

INSPECTION REPORT

NASSINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Nassington

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121847

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Laura Suffield

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th October 2003

Inspection number: 260603

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	60
School address:	Church Street Nassington Peterborough
Postcode:	PE8 6QG
Telephone number:	01780 782743
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M. Houghton
Date of previous inspection:	4 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small school, the children transferring at the end of Year 4 to a middle school. About 25 per cent of the pupils come from outside the village. They come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds although the majority come from high social class backgrounds. Free school meal eligibility is very low. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average. An acting headteacher has been in charge since September and will remain in post until the new headteacher takes over in January 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Mr P. Edwards	Lead inspector	English, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, physical education.
13874	Mrs J. Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
20350	Mrs V. Davies	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, mathematics, art and design, geography, history, religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a **fairly effective school**. The pupils generally achieve well and make good progress because the teaching is usually good. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is a good range of enrichment activities that enhance the pupils' learning. The staff know the pupils very well and there is a strong commitment to promoting their well being. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Although costs are high, the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Generally, the pupils are achieving well because the teaching is good, but there is an occasional lack of challenge for the more able children. The quality of the teaching and learning has not been monitored systematically
- Standards are above average overall
- The pupils do not have enough opportunities to use information and communication technology right across the curriculum
- In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is good and the children do well
- The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour is good
- Relationships between the pupils and between the staff and pupils are good
- The teachers know the children well and value their ideas but they have few opportunities to contribute their views on the development of the school
- The acting headteacher is providing strong leadership, but for some time previous to her appointment there has clearly been a lack of strategic planning and the teachers' personal training needs have not been included in the priorities

Standards in the core subjects have risen in line with the improvements seen nationally. However, the issues identified in the last report have **not been addressed satisfactorily**. Until recently there has been no systematic monitoring of the teaching and learning by the headteacher and co-ordinators and staff training issues have not been included in the school improvement plan. Moreover, the teachers have only recently used assessment to plan future work, and the tracking of pupils' progress has not yet influenced the planning process.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils are achieving well and overall standards are above average. As a result of good teaching, most children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards are above average, and the pupils are making good progress and achieving well. In 2002, the results were below average in reading and writing, but are well above average in 2003. The variation in the results is due to the small size of the year groups and the number of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection findings indicate that the improvement in standards is being maintained. However, there is occasionally a lack of challenge in some mathematics lessons and the more able pupils do not attain the standards of which they are capable.

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

*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*

By the end of Year 4, the pupils are achieving satisfactorily in the humanities, but they do better in history than in geography because of the teachers' good use of resources and environment. The pupils are also achieving satisfactory standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 but have insufficient opportunities to use computers to promote learning in other subjects.

The pupils have **good attitudes to learning and behave well**. In the classroom, during lunchtime and on the playground relationships are good. The pupils are always ready at the start of lessons and listen carefully to their teachers. **Attendance levels are above average**. The **pupils' personal qualities are developed effectively by the school**. There are good opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development that enhance the good relationships within the school. Cultural development is less well developed, particularly the pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education provided by the school is good**. The teachers offer a good range of interesting and enjoyable activities that keeps most pupils motivated. In most lessons, there is an appropriate level of challenge although occasionally in mathematics, there is inadequate challenge for the more able pupils. The teachers make good use of resources and artefacts to stimulate learning, particularly in subjects such as history. Usually the pupils work hard and are keen to learn. The **teaching is usually good** throughout the school.

