

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JAMES CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116331

Headteacher: Mr A C Smith

Lead inspector: Mrs S Tweddell

Dates of inspection: 26 - 29 January 2004

Inspection number: 259906

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	439
School address:	Moorgreen Road West End Southampton
Postcode:	SO30 3EG
Telephone number:	023 8090 0995
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Glover
Date of previous inspection:	16 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St James is a very large primary school with 441 pupils on roll. Children enter the reception class in three stages in the autumn term; there are 60 children in the reception classes. Most pupils come from the immediate area which is a suburb on the edge of Southampton. They come from homes in which income is broadly average but in which fewer adults than usual have attended higher education. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below that of most schools. Most pupils come from a white UK background and small numbers from mixed White Black-Caribbean and mixed White and Asian backgrounds. A handful of pupils come from other racial backgrounds. Nearly every pupil is fluent in English. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs than in most schools, but a similar number of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The special needs include moderate learning, speech and physical difficulties, the attainment on entry is about average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1709	Sandra Tweddell	Lead inspector	History English as an additional language
9769	Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
20142	Malcolm Childs	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Religious education Personal, social and health education
32257	Richard Chalkley	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography Special educational needs
32460	Barbara Newson	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St James is an effective school in which pupils of all abilities achieve well and standards are above average in English, mathematics and art and rising quickly in science and information and communication technology (ICT). The leadership of the headteacher is very good and the school aims of care, co-operation and consideration come to life in all aspects of the school's work. Value for money is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The ethos is very good; pupils' behaviour and attitudes are most positive and contribute to the strong work ethic.
- Very strong leadership which is open and honest and constantly seeks improvement.
- Achievement is good across the school because of effective teaching.
- Management is good but not all subject leaders have a good view of standards and how they might be improved.
- Very good links with parents and good links with the community contribute to good achievement.
- The management team analyses data from assessment well to identify and act upon priorities but not all teachers know how to make best use of it.

Satisfactory progress has been made on the issues from the last inspection. Standards in mathematics, science, music and ICT have improved and governors, many of whom have recently been appointed, are pursuing ways to be involved in strategic school development. Assessment in ICT and religious education has improved and is now satisfactory and the school knows that more needs to be done.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement across the school is good. It is satisfactory in physical and religious education. Standards have risen more quickly over the past few years than in most schools. Children in the reception class are on course to attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year. Standards are rising in Years 1 and 2 and are above average in reading, history, art and mathematics and average in science. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, art and history and well above average in mathematics. Standards of writing and of ICT are broadly average across the school and are rising quickly because of thoughtful management action. Standards in other subjects are average. Boys do as well as girls because of the school's approach of treating all pupils as individuals. This approach also ensures that pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve equally well. Successful work has been done on enabling higher attaining pupils to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Pupils develop very good personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy school, so their attendance is very good. They relate very well to one another and to adults.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

This is good and the quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers plan well together so that pupils build up their learning systematically. Marking is good and usually points out to pupils how they can improve their work, although this is not consistent. In many lessons pupils are enthusiastic learners because of the exciting and interesting activities. There is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching that has not been picked up by subject leaders.

The curriculum is good and substantially enriched by extra-curricular activities. Pupils are looked after well and provision for special educational needs is very good. Links with parents are very good and with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. Very effective leadership by the headteacher has driven the work to establish the very strong ethos that supports achievement. Subject leaders give good guidance but most do not regularly check up on standards in their subjects. Governors have an extensive range of expertise and are very supportive of the school, and know it well. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements and are developing systems to improve their strategic role. Governance is good overall.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school and its staff in high esteem. The questionnaire returns and parents' meeting were very positive. A small number would welcome more information about how their child is getting on although inspectors found that updates on pupils' progress are readily available. Pupils hold equally positive views; they enjoy school and like their teachers. Parents and pupils commented on the poor state of the toilets; a view shared by the inspection team.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue the work to raise standards in writing and science.
- Carry out the plans to train teachers in how to use assessment to ensure all pupils are progressing as they should.
- Strengthen the roles of subject leaders and senior managers, particularly the role of monitoring, to ensure standards are as high as possible in all subjects.
- Ensure that governors implement their plans to further develop their strategic role.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

All pupils achieve well, standards in mathematics are well above average, and in English, art and history they are above average. Standards in other subjects are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Standards of writing, science and ICT are rising quickly.
- Boys and girls achieve equally well as do all other groups of pupils, including pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards in other subjects are not as high as those mentioned above.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.9 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.3 (27.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Across the school, all groups of pupils achieve equally well because the very strong and positive environment, created by the vision of the headteacher, instils in pupils a love of learning. Children enter the reception class with attainment that is about average, but a significant number have poor skills of personal development. The wide range of interesting activities and the strong focus on developing social skills and skills of language ensures that children attain the goals that are expected of them by the end of the year and a number are working at the early stages of the National Curriculum.
2. Achievement is good in other years in most subjects because teaching motivates pupils and planning ensures that they progress well in their learning. Standards are rising in Years 1 and 2 and are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. This is because teachers' planning is now focused on ensuring that different groups of pupils are given work to match their learning needs. Achievement in religious education and physical education is satisfactory across the school. Boys do as well as girls because of the ethos of the school that values each pupil equally and because staff look for resources and activities that interest

boys. Pupils with special educational needs have very effective support from the subject leader and the team of classroom assistants. They support whilst encouraging the pupils to be as independent as possible. Other pupils are sensitive to their needs and keep a watchful eye on their peers who may need help.

3. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well. The school actively seeks external support when necessary and ensures that staff are deployed to work closely with those needing intensive help. Many pupils from cultures other than White-UK attain highly. Staff work hard to ensure that all backgrounds are equally valued. There are examples of pupils proudly drawing on their cultures when doing work, for example, in design and technology.
4. The headteacher was aware from his analysis of test results, that more able pupils were not doing as well as they should. Staff embarked successfully upon a programme to ensure that these pupils were challenged. Talented pupils have attended extra classes; work is carefully designed to challenge and many teachers pitch their questions to probe these pupils' understanding. As a result, more able pupils are now achieving as they should.
5. The work to improve the standards of more able pupils has had a noticeable effect in science where standards are rising quickly. Science has been a relatively weaker subject, but this is not now the case as more pupils are working at the higher levels of the subject. Standards are still broadly average, but are improving because of the work that is being done. In writing too, staff have been working to raise standards, seeking support from a wide range of sources. More time is given to writing and pupils are now encouraged to write for a variety of purposes in all the subjects they study. This is having an impact on the quality of writing across the school.
6. Standards in mathematics have been consistently high and pupils achieve very well. The reasons for this are good subject leadership that has included some monitoring of the provision. Monitoring of other subjects is patchier. Careful planning challenges all groups of pupils appropriately and ensures that pupils' minds are kept active throughout the lesson. Another reason is that pupils are grouped effectively. Pupils are usually clear about what they are learning, which helps them to focus. Lessons are exciting and pupils' wish to do their best means they work hard and enjoy the subject.
7. Much work has gone into improving the provision in ICT since the last inspection and ICT is now used in almost all subjects. As a result, standards, although currently average, are rising. In history, teachers ensure that pupils are fascinated by the subject. Pupils are skilled at research and making hypotheses about life in the past. The focus on writing has resulted in presentations of a high quality and above average standards. Standards are also above average in art where there is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to experiment with a range of media.
8. As in many schools, because of national priorities, staff have focused on English, mathematics and ICT. Other subjects are dealt with in turn, on a rolling programme. Standards in subjects other than art and history are broadly average. Some monitoring of provision has taken place in English, science, history and mathematics but not in other subjects, so that staff are unaware of the good features of teaching that are present throughout the school.
9. The upward trend in performance in the recent past has been greater than in most schools. This is because of the open and honest approach that the headteacher takes towards evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the action staff have taken to develop areas that need attention.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour, attitudes, values, and personal development are very good. Moral, social and spiritual development are very good and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high standards of behaviour because teachers expect it.
- The overall very good attitudes and enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and with staff.
- Pupils respond to challenge and show initiative.
- Very good attendance and punctuality.
- Very good spiritual, social and moral development and good cultural development.

Commentary

10. Overall pupils behave very well and the school has a happy and positive atmosphere which promotes very good behaviour and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to rewards and sanctions and are polite and respectful. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were keen to say how much they are encouraged when receiving rewards and are keen to have their name on a brick in the achievement wall in the school hall. Promoting harmony, including racial harmony, is a priority of the school and pupils are confident there is no bullying or intimidation. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
11. Children in the reception classes achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development because the provision is strong. They quickly become independent, relate confidently to adults and they often help one another.
12. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school: in lessons and in discussion they display an open enthusiasm for learning. They show keen interest and involvement in activities. Pupils in all years make a significant contribution to class discussion: they are able to sustain concentration and to persevere, organising their own work with good independence.
13. Relationships are very good: there is a strong element of respect for teachers, other adults in school and other pupils. Pupils respond well to the good examples set by all staff and support agencies. Responses at the parents' meeting confirmed the very good relationships in the school: parents rightly feel staff are open minded and have children's interests at heart.
14. Provision for spiritual awareness is very good and is evident in a number of lessons and assemblies. Pupils show an awareness of the faiths of others and can discuss them with openness and understanding. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge and spiritual awareness: in one assembly pupils joined in as the headteacher greeted them with, 'Peace be with you', going on to describe a journey on his bike; sharing the wonder he saw around him. Even the youngest children in the reception classes were held in a moment of spirituality.
15. Moral development is very good: all understand right from wrong and show evidence of this in their daily actions. The school promotes fairness, tolerance, and honesty, with time given for reflection and discussion in lessons. Social development is very good: pupils are keen to take responsibility for themselves and for others. They are involved in making and upholding school rules and classroom rules and are developing the school council. Pupils are aware of their own culture and traditions and a range of activities ensure pupils' multi-cultural understanding is developing. An assembly took a story from India as its theme. The music came from an Indian tradition and a teacher carefully explained its background and how to listen to it. Pupils were fascinated and listened carefully.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

16. There were no exclusions in the last academic year. Attendance is very good and there is a low level of unauthorised absence. Procedures for registering pupils are very good. Parents receive very clear information on attendance procedures and are left in no doubt of the school's expectations.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Pupils learn well because they are motivated by good teaching and a good curriculum. Links with parents, other schools and colleges are very good; links with the community are effective and pupils are looked after well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall; assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn well because lessons are usually lively and interesting.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well so the learning environment is very good.
- Pupils are encouraged to be involved in their own learning and are eager learners.
- Teachers give good guidance as to how pupils can improve their work, but do not always use information from assessment to plan for learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- In few lessons, pupils are sometimes not clear about what they are expected to learn.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	9 (20%)	22 (50%)	12 (27%)	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.

17. Teaching in the reception classes is constantly good and has many very good features. The lessons are planned well to engage children's attention and to ensure good progression in learning. The teachers and assistants have high expectations of the children's work and they are often infectiously enthusiastic which results in very good motivation. A strong feature of the teaching is the focus on developing children's social and language skills and all staff successfully encourage children to talk about what they are doing and to question them gently to extend their language. The adults in the reception classes work seamlessly as a team; a result of planning and talking together.

18. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is often also exciting and motivating so that pupils want to learn. In all subjects that were observed, there were examples of lessons that had the pupils spellbound or enthusiastically working. One example was an ICT lesson in which Year 6 were using computer programming to make cars perform complex parking manoeuvres. There was a little friendly rivalry between the boys and girls in the groups and all were pleased to find that there was no difference in their skills of parking.
19. Teachers are very skilled at ensuring that the vast majority of pupils behave well; this comes partly from the school ethos of *co-operation, care and consideration* which is manifest across the school. The small number of pupils with challenging behaviour are managed very well and all pupils are able to listen and learn.
20. A key feature of the teaching is how well teachers encourage pupils to develop skills of independence in their learning. Pupils know how to use dictionaries, computers and books to find and check sources of information. They think carefully about the best way to present their work. This comes about because of the expectations of teachers that pupils will learn to think for themselves, and also from effective questions that challenge pupils to think and which probe their understanding. Pupils are usually not allowed to get away with one word answers; they are asked further questions so that the teachers know how much they understand. Another feature of work done by pupils is tasks that challenge that are often done by groups of pupils. The depth of discussion in the groups that comes from this approach extends the learning of all and helps pupils to find new ways of exploring information. Pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their own work; in music, for example, the teacher asked pupils to comment on the compositions that groups had prepared and then performed. After each performance, she asked the pupils to give two stars and one wish, that is, two positive features about the work and one feature that could be improved. Many of the pupils were skilled at noticing features of the performance and used the language of music to describe their opinions. Because of the way in which the teacher had developed this method, pupils were also very sensitive of feelings. The teacher made her own suggestions, using technical language as a model, to further improve the performance. This method helped pupils to realise the importance of improving their first attempts, which helps their achievement.
21. When teachers mark work, they often comment sensitively about how it could be improved. In English and mathematics, staff use information to track the progress that pupils are making and step in when a pupil starts to fall behind. This is one of the reasons why standards are high in these subjects. It is beginning to happen in science but not in other subjects. The headteacher and senior managers have attended a course on how this aspect can be improved, and later in the year all staff are going to be trained in how to interpret the information that comes from assessment.
22. A feature of the very good teaching is that pupils know what they are expected to learn but this is not a consistent feature in all lessons. Some teachers ensure that they make the purpose of the lesson clear and throughout the lesson refer to the purpose, so that pupils are focused on what they are expected to learn. Other teachers are coming to grips with this idea and are currently less confident.
23. The headteacher is keen to ensure that all teachers have the confidence to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum. Music was one subject where teachers felt they lacked expertise so many have attended refresher courses in the subject and new subject guidance has been introduced. Teachers now have the skills to teach the subject at least satisfactorily and sometimes very well.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good range of additional activities which enhance the curriculum.
- Resources and library are good, but a few areas of accommodation are unsatisfactory.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational need. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.

Commentary

24. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The school meets all statutory requirements including those for religious education with the result that the curriculum meets all pupils' needs and interests. It follows the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Staff plan together to ensure that classes with the same age groups cover the same content. The curriculum is enriched with visits to museums and the theatre as well as sessions in school led by professional musicians and an artist in residence. All pupils, regardless of gender, ability or ethnicity, are encouraged to participate in the good range of extra activities offered by the school. As a result, boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils participate in a wide range of sports and arts events and competitions with local schools and the wider community. All of these activities not only develop pupils' interest in learning, but also effectively support their social, moral and cultural development.
25. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Resources are generally of good quality and in good condition. Accommodation in the reception classes is satisfactory, but in other parts of the school, in particular the toilet areas, it is unsatisfactory. However, the accommodation does not affect the quality of learning. An example of good accommodation is seen in the refurbished library which contains computers and a good range of fiction and non-fiction books that are well suited to the needs of all pupils. The school is well staffed with teachers. The number, training and experience of the support staff is good.
26. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is effectively led and managed by a knowledgeable and experienced co-ordinator. Pupils' needs are identified early and their progress monitored closely. They are well supported both individually and in small groups from an early age. For example, in literacy, specific language programmes are regularly provided to ensure that their needs are well met. The curriculum is planned very effectively to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum and learning opportunities provided.
27. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Sex education and awareness of the misuse of drugs are appropriately covered within lessons and governors review these policies on a regular basis. External agencies, for example nurses and police, are regular visitors to the school to support and enhance teaching the curriculum. Trained staff, from within the school and externally, work on a regular basis with pupils who have personal difficulties. The school has gained the nationally recognised Healthy Schools award and the *Walking Bus*, now a regular feature of school life, helps pupils to understand the need to care for the environment and for their health. Very good links with the community have been established which support and improve pupils' personal and social development. The school is developing effective links with the local hospital where pupils are involved in improving the hospital grounds, designing and making Christmas cards for patients and providing musical entertainment.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance, and support provided for pupils are good. Health and safety of the environment are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall effectiveness of support and guidance.
- Good procedures for care, welfare, health and safety.
- The school's effective use of pupils' views.
- Good liaison with other agencies.
- Poor quality of lavatories, particularly in Year 1 and reception.
- Lack of separate changing facilities for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

28. The procedures for pupils' safety and welfare are good and well established. The day-to-day awareness of health and safety is good and well known to all staff and pupils; this is supported by the designated member of staff for health and safety issues. Risk assessment procedures are well established and the school monitors and reviews safe working procedures. Parents' concerns for the poor quality of the pupils' lavatories, which are in need of repair and upgrading, are well founded. Many children will not use them and this causes distress. Older pupils have to change for physical education in the same room.
29. There are very effective child protection procedures in the school which meet statutory requirements. The policy is agreed by the governing body and is well known to all staff. Arrangements for dealing with accidents are clear and followed carefully and a number of staff are qualified to give first aid. The designated medical room is very well used and definitely appreciated by pupils who say they receive loving care and attention when needed.
30. The school has good procedures for the educational and personal support of pupils. Pupils are confident they have a strong voice in the school and can now make their views fully known through the school council. Pupils' wishes and opinions are carefully considered by the school and mostly acted on. Support and guidance systems are effective and appreciated by pupils: the impact on their progress is significant. Pupils with special needs are helped to meet individual education plan targets. Liaison with support agencies is very well established and the school nurse drop-in sessions are a particular support for pupils. There are very good procedures for pupils' induction to reception class and for the move from Year 2 to Year 3. An effective programme of support is also in place for any pupil who joins the school during the term.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with the community, and very good links with parents and other schools all of which contribute to the very good climate for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents.
- The good arrangements for consultation between parents and the school.
- The strong contribution made by parents to pupils' learning.
- Good links between the school and the community.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

