levels of commitment and involvement in the project. As pupils in one group programmed their robot to reach the target, they were surprised and pleased to find 'chocolate treasure'.
78. A shortcoming in provision across the school was illustrated in a satisfactory lesson to pupils in Year 1 where pupils were beginning to build up an information database about themselves. The teacher introduced pupils to using the computer word banks and the address book. Skills were introduced well. However, the weakness in provision was that only a few were able to have immediate access to computers in order to reinforce their newly learned skills. Others would have to wait until later in the lesson or later in the week.
79. The subject is managed soundly. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity recently of sharing the subject policy and the Internet safety policy with the governing body. The subject's development is planned through a very detailed action plan which makes clear reference to improving standards and meeting the professional development needs of teachers. The co-ordinator has undertaken some useful monitoring of teaching and she has recently focused on the use of ICT across the curriculum. Opportunities are enhanced well through the provision of an extracurricular club. The most recent focus for the club is to prepare entries for a local design competition to produce a robot which can move in a sequence which might be recognised as a 'dance'. During the inspection, pupils were observed refining the movement sequences of their entries.

ICT across the curriculum

80. Teachers use computers well across several different curriculum areas. For example, younger pupils use a tape recorder to record an elderly person reminiscing about toys for their history project while others use the digital camera to record aspects of their local environment in

geography. Older pupils use the Internet to discover information about Guy Fawkes in history and the lives of different saints in RE. The use of computers in science is not fully established.

HUMANITIES

No geography lessons were observed during the inspection. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision in this subject.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education overall is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The curriculum is enriched well.
- The use of resources is good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped.

Commentary

81. In Years 2 and 4, pupils attain standards that are in line with those in the locally agreed syllabus. This was also the judgement at the time of the last inspection. Four lessons were seen, which, together with the analysis of pupils' work provide the basis for the current inspection judgements. The achievement of pupils of all abilities and needs is good. Most enter the school attaining standards that are well below those expected for their age.
82. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were thinking about making advent calendars and what they might draw for them. They already knew there were similarities between religions such as the lights for Divali and the candles for Advent. Teachers encourage pupils to relate their learning to their everyday lives. For example in Year 4, pupils linked the story of St. Francis, and the difficult choice he had to make, to some difficult choices of their own. Pupils learn well from the visits that teachers organise such as visiting the Hindu temple, or the local priory. There are good photographs on display of a visit to the church where the minister is showing them vestments and the uses of the various items to be found there.
83. Pupils understand some of the common themes that run through several religions such as light, and teachers use resources well to follow these themes. For example, pupils have made diva lamps for Divali, they know about the havdalah candle for Shabbat in Judaism, and the calibrated Advent candle in Christianity, because they have seen and handled them.
84. Across the school, teaching is good and this enables pupils to learn well. Strong features are the quality of teachers' planning and the good use of visits and visitors who come in to talk to the pupils. For example in a good Year 2 lesson, a visitor came to talk to them about Hanukkah, the Jewish festival. She brought the special multi-holder candlestick and lit some candles for them, teaching them that they are lit from right to left, as in Hebrew writing. In both Year 2 classes, pupils know much more detail about the origins of Hanukkah than might be expected for their age, and in those two lessons most attained above average standards. There was a quiet, spiritual moment in one class when the candles were lit in the gathering dusk, and pupils listened very quietly to a festival story about the candles in a window helping a boy through the gloom of bad weather.
85. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator's management file demonstrates clearly that she knows how to take the subject forward and she has planned the schemes of work well to match the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment is good and is using a locally produced scheme. It is enabling teachers to see the outcomes of their lessons as they write evaluations and conduct assessment tasks for the pupils to do. The use of ICT is underdeveloped, but the co-ordinator has acknowledged this and is addressing it.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the topics they have studied and appreciate well how things were different in the past.
- Opportunities and interest are promoted well by visits and visitors to the school.