The **curriculum is satisfactory** and enhanced by a range of visits and visitors to the school. The children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a range of activities, enabling them to cover all aspects of the required curriculum. However, the lack of reliable equipment restricts the pupils' progress in information and communication technology. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective, enabling these pupils to make rapid progress. **The care, guidance and support of the pupils are good**. There are good relationships between the staff and pupils and the adults look after the children very well. However, there are no procedures for the pupils to present their thoughts about the school. **The school's partnerships with parents and the community are satisfactory**. The parents support their children well, but until recently they received insufficient information because the home / school communications were inadequate.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory**. The acting headteacher has instigated a number of initiatives aimed at addressing the shortcomings in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the strategic planning. A number of governors are new to the school and need guidance in how to monitor progress at the school. In her short time at the school, the acting headteacher has demonstrated good leadership skills and the co-ordinators, who have not had the opportunity to monitor their subjects, show an enthusiasm for raising standards further.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school should now take steps to

- raise standards further in mathematics
- improve the use of assessment information in teachers' planning
- develop the use of computers to support learning in other subjects
- improve the library facilities and the range and quality of books
- provide co-ordinators with opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects
- develop procedures for the senior management to systematically monitor the quality of the teaching
- develop the role of the governors to enable them to take a more active role in monitoring the quality of education provided by the school

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards and achievement are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well in English and mathematics
- Standards in science are above average
- The pupils do not achieve as well as they should in information and communication technology
- By the time they enter Year 1, the children achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and they achieve well overall.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.5 (17.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.9 (16.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.5 (16.8)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Each year the number of pupils in Year 2 is very small and therefore the interpretation of the National Curriculum test results must be treated with caution. However, the trend over the last three years has been one of rising standards. The lower results for 2002 are attributable to the number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group, and the 2003 test results show standards to be well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
2. In the Foundation Stage, the children achieve well and almost all are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in each area of learning. The children achieve well because a good range of interesting activities is planned for them.
3. Through skilful questioning, the teachers enable the pupils to improve their speaking skills and to reach standards that are well above average. Similarly, at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards in reading are above average because the key skills are taught well. A good grounding is established in the Foundation Stage and is followed by effective teaching in subsequent classes. Guided reading sessions and good support by parents enable the pupils to read confidently and with good expression. Consequently, they achieve well. Overall, the pupils' research skills are satisfactory, but the poor library facilities inhibit their further development. The pupils' writing skills develop well with handwriting, punctuation and spelling frequently well above average. However, their opportunities to practise writing at length are minimised through the overuse of mundane worksheets. Whilst standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4, they could be higher if the teachers made more effective use of assessment information to plan the work. They occasionally underestimate what some pupils are capable of achieving. Throughout the school, the pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the early identification of their needs and the very effective support provided by the teaching assistants.
4. Standards in science are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. The pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum and develop satisfactory skills in planning investigations. Nevertheless, the use of information and communication technology to support learning in

other subjects is unsatisfactory. The lack of reliable equipment has resulted in the teachers not planning systematically to use computers in subjects such as history and geography. Although most pupils have satisfactory skills in most aspects of the subject, they are not achieving the higher levels of which they are capable.

5. Standards in most other subjects are generally satisfactory. Insufficient emphasis has been placed on the pupils developing key skills in subjects such as geography, where there are insufficient opportunities to develop research skills and they do not reach the standard of which they are capable. In history, the pupils achieve well and attain above average standards because good teaching and the effective use of resources and artefacts stimulate the pupils' interest. Good use is also made of the local environment to promote the pupils' historical knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral and social development is **good**, but multi-cultural initiatives are **unsatisfactory**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils behave very well in class and around the school
- They enjoy school and are positive about what it offers them
- The pupils are encouraged to think about the world beyond themselves and to be responsible
- They have had insufficient opportunity to develop an understanding of other cultures
- Lack of playground facilities leads to some boisterous behaviour
- Parents ensure that their children attend regularly and on time