31. The school's partnership with parents is very strong and is beneficial to pupils' progress. The school works closely with parents on all matters and takes good account of parents' views. The school generates a strong sense of loyalty, involvement and confidence in parents who in return have very good views of the school. All like the way the headteacher welcomes pupils in the morning, feel he has a strong presence and that the school is well run.
32. Parents receive good information from the school and their views are regularly sought on a range of issues. Pupils' annual reports give detailed information on their progress and achievement. Parents are pleased with the information they receive about the curriculum, allowing them to support their child. The *Off To School We Go* booklet is full of useful information for new parents and pupils. The letter sent to pupils by the headteacher prior to their joining reception class is a good example of the very caring ethos the school promotes.
33. The Parent Teacher Association provides very good support for the school: they raise large amounts of money to support the school, are very much appreciated by the staff and are valued by the headteacher as a communication line to parents' views.
34. The community has a good impact on pupils' learning. The school regularly brings the community into the school, both to broaden pupils' learning and to raise their local and wider environmental awareness. The links with other schools, colleges and universities are very good, developing through the Network Learning Community. Arrangements for transferring pupils to secondary school work well because of the strong links with the main receiving school, which include good staff liaison and very good curriculum links extension in English, science, mathematics, ICT and special educational needs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives very good leadership and the school is well managed. Governance is good overall and is continuing to develop.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective leadership has created a very good ethos and is raising standards.
- Equal access for every pupil is a key strength of the school.
- Management is good and subject leaders give strong guidance but not all subject leaders know how high standards are in their subjects.
- Governors offer a wide and valuable range of expertise and support the school well. They are developing their strategic role.

Commentary

35. The very good learning environment coming from successful implementation of the school's motto of *Co-operation, Care and Consideration* is directly attributable to the extremely effective leadership of the headteacher who has a considerable presence around the school. One example of this was in an assembly for pupils in reception, Years 1 and 2 where children responded to his *Peace be with you* with a reverent and joyful *Peace be with you*. They listened wide eyed to the message of thanking God for the good things on earth. The environment of the school is one that places emphasis on the individuality of its pupils; parents' comments indicate that all are valued equally. All pupils, including those with great difficulties, have equal access to all the school offers. As one pupil put it, *xxx does everything that we do*.
36. The improving standards are also testimony to very good leadership. Information from a range of sources is used to identify the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve. Thoughtful action, drawing on sources of expertise, follows the analysis and the rising standards in writing shows that this approach is successful. Staff work effectively as a team,

implementing the school aims and working with the headteacher to raise standards. This has been most successful in mathematics, science and English. In these subjects, the quality of provision, including teaching, has been reviewed. Each subject is reviewed on a rolling programme and the leader draws up an action plan to guide improvement. The nature of the building means that much monitoring takes place informally by the headteacher. However, senior managers and subject leaders are not always involved in monitoring the quality of the educational provision.

37. Senior managers support the process of performance management and this is used to help develop the priorities on the school improvement plan. Continuing professional development supports teachers well, for example the headteacher is undertaking courses to aid management as are some of the senior managers. The history subject leader is using information from a course to improve provision in history.
38. Governors have gone through a phase when they found it difficult to recruit members. They actively sought new governors and now have a full complement. A characteristic of the governing body is its frank approach to identifying its strengths and where it needs to develop. A recent appraisal of its work has been widely shared and is being used to review how it operates, especially in relation to its role of holding the school to account. A new system of the protocol to observe when making visits to the school has been agreed. More work is being done on governors' role of accountability for the school.
39. A characteristic of both the headteacher and the governing body is an open and honest approach to their work. This constant quest for improvement is paying dividends in terms of the quality of provision and the raising of standards.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,057,764
Total expenditure	1,067,177
Expenditure per pupil	2361

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	64,084
Balance carried forward to the next	54,671

40. The budget is managed very well with the support of the bursar who keeps governors and staff up to date. The budget is carefully reviewed at committee meetings. Governors take good account of the principles of best value.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The children enter the reception class on three occasions in the autumn term. Their attainment on entry is about average, although a number have weak social skills. They achieve well across all areas of learning and they are in line to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception class and some will be working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning are good overall and are very good in personal, social and emotional development. The support provided for children with special educational needs is very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Positive relationships and care for each other.
- The children's contributions to conversations on the work in hand are all valued.
- There is a consistency of approach between the two classes.
- The children are encouraged to be independent and explore new ideas.
- The children listen well to adults and to each other.
- All the staff support and encourage the children.

Commentary

41. Children achieve very well in this area and almost all reach the goals that are expected of them by the end of their year in the reception class. The Foundation Stage does very well for its children in their personal, social and emotional development.
42. The teachers have clear expectations and so the children feel confident about what they are doing. There is good provision for children with special educational needs and for those whose first language is not English and so they achieve well. This caring environment ensures that children soon learn to help each other, for example one girl was heard to tell the teacher that she would look after a relative newcomer at lunchtime.
43. This very good provision starts with an excellent information brochure for parents entitled *Off To School We Go* which includes photographs and useful information for new parents. This relationship between parents and staff then continues positively and both sides keep each other informed. This is particularly apparent at the start of the day when carers and children enter the classroom together. They are greeted by the staff and the children are warmly welcomed. Adults have the opportunity to share information with each other. This ensures that there is a smooth handover from carer to the school staff and so there are no tears! Children who have been absent are greeted with warm enthusiasm on their return. This is a delightful start to the day and both classes are consistent in this approach.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults interact well with children to develop their language.
- A wide range of interesting activities are designed to extend language well.

- Many of the activities revolve around books, which motivates children to read.

Commentary

44. By the end of the reception year, many children achieve well to reach the goals that are expected of them. This is because the provision is strong and focuses well on developing children's language in all the areas of learning. Adults are skilled at encouraging children to develop their ideas orally and gently ask questions to help them to think. An effective team of adults provides good role models for language; children listen eagerly when adults talk to one another about activities.
45. The week's activities are often planned around a book, which develops a love a reading in the children and also consolidates their understanding of the plot of books. The book used during the inspection was the *Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* which provided a wide range of exciting learning opportunities, especially in the play area, where pupils learnt about weights through a pulley that had been erected to haul the lunch up to the lighthouse. This developed their mathematical and scientific language. Role-play using a boat and dressing up clothes led to children talking to one another about the story which extended their language.
46. Children are given satisfactory opportunities to develop writing. During lessons that teach phonics, children are encouraged to trace letter sounds in the air, on the backs of other children or on the floor. This helps them to spell the sounds accurately when they start to write. Children are invited to write in a writing area of one classroom, and they discuss their writing with an adult who then writes a comment on it as part of recording the progress that children make.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Wall displays value the children's work and give information for the children to use.
- Adults interact well with the children to reinforce mathematical language.
- Activities are well planned so that they also reinforce mathematical language.
- Teachers have high expectations.