Commentary

86. Across the school, pupils attain average standards but most pupils make good progress in their learning from a low base on entry to the school. This represents a good improvement since the school was last inspected as the last inspection judged that pupils made sound progress.
87. Across the school, pupils have a sound understanding of the topics they have studied. For example, pupils know some of the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain and aspects of early Celtic life. They know some details of the life of Boudicca and write imaginatively as if they were her follower. Other pupils know about the life of Guy Fawkes and his involvement with the Gunpowder Plot. As younger pupils consider a collection of old and new toys, they learn how toys have changed over the years and begin to appreciate how people lived in the past.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is good. No clear judgement about teaching and learning was made at the last inspection. A lesson to pupils in Year 4 illustrated several features of good, effective teaching. The focus of the lesson was the last in a series on Invaders and Settlers and focused on Hadrian's Wall. Interest in the topic was generated because the pupils had recently visited a display of Roman artefacts at St Albans and good reference was made to this. Also the pupils were interested and excited to learn that a Roman Emperor and a famous defensive wall had the same name as their school! The teacher's lesson planning was full and detailed and the topic was introduced enthusiastically and clearly. A further strength was the way in which the teacher generated a further discussion about possible sources of evidence and took the whole class to the school library to explain the Dewey cataloguing system which would help them access information books. By the end of the lesson, pupils' knowledge of Hadrian had been developed well as had their appreciation of different sources of historical evidence.
89. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced and, through a detailed action plan, she has a clear view of the developments planned in the subject. She has a regular view of teachers' planning and makes helpful written comments to teachers. Work in the subject is enhanced well by a series of well-planned visits and visitors to the school. Younger pupils visit their local area to look at houses of different ages and others receive visits from friends of the school to talk about toys they have used in the past. Year 2 pupils visit Milton Keynes Museum and experience Victorian school life, while older pupils visit the Roman remains at St Albans. Grandparents visited the school recently to talk about life during the Second World War. Sound assessment is made according to some key learning objectives.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

90. No lessons in art and design were seen during the inspection and, therefore, it is not possible to make any firm judgements about provision, standards, teaching and learning and achievement in this subject. However, evidence was gathered from a sample of Year 4 sketchbooks and from displays around the school in classrooms and corridors. Indications from these sources show that pupils generally reach at least satisfactory and sometimes good standards in their artwork. Sketchbooks are used appropriately to prepare for major designs and compositions, and give

evidence of skills being taught and learned. Wall displays show good integration of the study of the work of famous artists and craftsmen with the practical strand of the subject. For instance, after looking at the work of Monet, Year 4 pupils learned to use brushstrokes in different ways, and to employ water washes to fade out colours gradually, in their attractive summer landscape compositions. Year 2 pupils made their own versions of portraits, after looking at the self-portrait of Van Gogh and his use of colour. Excellent inclusion is indicated in the displays of work included in class and corridor areas from Hummingbird pupils, and especially notable is their work on the willow-pattern plate. Displays are consistently of a good standard. They also show that particular skills and techniques are taught, and that there is a balance between sculpture and printing and painting and drawing in the programme for art and design.

Design and technology

Provision in the subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good and pupils progress well in their learning.
- There is a well-organised scheme of work with built-in progression.
- The work involves a range of different types of product.
- Pupils record processes well.
- Evaluations are sometimes weak and lack the necessary detail.

Commentary

91. Since no lessons in design and technology were seen in Years 1 and 2, no firm judgements about standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning can be made at this stage. A scrutiny of samples of work from the current and the previous Year 2, however, indicates standards of attainment at average levels. Pupils record their work appropriately in terms of describing the processes undertaken, but many evaluations are weak and lack the use of any criteria. In their written work this term, pupils in Year 2 were not able to show the same standard of writing as in their literacy work.
92. In Years 3 and 4, pupils attain average standards. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and are innovative in their ideas for modifying and improving their products. They think about their selection of tools and techniques for given tasks and they are beginning to understand the processes of trial and error. They record the processes involved accurately, but evaluations do not always apply relevant criteria and are sometimes weak and lack detail. However, in a lesson in Year 4, pupils were using their knowledge of materials well as they compared and contrasted the use of different types of seams as they sewed their purses.
93. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2, but those in Years 3 and 4 achieve well. By Year 4, all pupils, including the more able and those with SEN, are appropriately challenged and do well for their capabilities and their previous learning. Excellent inclusion was seen in some lessons where pupils from the Hummingbird class joined in the activities.
94. In Years 3 and 4, teaching and learning are good. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations and provide demonstrations to enable pupils to understand well what they have to do. They monitor groups while working on practical tasks, providing advice and support. They employ good strategies, such as collaborative ways of working and the use of talk partners for discussion and exchange of ideas. Planning is clear and detailed and shows a good balance between designing and making. Planning also includes assessment focuses for each project, which teachers evaluate for group and individual assessment purposes. Both standards of attainment and the quality of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection.