Commentary

6. The staff have clear expectations of behaviour in class, and pupils are aware of this and do their best to meet these high standards. They listen attentively, follow instructions carefully and try hard to achieve as much as they can during lessons. They move around the building sensibly and are very orderly and interested during assemblies. The pupils who were interviewed were keen to talk about their work and the other school activities that they enjoy. In the playground, their behaviour and relationships are usually good, but the lack of facilities has an adverse effect. Because there is nothing for the pupils to do and nowhere for them to sit, the games occasionally become boisterous and some children can find the play too rough.
7. The school is successful in helping the pupils develop their self-awareness. Good use of the school's rural environment builds on their knowledge of the natural world they live in. The residential trips and sports clubs encourage teamwork and self-reliance. On a daily basis, the chance to be a special helper enables pupils of all ages to contribute to the life of the school community. Until recently, the pupils have had very little chance to find out about the different cultures living in modern Britain, something which is particularly important for children living in an area with a limited mix of ethnic backgrounds. However, the acting headteacher has already established some promising new initiatives designed to improve this provision, beginning with celebration of Diwali.
8. The school consistently achieves good levels of attendance, above the national figures. This is because it insists on high standards and because the parents value education and make sure that their children come to school regularly and on time. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** overall.

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are good overall enabling most pupils to attain standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, enabling most children to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is good and most pupils achieve well. Occasionally, however, the more able pupils need more demanding work in mathematics
- The pupils develop good speaking and listening skills
- The teachers assess the pupils' work regularly, but insufficient use is made of the information to plan future work and the marking rarely informs the pupils how they might improve their work
- The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' and the lessons proceed at a brisk pace

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	8	5	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.

9. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The small number of children in the class enables the staff to give them good support and the work is well matched to their levels of ability. Although they have only been in school a short time, assessment procedures have been used effectively to identify the areas in which they need more help. There is good emphasis on developing the children's speaking and listening skills and they make rapid progress, showing confidence when engaging adults in conversation. The staff create good opportunities to develop numeracy skills. For example, when celebrating a 'bear's birthday', the children are encouraged to count the number of candles on the cake.
10. Throughout the rest of the school, the quality of teaching and learning in English is generally good. A particular strength of the teaching in all subjects is the way in which the teachers engage the pupils in discussion, thereby successfully improving their speaking and listening skills. The teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and this ensures that the pupils settle to work quickly and make good use of the opportunities to learn.

11. The teachers have had insufficient opportunities to attend good in-service training in subjects other than literacy and numeracy. Consequently, they lack confidence in their abilities in a number of subjects because they have not been able to further develop their skills. Furthermore, until recently, they have not had the opportunity to observe teaching of a higher quality and, whilst most pupils achieve well, the staff have recognised that they could do better. In some subjects, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets that do little to help the pupils improve their literacy skills. Occasionally, in mathematics there is a lack of challenge for the most able pupils. In these instances, the work is set at too low a level and the pupils do not make sufficient gains in their learning. This is partly due to the teachers' failure to use assessment information effectively when planning the work, particularly when pupils move from class to class.
12. In contrast, the staff make particularly effective use of the assessment information to draw up clear targets for the pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are also provided with very good support by the teaching assistants, enabling most to make rapid gains in their learning.
13. The teachers work together very effectively as a small team and have a very good understanding of the personal development of the pupils. They try to make lessons interesting through the use of a good range of practical activities and there is a good balance between 'teacher talk' and 'pupil activity'. The pupils enjoy subjects such as music and physical education and learn well because of their enthusiasm. The teachers make effective use of the expertise within the community, for example, to produce a school newspaper, for design and technology activities and for physical education.

The curriculum

The school has a satisfactory curriculum that meets the statutory requirements and provides for the needs of different groups of pupils. It is broad and enriched by a good range of visits, special events and additional activities. The accommodation and resources are adequate overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development, including provision for personal, social and health education, is a recent introduction. It is now satisfactory
- The school makes good use of the local environment to enrich the pupils' education
- The provision for the children with special educational needs is very good. The teaching assistants provide very good support and enable the pupils to access the curriculum well
- The resources for information and communication technology and the school library are unsatisfactory

Commentary

14. The curricula for English and mathematics are effective and the pupils achieve well and enjoy their lessons. In other subjects, where pupils do not reach the same high standards, the curriculum development has been rapid this term. There are now policies, schemes of work and slots on the timetable for these subjects. However, these initiatives have yet to influence the pupils' performance, particularly in regard to the systematic development of key skills. The school makes good use of its locality to enrich the work in history, geography and the arts, but it has yet to monitor the effectiveness of its curriculum. This is an outstanding issue from the previous inspection.
15. The children with special educational needs achieve very well, often assisted by very good teaching assistants. For example, they enable the visually impaired pupils to play a full part in physical education lessons.