Commentary

47. Most children are in line to achieve the goals that are expected of them in this area of learning, and some will be working at the lower stages of the National Curriculum.
48. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding, particularly the use of mathematical language. In one lesson the teacher used parcels very effectively to generate discussion about lighter and heavier. There was an air of eager anticipation amongst the children when the teacher produced these parcels. They were entranced as the parcels were unwrapped. Sessions often start with games and songs that teach counting and simple skills of computation.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are well planned.
- Teachers have high expectations.

- Children's work is displayed attractively with the teachers providing labels and appropriate questions.
- Links are made between areas of learning.

Commentary

49. Children are eager to understand the world in which they live and take part with great interest in the activities that support this area of learning. As a result, they achieve well and are in line to reach the end of year goals.
50. Teachers value the contribution that children bring from home. One pupil was praised and encouraged for making a model at home about a lighthouse which was part of the current work in the class. Children were motivated when working in the ICT suite by the lively teaching and the support from adults with them. Many were confident to use a mouse and some understood how to use the commands to make a robot function.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations.
- Teachers ask questions skilfully.
- At the end of the lesson teachers tell children what they will be doing in the next lesson.

Commentary

51. Children achieve well in this area of learning and most develop the control of movement that is expected of their age group. In one lesson, the children were using space well and when the class was told to find a space to work in, one child was heard to say, "here's a good space" which indeed it was. All children were able to move their body position in the way they were asked. Younger children have difficulty in using small equipment such as scissors, but they concentrate furiously and do not give up.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are well planned in the play area.
- Children's ideas are listened to and valued.
- Children's work is attractively displayed.
- Links are made between areas of learning.

Commentary

52. The provision in this area enables children to achieve well and for most to reach the goals that are expected of them. A strong feature that supports this is the play area, run by a play leader who plans jointly with the staff to extend learning opportunities. During the inspection, the area became the sea with a lighthouse and a boat. This gave children the chance to develop their creativity and all entered the area with great enthusiasm and delight. Children enjoy painting and their work is carefully displayed. They enjoy the opportunities to make three-dimensional objects. Drama lessons also support the development of creativity well; when improvising roles, many children already respond to the command to freeze, understanding the technical term.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is already aware of weaknesses in pupils' writing and taking action to improve it.
- Standards of reading are well above average.
- All pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes are highly positive and they enjoy the subject.
- Pupils are not always clear about the aim of the lesson.
- There are no regular procedures for identifying and sharing the good practice that is in the school.

Commentary

53. Standards overall are above average. As a result of a detailed analysis of pupils' work in English, co-ordinators have identified areas of weakness in English, particularly in writing. Action plans for raising standards have been devised and implemented. Standards are improving because there is now a strong emphasis on providing increased opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate writing skills by applying them to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in history, Year 2 pupils developed their skills when writing imaginary letters about the Crimean War and in Year 6 they research and write about famous people. Standards have therefore been maintained since the last inspection when they were above average.
54. Pupils enjoy reading and are provided with regular opportunities to develop their skills. They read with interest and good expression. In Year 1, pupils read with excellent expression. They were observed in a whole-class reading activity in which they greatly enjoyed changing the tone and volume of their voices as they read the story of Goldilocks. The recently up-graded library has helped to develop an interest amongst all pupils in reading and provides a good range of resources that are suitable for pupils of all ages and ability. Pupils read widely and talk with enthusiasm about books.
55. Pupils of all ages and levels of ability achieve well in English because of effective teaching. Those identified with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and consequently make similar progress to that of their classmates.
56. Pupils of all abilities work hard in their lessons and are eager to succeed. They speak clearly and listen carefully to the teacher and each other. They concentrate well and know how to improve their work because of helpful comments made by their teacher in discussion and marking of work.
57. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are based on the National Literacy Strategy and are jointly planned by teachers to ensure that all pupils in each year group receive the same instruction. Sometimes, more able pupils are insufficiently challenged by their work as it is the same as that given to the whole class. Pupils are sometimes uncertain about what they have to learn. This is because teachers plan learning objectives for work spread over a number of days, but do not always make clear the purpose of individual lessons.
58. Leadership and management are good. The subject has been monitored by senior management and external agencies and the information used to improve standards of writing. The leaders for the subject regularly attend training sessions and are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They have identified areas of strength and weakness by analysing pupils' work

and producing action plans for further improvement which include organising training for all teachers. They also arrange special events each year to enhance learning in particular aspects of English. For example, "Story Telling Week" was used to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. Co-ordinators monitor teaching by scrutinising teachers' planning, and observe teaching through the implementation of appraisal procedures. This now needs to be developed by establishing a regular system for monitoring teaching, beyond that of performance management, in order to identify and share "best practice" and in so doing continue to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in writing by encouraging them to write for a range of purposes in other subjects. For example, in history they research and write about famous people and events of the past, in design and technology they produce reports about the things they have made and in science they develop their writing skills by describing their investigations and reporting their conclusions. Drama and role-play activities are used to develop speaking and listening skills and to reinforce pupils' understanding of the past. Information technology is used to support pupils' writing. They use word processing programmes effectively to produce final versions of reports, poetry, and stories.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- There is very good teaching.
- Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and this enthusiasm is passed on to the pupils.
- Teachers are skilful and ask challenging questions
- There is very good collaboration and discussion between pupils during which they exchange mathematical ideas and develop their thinking
- Teaching assistants give very effective support in lessons and this is particularly marked in lessons with older pupils
- In the best lessons, pupils are clear about what they are learning but this is inconsistent across the school.
- The plenary session at the end of the lesson does not always provide opportunities for assessment.

Commentary

60. Since the last inspection standards in mathematics have been raised and mathematics is now a strength of the school. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are above average and by the end of Year 6 they are well above average. All groups of pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and teaching assistants so that they achieve well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported very effectively in order that they can make progress with their mathematical skills. Grouping pupils by ability in Years 4, 5 and 6 ensures that more able pupils achieve well and supports their very high achievement.
61. Pupils are able to make use of computers to develop their mathematical skills. In one Year 4 lesson, pupils were reading measuring scales to the nearest division using an interactive computer program. They were totally absorbed in this task and all pupils succeeded in the challenging task.