95. Co-ordination in the subject is good. The co-ordinator has recently restructured the scheme of work, utilising the better of two available schemes, to tailor it to the school's needs and to provide a comprehensive range of projects and built-in progression. She monitors lessons systematically, surveys planning and provides feedback to teachers, and samples pupils' work. She has a good grasp of how the school has made progress in the subject and what future targets need to be, and this information is recorded in the subject action plan and position statement.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 are very good.
- Pupils all learn to play the recorder from Year 1 onwards.
- By Year 4, pupils can read conventional notation well, and play or sing from it.
- The pitch, tone, volume and diction of pupils' singing are good.
- By Year 4, pupils can sing in two parts.
- Good enrichment opportunities are provided.

Commentary

96. In Year 2, only one lesson was seen, together with a shorter observation, and both these lessons focused on singing. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about standards attained. Singing was enthusiastic, tuneful, and pupils paid good attention to rhythm and to diction. There were no clear judgements made on standards at the last inspection.

97. In Years 3 and 4, pupils attain above average standards. In Year 3, pupils assess the number of beats in a bar and identify the pulse and rhythm of a piece of music. They devise and play a simple ostinato accompaniment, using different instruments, to accompany a song or melody. They confidently replicate simple musical patterns. In Year 4, pupils confidently read and use conventional notation. They sing or play from notation, know note and rest values, the meanings of the clefs and notes on the staves. They are able to identify and recognise time signatures. They have been exploring the way sounds can be combined and used expressively, and they have learned to sing in two parts. They sing with enthusiasm, tunefully, with a good sense of pitch, appropriate volume, and clear diction.

98. Across the school, pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress. During the inspection, some excellent integration of the pupils from the Hummingbird class was observed.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 and 4. Teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum and are confident with this subject. They pay careful attention to increasing pupils' awareness of the musical elements, whether in practical music making sessions or in listening to and appreciating music. Choices of music studied are lively and appeal to pupils. This promotes their motivation and improves their learning. Knowledge of conventional notation is well promoted by the learning of recorders by all pupils, and by activities using the individual music whiteboards already printed with staves.

100. Co-ordination in the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge. She monitors lessons, checks planning and teachers' evaluations, and visits class performances from time to time. An assessment guide and recording sheet are provided for teachers' assessment of pupils, which is good. Assessment opportunities are also identified in planning. Resources are good, and are well used. There is sound integration of ICT in the subject through the use of CDs, and the overhead projector. Although some music programs for the computer are in use lower in the school, there are insufficient up-to-date programs for older pupils. This is the focus of the subject action plan already. The music curriculum is both broad and balanced, and enrichment in the subject is good. Pupils take part in local singing festivals and events, and perform at school events

as well. Instrumental players visit the school to perform and give concerts. Instrumental tuition is available to pupils, for subsidised fees, in both cello and violin, and currently seven pupils are studying these instruments. During the inspection, several pupils performed confidently during a whole school assembly.

Physical Education

Overall, the provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning of lessons is good.
- The way that all pupils join in together, including Hummingbird class, is good.
- Planning for swimming is good and enables pupils in all years to swim in the summer term.
- Teaching and learning are good and most pupils achieve well.
- Assessment is good.
- Some lessons are too long and repeating activities reduces pupils' enthusiasm.