16. Although the school's accommodation is attractive and set amidst lovely grounds it lacks an adequate library so the pupils do not have access to a sufficient range of books and older pupils' independent research skills are under developed. Building work is in process to remedy the adverse effects that the unsatisfactory provision has on the pupils' achievements in information and communication technology. The accommodation is unsatisfactory for adults working in the school. The staff room is cramped with insufficient room for the number of staff.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **good** care and support for the pupils. They have **satisfactory** opportunities to make their views known through informal discussions with staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff are warm and caring in their dealings with pupils
- The pupils feel happy and well looked after
- The induction arrangements are good
- The pupils lack structured opportunities to put their views forward

Commentary

17. The key to the good care that the pupils receive in the school is the quality of the relationships fostered by the staff. The teachers and support staff are very attentive to the pupils' well being, and this is acknowledged and appreciated by pupils and parents alike. In response to the inspection questionnaires, the parents commented on the nurturing atmosphere of the school, and the pupils were unanimous that they always felt there was someone they could turn to if they had a problem. The warm, informal support, which is evident daily in the classrooms throughout the school day, is crucial in helping pupils of this age to feel settled, comfortable and ready to learn. This begins in the reception class, where the well established, carefully planned links with the playgroup ensure that the children soon settle in and feel at home.
18. All members of staff listen carefully to the pupils' individual ideas and opinions, but there are no formal systems for gathering the pupils' views on issues that affect them. There is no school council, for example, although the structured programme for 'Circle Time' could be used for pupil consultation.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents, other schools and the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The home / school relationships are good
- The reports to parents on their children's progress are good
- Some good initiatives now mean that the parents are better informed about the curriculum

Commentary

19. The parents get on well with the staff and are very supportive of the school. In turn, the school gives the parents good information about their children's achievement and progress in their annual reports. These focus clearly on what the pupils can do, and the best ones state clearly how well the pupils are doing for their age. However, this is not consistent across all classes. The reports are also helpful in setting targets for future improvement, so the parents know what their children need to do next.

20. The acting headteacher has swiftly improved the quality and quantity of the information that goes out to parents. Weekly newsletters and half-termly curriculum updates ensure that the parents know what is happening at school and what their children will be learning, so that they can give their support. Previously, the communications were less frequent. The school and governors need to check that the prospectus and the governors' annual report fully cover all the necessary information. For example, attendance information and the right of parents to withdraw their children from religious education is not included. In the past the school has always responded effectively to the parents' individual queries and concerns, but it has not systematically sought their ideas and opinions. The acting headteacher has now developed a useful questionnaire for parents, which will enable them to have their say in the school improvement process.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the present leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weakness
- There have been insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning
- Insufficient use has been made of in service training to meet fully the priorities in the school improvement plan and to address the issues raised by the previous inspection
- The governors have not monitored the provision at the school as effectively as they could

Commentary

21. In her short tenure, the acting headteacher has identified a number of weaknesses at the school and has begun to address them effectively. For instance, until recently, the teaching and learning were not being monitored systematically, the co-ordinators were not monitoring their subjects effectively and the available assessment information was not being used to plan future work. Whilst strategies have been put in place to address these shortcomings it is not possible to determine their effectiveness so soon into the term. She has been successful in establishing a good climate for learning and promoting inclusion throughout the school. Discussions with subject co-ordinators demonstrate a clear desire to raise standards further and to improve the quality of teaching and learning, but they lack understanding as to how they should go about the task.
22. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It compares the school's performance with others both nationally and locally. The governors make regular visits to the school so that they can see for themselves how it operates, but they lack the experience to determine how effective it is. New governors have commenced a training programme to enable them to better perform this task. They are aware of the more obvious strengths, but lack a more in depth knowledge of what needs to be done to improve.
23. The governors ensure the school meets all requirements, for example, in respect of its race equality policy and health and safety. There are, however, minor omissions from their annual report to the parents and from the prospectus.
24. The recent school improvement plan gives a clear outline of the areas needing immediate attention. However, there is insufficient evidence of strategies for longer-term improvement. Occasionally, developments have been planned because finances have been available. For example, the school will benefit from a new computer suite that is to be opened soon, but no account appears to have been taken of the poor library facilities. The lack of strategic planning has also resulted in a failure to identify properly the in-service training needs of the staff and has had consequent effects on the quality of the pupils' learning.

25. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is managed very effectively. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection and has had a very good effect on the progress made by these pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	216,097	Balance from previous year	52,970
Total expenditure	197,471	Balance carried forward to the next	71,600
Expenditure per pupil	3,038		

26. The school has accumulated a significant credit balance in its finances. However, most of this money is committed for its share towards the building and equipping of the computer suite. The school's finances are managed very effectively on a day-to-day basis.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

High standards and good quality provision have been maintained since the previous inspection. The outside play space has been improved, but the children still do not have frequent enough access to large apparatus and there is no outside covered area for play. Changes in the school organisation have resulted in a single age group reception class, which the staff consider is benefiting the children's learning. In service training has improved the staff's confidence in teaching all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An early assessment of the children's skills enables the staff to offer activities appropriate to their needs
- The staff plan well an interesting range of activities covering the recommended curriculum
- The children achieve well. All children are helped to do their best and provision for children with special needs is a very strong feature. They are on course to achieve or exceed the expected standards on admission to Year 1
- The Foundation Stage is confidently led and well managed by an experienced practitioner. Both members of staff are very caring towards their young pupils, who have settled well and now spend a full day in school
- The teaching at this stage is consistently either good or better

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attention is paid to this aspect at all times because of good teaching and high expectations
- Following a careful induction process, the teacher creates a caring environment and atmosphere in which each child is made to feel special and relaxed
- The children are confident and able to learn

Commentary

27. The children are achieving well and meeting the national expectations. They have only been in school for a few weeks, but have settled well and are happy in their class. They are able to listen and concentrate. The activities promote a high degree of socialisation and the children are responding well. They are friendly, kind to each other and very inclusive in their play. The teachers are clear about their learning needs. For instance, they used a physical education lesson to emphasise the importance of following instructions, and this message was reinforced when the children were asked to follow a different type of instruction in their cooking lesson. There are plenty of opportunities for free play and the children co-operate well when making decisions about the rules of their game or the story-line in their imaginative play. They are aware of the importance of hygiene because the teachers emphasise the need for hand washing prior to cooking.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for the development of the children's skills of communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for the children to develop reading and writing skills and they are making good progress in line with their capabilities
- The children have good speaking skills and are given lots of opportunity to use and improve them in small groups and with the whole class
- The teachers are very good story tellers who relish language and provide very good models for spoken English

Commentary

28. The children are making good progress in reading skills. They are acquiring a good knowledge of initial sounds because they have frequent short practice times. They also have good opportunities to write and are encouraged to hold a pencil properly. Most can write their name and an initial letter when completing an invitation, and many are able to copy accurately quite complicated words, such as Wednesday. There are many attractive books available in the classroom. All children can interpret an illustrated instruction book, and the more able children can read simple text. For example, they use the instruction book and follow the steps logically when making a chocolate hedgehog for Brown Bear's party. Speaking and listening are given a high priority. During registration, for instance, the children respond in a variety of languages with good accents. Others listen carefully enough to identify the language used. During all activities, the adult interventions are sensitive and focussed on improving the children's response.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are using mathematical language in many activities and reinforcing their good understanding of the subject
- The teachers provide interesting activities to establish basic skills so children are developing positive attitudes