62. Teaching is very good overall. In all the lessons seen teaching was good and very good. This is because:
- Teachers plan their lessons very carefully and match tasks well to the pupils' abilities.
 - All the areas of mathematics are covered with a good balance of each aspect.
 - Pupils are encouraged to present their work clearly and to show how they arrived at their answers.
 - Pupils are encouraged to share their methods with each other and discuss them. They do this particularly well because the teachers make this a feature of many lessons.
 - The teachers are knowledgeable about their subject.
 - Teachers provide challenge for the high attaining pupils.
63. These features came together in an exemplary lesson. The teacher had planned a series of lessons and in this one, realised the pupils had moved on more quickly than was anticipated. The planning was flexibly adjusted to take account of this, so that pupils were not held back. A quick, and very challenging session took place in which pupils were asked to estimate mass using grams and kilograms and then convert the grams and kilograms into fractions and decimals. Every pupil concentrated furiously and was helped by the teacher pitching questions to challenge the range of abilities in the class. Even though the class had been grouped by ability, the teacher was not content to give out the same exercise following the activity, but had carefully prepared different activities according to the stage of learning of individual pupils. The other feature of this lesson was that the purpose of the lesson was made very clear at the beginning and the teacher kept coming back to it to ensure that all were keeping up with what was expected. Every pupil understood what they were doing and why, which helped them to focus appropriately. The achievement in this lesson was very good and standards in this aspect of mathematics were well above average for the pupils in this Year 4 group.
64. This very good quality teaching results in pupils being challenged, and learning very well. In one lesson, the teacher deepened a pupil's mathematical thinking by not accepting the answer, "I just knew it". The teacher drove the pupil into explaining her method. This example of a teacher's high expectation is what makes the teaching of mathematics so successful. The pupils enjoy this subject and one child was heard to say, as she went to her lesson, "I love maths".
65. In one lesson, about measuring, the teacher made it clear to the pupils what the focus of their learning would be and kept reminding pupils of this throughout the lesson. This enabled the pupils to understand their own progress. This was not a feature of all lessons. The plenary session at the end of the lesson is not always used to assess how far the pupils have progressed and to involve the pupils in this. Often this part of the lesson was used solely to revise key points.
66. The subject is led very well by the mathematics co-ordinator. She has a good understanding of why pupils do so well in mathematics. There is a clear action plan for the further development of this subject. The co-ordinator assesses the older pupils regularly and the results of this are then used to identify common errors for the teachers to work on in lessons. She is planning to develop assessment further and knows how she will use this to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Pupils use mathematics effectively as part of their work in other subjects. During the inspection, this was seen in information and communication technology which was used to develop numeracy skills as well as for data handling and work about shape. In a physical education lesson Year 2 pupils used their recently gained mathematical knowledge of position and direction to carry out a warm-up activity.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The way in which all pupils are included in lessons is a strength.
- Pupils are able to take responsibility for their own learning and they work together well.
- Standards are now average and continuing to improve.
- The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5 is increasing and most pupils are now achieving well.
- Many lessons are interesting and motivate pupils to learn.
- The subject co-ordinator is providing effective leadership and sound management.
- The focus being given to further raising standards of writing is reflected in good standards of presentation and recording.
- Opportunities for investigative science are being developed well.
- With the exception of 2002, standards at the end of Year 6 have risen consistently since the time of the last inspection in 1998.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are being used effectively to inform teachers' planning, improve rates of progress and raise levels of attainment.

Commentary

68. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. These pupils entered Year 1 with generally below average attainment. They have made good progress and are now achieving average levels. Lessons are thoroughly planned and are matched well to the prior attainment of pupils. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking, and they expect them to record ideas independently. In Years 1 and 2, the focus is on the development of investigative learning, concepts and skills, with less emphasis being given to formal recording. For example, in one good Year 1 lesson, pupils worked well together to identify a suitable material for covering an umbrella, carrying out their own research in well-motivated and hard working groups. The emphasis being given by the school to the development of writing means that recording is improving by the end of Year 2.
69. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 and this represents good achievement from the end of Year 2 for this particular group of pupils. The school has set a demanding target for the national tests and assessments in 2004. If achieved, this will still remain close to the national average but will show a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the 2003 National Curriculum tests and assessments.
70. Pupils now enter Year 3 with average attainment, especially in relation to their skills in investigative science. Through Years 3 to 6 they are currently making good progress and pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve the target set for the end of the school year. In one very good Year 6 lesson, pupils discussed reversible and irreversible processes in a mature and scientific manner, identifying that when an effervescent tablet is dissolved in water the process cannot be reversed because the gas released has escaped into the atmosphere. Teachers are working effectively to develop pupils' ability to take responsibility for their own learning, think creatively and record their ideas independently and these are significant strengths across the school. The emphasis being given to the development of writing is evident in the above average quality of written work in Year 6.
71. Teaching and learning are good overall; and standards, especially among higher achieving pupils, are beginning to rise. This is judged to be the case even though during the inspection a number of lessons which were no more than satisfactory were observed. Good teaching was observed in Year 1 and very good teaching in Year 6. The best lessons were brought alive by the many opportunities to learn from practical situations, and by carrying out investigations or finding out about materials and their properties at first hand. However in some classes such practical activities were very tightly limited and controlled by teachers, leading to lower levels of

challenge and less pace. Nevertheless, it was evident that most pupils have developed the skills necessary for independent learning. Procedures are now in place to ensure that skills are developed in a careful way, so that pupils build steadily on what they have learned before. A particular strength is the way in which teachers and learning support staff work together cohesively to ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons. As pupils get older, they take careful measurements of what is happening in their investigations and note these in graphs and tables. As a result, they are beginning to develop satisfactory skills of interpretation, drawing conclusions about what is happening and why.