Commentary

101. Across the school, pupils' attainment is average. They achieve well and make good progress. All pupils join in well in the lessons and work well together. This includes pupils from Hummingbird class. They are integrated well, and the mainstream pupils are pleased to see them. Physical skills are planned for and addressed well. The school has its own swimming pool and, in the summer term, all classes have swimming lessons. By the time they leave the school, pupils are confident in the water and nearly all can swim at least a length of the pool. In the last inspection report, there was no clear judgement about overall standards achieved.
102. The quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, the quality ranged from satisfactory to very good. Planning is generally good and gives the pupils plenty to do and join in with. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, pupils were practising the movements to the story of the Bear Hunt. The teacher conveyed her own considerable enthusiasm to the pupils very well, and they really entered into the spirit of the story, and were fully occupied all the time. They jumped, hopped and ran, making large and small movements as the story line demanded. The teacher evaluated very well, and chose pupils to demonstrate their good movements to the class. "We're not scared," chanted the pupils, and they showed this with large, expansive movements, full of confidence. The two support assistants and the teacher all joined in fully. This enthusiastic trio led to some very good work by the pupils and they showed some very good interpretations of the words.
103. All teachers have appropriate regard for health and safety issues and remind pupils about them frequently. They have taught them well about the carrying of large apparatus, and, consequently, pupils do this carefully and well. This was seen to good effect in a good Year 2 lesson where pupils moved out all the large apparatus and set up the various positions round the hall. They placed mats in good positions for jumping off apparatus and still being safe. Lessons generally move at a good pace. However, sometimes the pace is allowed to drop. This was seen in an otherwise satisfactory lesson when activities and movements were being repeated towards the end of the lesson and pupils lost some of their enthusiasm as a result.
104. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. She has adapted a commercial scheme and fitted it to the school's needs well. Apparatus and resources are good and she renews them when necessary. She demonstrates lessons to colleagues and helps with planning and advice. The local adviser for physical education has visited and helped to develop the teaching of dance in the school. Assessment is good and uses a local scheme. In this way, teachers are able to focus well on skills and outcomes as they write evaluation notes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good, imaginative programme.
- Plans for visiting speakers and organisations enrich the curriculum very well.
- Citizenship is incorporated well.
- There are good links to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

105. As only two lessons were observed in PSHCE during the inspection, no overall judgements can be made about standards of attainment. In the two lessons seen, pupils achieved well and made good progress in the topics they were studying. They were studying relationships through work and play and discussing family and friends within this context. They were encouraged to give their own views and opinions and they were eager to do so.
106. The quality of teaching and learning in the two lessons seen was good. Both were with Year 4 pupils. Most pupils spoke confidently about the way that their family helps them, mainly concerning homework, but one said that families help to make you more confident and set a good example. The teachers and support assistants also took part and pupils learned how to take turns when speaking. Pupils from Hummingbird class joined in very well and were able to give their opinions and examples in the discussions. Teachers encouraged pupils to apply this topic and learning to their everyday lives. "How do we hurt one another's feelings?" one teacher asked. Later, pupils shared their thoughts with the classes well.
107. A scrutiny of planning for PSHCE shows that much time has been spent providing an imaginative and comprehensive programme that covers all requirements. It is very good. For example, time is spent with Year 1 developing their confidence and self-awareness. They are preparing to take an active part as citizens and they consider classroom rules, personal values and respect for others. In Year 2, several visitors come to the school, and these help the programme very well. They include the fire service, and a visitor from the RSPCA. Healthy eating and choices are studied, and there is a visit from the Life Bus, which is a mobile workshop concerned with health and safety and includes drugs awareness. Year 3 have a visit from the community police officer, learn about friendships, re-cycling of waste and belonging to a community. Year 4 widen their horizons and learn to evaluate and appreciate their own and other people's work. They have lessons about road safety, first aid, and social behaviour. Incorporated into their programme is preparation for their transfer to middle school.
108. There is very good integration between PSHCE work and other parts of the school's life and the pupils' development. For example, in the Year 4 lessons, the ideas of friendship and loyalty are linked to work in RE. As pupils learn about the responsibilities of living in a community, some have the chance to put this into practice as members of the school council, or by helping Hummingbird class in their base room. The curriculum is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who has developed these ideas and programmes in her two years in post. The school is part of the 'Healthy Schools' initiative and its work is currently being assessed for the award. Overall, PSHCE is central to the life of the school and is very well planned to have a good effect upon pupils as they grow up.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
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).