Commentary

29. The children are acquiring a good knowledge of the counting sequence to five. To reinforce this skill they are making birthday cakes with five candles. Similarly, the class routines are used to teach the days of the week and the months of the year. The vocabulary of measure is developed well through games, for example, in comparing the size of presents. The teachers are very confident about the subject and seize learning opportunities as they occur. For instance, when a pupil commented on a shape (an example of symmetry) during a gluing activity, the teacher fascinated the children as they discussed the pattern.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are given good opportunity to play freely outside. The area was developed after the last inspection, but there are still not enough large pieces of apparatus available
- The teachers make good use of the hall to provide appropriate physical education lessons so that the children learn new skills and make progress

Commentary

30. The children's achievements are in line with the expected standards, and many are doing better. They use space well and recognise that their bodies get warm when they exercise.

Their teachers use coaching effectively to help them acquire new skills like skipping. A child with visual impairment is given very good support so her achievement is high. She quickly acquires the confidence to move and dodge in a large space. Many children also choose to run and dodge in their free play outside. They throw balls into puddles with telling accuracy. The children use pencils well, but their teachers have recognised that many require additional practice with scissors

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher provides good opportunities for role play
- The art and craft activities are interesting and purposeful

Commentary

31. The children are achieving well in this area because they have exciting and worthwhile activities in which to develop their skills. The preparations for Brown Bear's party gave them good opportunity to choose colours when designing cards and presents. Their teachers encouraged them to discuss their work and consider improvements and alternatives. Although no music lessons were seen, the staff are very well qualified and their lesson planning indicates that this is a strong feature of the provision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in all aspects of English are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4
- The teaching assistants are used very effectively
- The teachers' marking does not indicate how the pupils might improve their work
- Until recently, there has been insufficient monitoring of the teaching and learning

Commentary

32. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the pupils' attainment in English is above average. Standards vary considerably from year to year due to the very small numbers in cohorts and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups. However, the pupils generally achieve well throughout the school. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
33. The pupils achieve particularly well in speaking and listening as a result of the good opportunities provided by the teachers. The older pupils speak confidently and are able to explain answers to questions clearly, often using quite complex sentences. The pupils listen very well to their teachers and understand when it is appropriate to ask questions and when to respond to what has been said.
34. In all year groups, standards in reading are above average because the pupils are taught the basic skills effectively and are then provided with good opportunities to develop them further. The pupils are also provided with good support by their parents who take a keen interest in their children's work. The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of genre and read a wide

variety of books. The home-school diaries are used effectively to record how the pupils are reading and how parents might help their children. The structured reading scheme is used effectively to develop the pupils' reading according to their ability and more able children read books by a wide variety of authors. They have the ability to predict and anticipate words using a range of techniques, ranging from pictorial cues to contextual cues. Most pupils read expressively and with a good deal of confidence. Recent innovations by the acting headteacher have improved the quality of the guided reading sessions by injecting pace and interest, and thereby enabling the pupils to achieve particularly well. However, whilst the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to use information books for research purposes, their opportunities to develop such skills are inadequate because of the lack of appropriate library facilities.

35. The pupils' writing develops well throughout the school. They are provided with good opportunities to practise writing for a wide range of purposes. It includes letter writing, using the correct format, and poetry. The older pupils understand the nature of 'argument' and use it, for example, in writing a balanced report on the advantages and disadvantages of school dinners. The pupils' work shows they have above average spelling skills and their grammatical competence is good. The Year 4 pupils have a clear understanding of verbs, adjectives and adverbs and the more able pupils enjoy using descriptive language to produce lively and interesting stories. The pupils' handwriting skills are particularly good and well above average for their age. Those with special educational needs make notably good progress because of the well targeted and effective support provided by the teaching assistants.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

36. There are satisfactory opportunities for the pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum. However, the use of many worksheets in some subjects limits the opportunities for the pupils to practise their writing skills, for example in science where the teachers tend to direct how the pupils should set out a piece of work. The pupils are taught good handwriting skills and most use these skills well in other subjects to produce neat, well-presented work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the pupils attain standards that are above average
- Individual pupils receive good support from their teachers and the teaching assistants so they achieve well in lessons
- The overuse of worksheets prevents the pupils from using and developing their mathematical vocabulary. Consequently, they find difficulty in expressing their thinking in written form
- The use of assessment to track the pupils' progress and to establish targets for improvement is underdeveloped