72. The subject leader has a clear vision of the direction in which she wishes to lead this subject. She has put in place an action plan that correctly identifies areas for future development, and has established sound routines for day-to-day management. The improving standards in each year group from prior levels of attainment are evidence of the impact of her leadership and management. There has been satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection. The high priority that she and her colleagues are giving to the promotion of investigative science and creative thinking are an important development that is having a positive impact on standards. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall with achievement noted at the end of each unit of work. Assessment materials produced nationally are currently being introduced and evaluated in order further to refine the monitoring of pupil progress and better inform teachers' planning. This is further evidence of the work being done to ensure that every pupil receives a programme of work that is well matched to his or her prior attainment. While there has been some direct monitoring by the co-ordinator of the quality of teaching, she has identified this as an area for further development. Resources are of good quality and are used well by teachers and pupils to support learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good across the school.
- Resource provision is good and improving and a particularly good level of technical support is provided.
- The subject leader is providing strong and effective leadership with a clear sense of direction that has led to significant improvement since the last inspection.
- The subject is well managed.

Commentary

73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, and standards are rising to be in line with that expected by the end of Year 2. They have a positive attitude to the subject and enjoy talking about what they know. By Year 2, pupils carry out simple research and enter, retrieve and save work. They can present their ideas in different forms, such as in tables and charts. They enjoyed creating pictures in the style of Piet Mondrian using an art program. There were real moments of awe and wonder as their pictures were printed and compared with those of the original artist. Their mouse control and their ability to use icons and menus is generally satisfactory, with a small number of pupils attaining above average standards. They have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how computers are used in everyday appliances and appreciate that technology is used to control them. Their skills in word processing are appropriate for their age.
74. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also achieve well and standards are rising to be above average. Higher attaining pupils are now doing well. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their knowledge of databases appropriately, using different methods to interrogate the data they have collected. Most pupils have well developed skills in word processing, and can demonstrate how to use the icons to manipulate and amend text for different purposes. Their skills in monitoring data, modelling

and controlling events are at an appropriate level for their age. In one Year 6 lesson the quality of work seen as groups of pupils worked well together to program their cars to drive down a road and park in a parking bay was impressive, with high rates of learning and a real sense of excitement and amazement as success was achieved.

75. Teaching is good and helps to ensure that there is a constant emphasis on improving rates of pupils' achievement and the overall standards that they attain. This is beginning to bear fruit as previous gaps in their knowledge are filled. Staff, including the well-qualified support staff, are confident in their use of ICT and ensure that pupils learn effectively and that all have full access to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy the subject and throughout the school they work well together, often working in pairs or threes and showing very good levels of support for each other.
76. Subject leadership is good and there is a very clear and appropriate action plan in place. Monitoring and assessment procedures are sound and the information gained is used satisfactorily to inform teacher planning. However, the direct monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is an area that requires further development. Resources are good, improving and used very well. The provision of a technician to support the ICT suite and ICT generally is a positive feature that frees teachers and other support staff to concentrate on the quality of teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. It is often used well to support English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. In addition to the use of art packages, databases, CD-ROMs, and robotic devices, the school's current emphasis on raising standards of writing further is evident in the range of opportunities that are provided for pupils to record original work using a word processor. Pupils make increasing and very good use of the Internet for research as they progress through the school.

HUMANITIES

Geography was sampled during the inspection through an examination of pupils' work, talking to pupils and looking at subject documentation. Pupils have a good knowledge of their local environment and places around the world. They know about important mountain regions, famous rivers and have a good knowledge of places from around the world and their different climates. They learn about their local environment and discuss the ways in which changes have been made in the area. In addition, they speak confidently about looking after the environment and discuss the importance of keeping it clean and litter-free. They cover all the recommended programmes of study in their lessons. Those with special educational needs make the same satisfactory progress as others because they study the same work and are well supported by teachers and their assistants.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers inspire pupils so they enjoy learning and are fascinated by the subject.
- The new subject leader is pro-active in improving the provision.
- Skills of literacy are used well to research and present information.

Commentary

78. Pupils are fascinated by history and are eager to learn more about the past. This is because teachers make the subject interesting and use a range of resources well. As a result, pupils across the school achieve well and standards are above average. Boys and girls are equally fascinated by the subject so do equally well as do those who come from the range of cultures in the school. More able pupils are challenged by the activities and by the teachers' questions that probe their understanding and develop new learning. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well as they are well supported and given appropriate activities.
79. Staff have been seeking to raise standards of writing, and history is used well as a vehicle for this. Pupils use skills of research well, finding out information from books, artefacts, photographs and the internet and other forms of ICT. They are given many opportunities for writing, for example as people who lived in the past, writing letters and presenting information in a range of charts and tables. Pupils in Year 6 had carried out research into life during World War Two, part of which involved talking to relatives who had lived during or immediately after the war. Many produced their work using ICT. The quality of the research and the presentations of their findings were very high for many. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 who have been looking at the life of Florence Nightingale produced high quality writing as participants in the Crimean War. The reason for this was the stimulation through a video, books, photographs and finally drama in which they acted the parts of soldiers, nurses and doctors.
80. Teachers are skilled at bringing the subject to life, and there were many examples of pupils being awestruck as artefacts were produced and they were asked to guess what they might have been for and how they were different from today. Pupils in Year 1 were entranced by old irons and other household equipment as the teacher produced them with an air of magic. They were eager to try their ideas as to the purpose of the objects, those who lacked oral skills acting their suggestions enthusiastically!
81. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is currently reviewing the provision. She has attended a course and is trying out some of the ideas before sharing them with the rest of the staff. As starting point for the review, she monitored the quality of pupils' work. The action plan for history is well thought out, but does not include time for monitoring the impact of staff development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy the subject and their learning is good.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The subject leader is providing effective leadership and manages the subject well.

Commentary

82. By the ends of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus in terms of knowledge and understanding. Standards of recording are broadly average at the ends of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across the school when judged against their prior attainment. Although there appears to have been a decline in overall attainment since the last inspection when it was reported that standards were above average, other evidence, such as teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils, suggests that there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since then.

83. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developing knowledge of the major religions of the world through their study of the major festivals of the Christian and Hindu faiths. They show a sound understanding of who Jesus was and they enjoy hearing the stories that he told, and discussing what the stories mean. In a good Year 2 lesson pupils were observed thinking about the miracles of Jesus and discussing in a sensitive way what it must feel like to be blind as they responded to the story of *Blind Bartimaeus*. There was a moment of genuine engagement and amazement as the pupils listened in rapt attention to their teacher describing the wonder and beauty of a helicopter flight through the Grand Canyon.
84. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their knowledge of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and begin to understand why religion is important to people. In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils responded sensitively to the story of how the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed and about his role as the messenger of Allah. By Year 6, pupils have secure understanding of the key elements of the Christian, Islamic and Jewish faiths and are relating their teachings to the world in which they live. They are fully aware of the nature of the different holy books and how they should be handled. Assemblies are well planned and make a good contribution to the development of pupils' knowledge of the Christian and other faiths.
85. When all inspection evidence is taken into account the quality of teaching is judged as good overall. It was good in all of the lessons seen. The curriculum is planned to ensure that the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are met, with a strong and effective focus on discussing the spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues raised, in all classes. The co-ordinator is providing effective leadership. She has successfully engaged all the staff in teaching religious education and ensuring that it makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Monitoring and assessment procedures are satisfactory. However, the direct monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is an area for development. Resource provision for the subject is good, with religious artefacts used well to support learning. Both teachers and pupils treat religious artefacts with reverence and respect.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. Music and design and technology were sampled as there were few lessons to observe during the days on which the inspection was held.
87. Work was sampled in **music** by listening to singing in assemblies, observation of two lessons and discussion with pupils and the subject leader. All that was seen was good. Instrumental tuition enables higher attaining pupils to achieve well. There is a strong focus on listening and on using the technical language of music so that pupils can describe their work with precision. Music contributes effectively to pupils' personal development, especially to their understanding of music from a range of cultures. As yet, there are few formal systems of assessment and the subject leader does not monitor the quality of provision in classes. Since the last inspection, standards in singing have improved and they are now satisfactory. Pupils are able to sing tunefully and maintain their own part in a two part song.
88. Only a small number of observations could be undertaken in **design and technology**. These indicate that provision in this subject is good. Scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display around the school confirms that all elements of the design process are being taught and that standards overall are broadly average at the ends of Years 2 and 6. The subject is being effectively led and soundly managed. Monitoring and assessment opportunities are satisfactory. However, there is little direct monitoring of teaching and learning to raise standards to those of other subjects. There are ample resources and these are used well by teachers, support staff and pupils.

Art and Design

Provision in **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school offers a good range of opportunities for pupils to explore their creativity.
- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

89. The curriculum is carefully planned to include a broad range of activities. Lesson observations and displays around the school show that pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their skills in art and design by using a wide range of materials. Paint, pastels, charcoal, fabric, clay, drawing pencils and three-dimensional modelling materials are amongst those used regularly. The use of computers is being developed to provide opportunities for pupils to learn about famous artists and imitate their style. Art is used to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example in a literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils with special educational needs were observed learning about adjectives and drawing pictures to illustrate the words they had found in a story, and in Year 4 pupils painted Tudor portraits of each other as part of their history work.
90. Pupils show a good level of competence in all aspects of the subject because teaching is good and pupils are enthusiastic about their work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' achievement was judged to be satisfactory. They enjoy the subject and produce work that is lively and imaginative. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work and, as a result, strive hard to improve and encourage each other. For example, on entering one classroom, one pupil was seen making a particular effort, without fuss, to encourage the work of another who had very challenging special educational needs and, whilst gently touching the pupils' elbow, was heard to remark, "*That's beautiful! – well done!*" before quietly returning to her own place.
91. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She provides good support for teachers, organises the resources well and arranges visitors to come into the school as a means of promoting the subject throughout the school. An artist in residence who works with the school is currently involved in preparing the school's application for the nationally recognised 'Artsmark Award'.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers encourage the pupils and interact well with them.
- There is very good collaboration between pupils and they are able to work in pairs and small groups.
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate what they have done and suggest ways in which they could make improvements.
- There are positive relationships between the pupils and the teacher as well as between pupils.
- In some lessons there is limited opportunity for the pupils to practise and improve on their work.
- Pupils are not challenged sufficiently in order to develop greater control and precision.

Commentary

92. It was not possible to inspect games because of poor weather during the week of the inspection so the full range of activities was not observed. Standards in physical education are broadly average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and teaching assistants so that they fully participate in physical education. The way in which pupils with physical limitations are enabled to take part in all aspects of physical education is a strong feature of this subject. It reflects the very good ethos of the school that values every one.
93. Teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection the lessons seen focused on gymnastics and dance. In these lessons teaching was satisfactory and often good. This is because, in the good lessons, pupils were given the opportunity to reflect on what they had done and to improve. In some lessons this reflection and opportunity to improve did not feature. Most lessons had a mixture of calm activities and ones that increased the heart rate. All lessons started with a warm-up activity and a time for cooling down at the end of the lesson. There were occasions when pupils were insufficiently encouraged to control their movements in a precise way, for example, stretching as much as possible or being still.
94. Pupils work very well with a partner or in small groups and this enables them to extend their learning. In one lesson, for example, pupils were mirroring each other's movements. They were able to do this well because they were constantly encouraged and praised by the teacher.
95. There are good examples of work in other subjects being brought into physical education lessons. In Year 2 pupils were able to develop the work they had been doing in mathematics on position and direction and transfer this into being "robots" in physical education.
96. The subject is led in a satisfactory manner by the physical education leader. Some aspects of her leadership are good because she has a clear idea of the needs and priorities in physical education. Indeed her action plan shows that she wants to strengthen assessment in physical education and to develop dance further. Inspection findings confirm that these are appropriate. She is particularly enthusiastic about the work that the school is doing with the Wildern cluster which enables schools to work together.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

97. This subject was sampled by talking with staff and pupils, observing sessions and examining subject documentation. It is a focus for development on the school improvement plan and teachers are increasing opportunities for pupils to talk and think about their personal lives and how they can maintain good health. The school has recently been recognised as a healthy school under the national Healthy Schools scheme. More work is taking place in this area. One element of the provision is the very successful *Walking Bus* which is supported by volunteers from parents and the community. This is designed to support both healthy living and the environment. The very strong links with parents enable it to be a big success. Staff are also supporting pupils with personal problems through a range of approaches including teachers trained as counsellors and people from outside. This area is one of the strengths of the school and is developing further and is one of the reasons why parents are so pleased with what they see as the development of the whole child.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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