Commentary

37. The pupils consistently reach higher standards than schools nationally by the end of Year 2, and standards are above average by the end of Year 4. Throughout the school, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported. Over time, the more able pupils achieve their expected levels. The pupils and teachers work hard and cover the curriculum well, but occasionally the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work. This was evident, for example, during a data handling exercise when Year 4 pupils could have undertaken more difficult tasks. Similarly, in a lesson in Year 2 some pupils were not active during the group task and did not have an opportunity to consolidate their learning. Good individual questioning by their teachers helped to remedy this to some extent, but in both lessons the task did not offer sufficient challenge. Overall the teaching is satisfactory.

38. The pupils' independence in the subject is under-developed. The overuse of worksheets limits the pupils' ability to organise their work and to record it in their own words. Consequently, they find it difficult to explain their mathematical thinking. For instance, in one lesson the oldest pupils struggled to explain why place value was important when ordering numbers.
39. The mathematics co-ordinator is very well qualified to lead the subject, but has not had the opportunity to monitor work in the classroom. This is an outstanding issue from the previous inspection. She is aware that she needs to develop systems for assessing the work and tracking progress to check that pupils are making appropriate gains in their learning. The subject is appropriately resourced.

Mathematics across the curriculum

40. The teachers are aware of the importance of pupils using mathematics for real purposes. In a history lesson, for example, the year 2 pupils were able to order a series of dated pictures on a time line. In a Year 3/4 English lesson pupils used a pictogram to record information about genre. In science mathematics is well used to measure and record data during experiments. In design and technology the Year 3/4 pupils were encouraged to tessellate shapes to avoid wasting fabric. Overall, the teachers are making an adequate attempt to include mathematics across the curriculum, but it is not fully embedded in their planning.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4
- The teaching is good, although better use needs to be made of assessment information
- There has been insufficient monitoring of the quality of the teaching and learning

Commentary

41. Only two lessons were observed. Other judgements on standards and teaching are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work. The quality and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. In both classes, the pupils cover all aspects of the subject and do so in sufficient depth. This enables them to make good progress over time and their knowledge of fair tests, for example, is good. The teachers explain the tasks very clearly and this enables the pupils to gain a good understanding of what is being taught. The teachers use day-to-day assessment very effectively, enabling them to gain a detailed understanding of what the pupils know and can do. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher's questioning helped her to determine which pupils had a secure knowledge of the 'five senses' and which pupils need more guidance. Effective deployment of teaching assistants then enables these pupils to make the progress of which they were capable.
42. The older pupils in Years 3 and 4 plan and carry out their own investigations, thereby developing their independence and confidence. For example, following a series of lessons on the body, small groups of pupils planned an investigation to determine 'how muscle strength varies between people'. The value of the lesson was not only in the way the pupils planned the lesson, but also in the way in which they identified the shortcomings in their methods. They realised that the results of their investigation varied because the subjects did not perform the tests in the same way.
43. The pupils' written work is marked regularly, but the marking is rarely evaluative and does not indicate how the pupils might improve. Although assessments of pupils' work are undertaken,

the teachers rarely use the resulting information to plan from one year-group to the next, and therefore it is difficult to ensure that the work builds effectively on what the pupils have previously learned. There has also been insufficient monitoring of the teaching and learning which makes it difficult for staff to know if they could be better.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils attain satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2
- The pupils' use of computers to support their learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The resources are unsatisfactory

Commentary

44. During the inspection no information and communication technology lessons were taught although two lessons were observed where computers were used. The teachers' ability to teach this subject satisfactorily is seriously impaired by the lack of reliable equipment. The shortage of computers has also resulted in some teachers not developing this aspect of the curriculum sufficiently. A computer suite was in the latter stages of completion during the inspection and will provide the school with an excellent facility.
45. By the end of Year 2, the pupils demonstrate good skills in controlling the mouse and use simple word processing packages to produce stories and poems. By the end of Year 4, these skills have been developed satisfactorily and pupils can load and save their work. With the help of a parent, the pupils produce a good quality school newspaper, which shows an understanding of how to incorporate pictures into text. However, there is a lack of opportunities for the pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills and a significant minority is under achieving as a result.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

46. The school makes unsatisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. Although some use is made of the Internet for research, the paucity of reliable equipment makes it difficult for the teachers to plan regular activities across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

47. Only two lessons were seen in history. Other evidence was drawn from discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of completed work in history, geography and religious education, including some from the previous year. The teachers' plans were also scrutinised.

History

The provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are achieving above average standards by the end of years 2 and 4 and have a good recall of their previous learning
- There is very good use of artefacts and photographs to develop the pupils' understanding of the nature of historical evidence
- Good use is made of visits and special events to promote understanding and enthusiasm

Commentary

48. Standards of attainment in history are above those expected nationally. The pupils receive good levels of individual attention so they achieve well. The teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and the teaching is consistently good. The work in their books is neatly presented but there is an overuse of worksheets and few examples of independent recording. The pupils in year 2 made very good contributions to their history lesson, which was based on a seaside theme. One child brought in a family photograph of his Grandpa at the seaside in the fifties and the class was able to compare and contrast it with another photograph of the child on a similar beach this year. The teacher used good questioning to help the pupils to arrange a set of photographs on their desks and to identify the factors that made the scene either 'old' or 'new'. The older pupils in Year 4 are very enthusiastic about their work on the Ancient Egyptians. The project was given a good start because the pupils were taken to a museum and were involved in exciting role-play with 'Howard Carter'. They could talk about the life style of the people at that time and were particularly interested in their notion of after life. They were able to conduct research prior to giving a presentation to other children. However, the pupils' independent enquiry was restricted by the inadequacy of the school library so they were unable to select appropriate books for the task.

Geography

The provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

49. The geography curriculum covers the programme of study satisfactorily. The oldest pupils have a good knowledge of place and can discuss similarities and differences between, say, a mountainous terrain and the seaside. They know that climate, including rainfall, influences the way people live. They use maps with confidence and can distinguish between different sized settlements. The work in their books is neat but is too often presented on worksheets.

Religious Education

The provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

50. The previous year's work showed that the oldest pupils covered most aspects of the Christian year. Some of their writing was produced independently. With prompting, the Year 2 pupils talked about the events surrounding Easter or Christmas and they have a satisfactory knowledge of other faiths. All of the pupils visited their local church and older pupils knew that religious buildings had special names and contained different symbols according to the faith.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One art and design and one design and technology lesson were observed. Singing was heard in assemblies and a brief observation of a games session was undertaken.

Art and design and design and technology

The provision for these subjects is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers have good subject knowledge
- The teaching environment is attractive and contains good examples of design, including flowers and fabrics, which inspire pupils
- Design and technology work is linked effectively to other subjects such as science

Commentary

51. The limited sample of work available indicates that standards in art and design are in line with national standards at seven and nine. During the lesson seen, the pupils made good use of a collection of natural objects to produce a design for autumn. Throughout the lesson they were encouraged to talk about their group picture and to evaluate the final result. The staff had created some attractive hall displays that the pupils discussed prior to starting their work. The teaching was very good because the teacher focussed on language development so that Year 2 pupils could talk about patterns and textures in their work.
52. Standards in design and technology are in line with the national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. The pupils develop satisfactory design skills and use an appropriate range of materials to make objects. For example, in a good lesson linked to the history topic, the pupils designed and made a bag with a fastener after having researched designs using the Internet.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

53. No lessons were observed in personal, social and health education so no detailed judgements can be made. However, this aspect permeates much of the curriculum and the general life of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

