

INSPECTION REPORT

WOLVERCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123051

Headteacher: Mrs A Ballance

Lead inspector: Mr R R Fry

Dates of inspection: 26–28 January 2004

Inspection number: 260623

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3–11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 197 |
| School address: | First Turn Wolvercote Oxford |
| Postcode: | OX2 8AQ |
| Telephone number: | 01865 558301 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr R Lawrence-Wilson |
| Date of previous inspection: | 8 March 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wolvercote Primary School is an average sized school. Children's attainment on entry to the school is above average overall. Eleven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a little below average proportion. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is average. Some pupils, for example, need extra help with reading and writing skills or have specific or moderate learning difficulties. Five pupils have a Statement of their Special Educational Needs. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and virtually all speak English. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in the last two years because of the reorganisation of Oxford schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| 21073 | Roger Fry | Lead inspector | Special educational needs English Information and communication technology Geography History |
| 9779 | Suzanne Smith | Lay inspector | |
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wolvercote Primary School provides a sound education. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to attain above average standards at the end of the year. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, given their prior attainment. Teaching is sound, and a significant proportion of teaching is good. Since her appointment, the headteacher, together with senior staff has made a good start with moving the school forward. Governors make a good contribution to the work of the school. The school provides sound value for money. All schools in the area were reorganised in 2002. Wolvercote became a primary school and gained Years 5 and 6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 has improved and last year the school received a National Curriculum Award. Pupils achieve better than they did.
- Pupils' standards of work in Year 6 are above average.
- The provision for mathematics and science is good.
- Pupils' standards in writing in infant classes are lower than in other aspects of English.
- The curriculum in Reception does not meet the needs of some children. Provision in the Nursery is good.
- In some lessons teachers do not set tasks that challenge pupils of differing abilities equally.
- There are no whole-school systems for assessing pupils' progress in some subjects.
- Teachers have not evaluated the success of additional teaching programmes, such as that to improve reading, for groups and individuals.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are good. The provision for pupils' moral and social education is good.
- Parents' views of the school are positive.
- Pupils' views of the school are positive and the school's pupil council is successful.

The school had four main issues to complete after the last inspection. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement. Aspects of teaching and the provision for ICT have improved the most. The work of subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. There has been unsatisfactory progress with improving assessment procedures. The school has sustained strengths identified previously, such as pupils' good personal development. The accommodation has also improved considerably.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| The school's results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2: | compared with all schools | | | and similar schools |
|---|---------------------------|------|------|---------------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| Reading | C | E | B | B |
| Writing | C | D | D | E |
| Mathematics | A | D | B | A |

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The table above shows that in comparison with standards in broadly similar schools in July 2003, Year 2 pupils' standards were above average in reading, well above average in mathematics, and well below average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that Year 2 pupils' work broadly follows this pattern; mathematics standards are good and higher than those in English, which are satisfactory. Reading standards are higher than those for writing. Overall, the school's improvement in results has been above average in Years 1 and 2.

At the end of Reception, children make steady progress and exceed the Early Learning Goals set for them nationally. The school has not had a Year 6 until this year. Indications are that pupils' standards

of work in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science compared with standards in schools nationally. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately. Pupils reach the expected standards in religious education, and in ICT to date. Girls and boys perform equally well.

Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and most are eager to learn. Virtually all pupils arrive at school on time. Standards of behaviour are good. The attendance rate is slightly below the national average. A significant number of pupils have holidays in term time. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.** Relationships are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is sound. Teaching and learning are sound. The best teaching observed allowed pupils to make rapid progress in, for example, some mathematics and English lessons. Teachers motivate pupils by making lessons interesting and fast moving. Pupils respond enthusiastically and learn effectively. In less successful lessons, teachers set tasks that are too hard or too easy for some of the class. Teachers' use of assessments is unsatisfactory when information is not used effectively to set challenging targets for all pupils to attain.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The mathematics curriculum is good. Planning does not always meet the needs of all pupils, including some older Reception-aged children. Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are kept adequately informed about their children's progress. The school provides effective care for pupils and values pupils' views greatly. Community links and initiatives are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors lead the school well in many areas of its work. Two statutory requirements have not been met. The new headteacher and senior staff have made a good start with identifying the school's weaknesses and planning to rectify them. Additional special educational needs programmes have not been checked to find out which ones work best. Subject co-ordinators have written well-conceived plans to improve the provision and standards of pupils' work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the school's work and their views are much more positive than previously. Inspectors judge that the school sends enough information home about events in newsletters. The school is looking into ways to improve the guidance for parents about how they can help their children at home. Reports about children's progress are satisfactory. Pupils have positive views about their school. They enjoy participating in events.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are to:

- Raise pupils' standards of work and achievement in writing by the end of Year 2.
- Ensure that all children in the Foundation Stage receive a curriculum that meets their needs.
- Improve the attendance of pupils.
- Improve systems for assessing pupils' progress in many subjects.
- Ensure that curricular planning in subjects such as science, religious education and history matches pupils' abilities.
- Evaluate the success of additional learning programmes used to support the English curriculum and for pupils with special educational needs.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Communicate to parents the progress made with implementing the racial equality policy.
- Ensure that the child protection co-ordinator keeps up to date with regular training.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils attain standards that are average in English and above average in mathematics in Year 2. In Year 6 pupils' standards of work are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Last year the school received a National Curriculum Award for improving standards in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' standards of work in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' standards in writing in infant classes are lower than in other aspects of English.

Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 16.8 (14.8) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 13.6 (13.4) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 17.2 (15.7) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In comparison with standards in broadly similar schools in July 2003, Year 2 pupils' standards in the national tests were above average in reading, well above average in mathematics, and well below average in writing. Pupils' standards of work in science were above average. Inspection evidence shows that Year 2 pupils' work follows this pattern, where mathematics standards are higher than those in English. Standards in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics declined in comparison with those of all and similar schools from 2000 to 2002. Overall the school's improvement in results has been above average when the big improvement in standards in 2003 is taken into account. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. No significant differences were found in the achievement of boys and girls. Improvement in standards is linked to the presence of a more able year group last year in Year 2. However, the improved teaching is also a factor. Teachers, for example, use the National Numeracy Strategy successfully to improve pupils' standard of work in mathematics.
2. At the end of Reception, children in some previous years have exceeded the Early Learning Goals set for them nationally. This is the case in the present Reception. Standards usually reflect their abilities when they start at the school. Children's achievement is good in the Nursery, where the Foundation Stage curriculum has been put into practice well. Achievement in the two Reception classes is not as good because children do not always have enough opportunities, for example, to practise writing in a range of purposeful play activities. In some lessons the activities planned are a little too formal.
3. The school has not had a Year 6 until this year. The school has set high targets for pupils to attain in 2004. Indications now are that their standards of work are above average compared with schools nationally. These standards reflect their prior attainment and some good teaching. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

4. The recent upward trend in results in Year 2 is also likely to be due to the good leadership generally in English, mathematics and science and the school's capacity to understand and act on trends in standards. Teachers have isolated several of the factors that have led to consistently lower standards in writing in Years 1 and 2. The school has taken action to make lessons more interesting and to counter some pupils' lack of desire to write. In other subjects, such as history and geography, pupils throughout the school do not make all the progress they could because teachers do not know enough about what pupils know and understand. Hence, pupils do not always have work that matches their capabilities. Although teaching is satisfactory, overall, there are times when teachers have too high or too low expectations of what pupils can do or know already. This weakness affects pupils' achievement negatively.
5. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing adequately in other lessons. Pupils use this knowledge to help them to count, sort and find information in other subjects such as history. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to help develop pupils' numeracy and literacy skills, but not well enough in science. One of the school's main priorities for improvement is for pupils to use their writing skills more often in different subjects. Pupils use their listening, reading and writing skills in many lessons effectively now. Older pupils, for example, have written interesting accounts about why the 1930s were known as the 'hungry decade'. This provision effectively improves standards of writing.
6. Pupils attain the expected standard in religious education and in all other subjects. Pupils have reached the expected standard in ICT, because they are taught the key skills and have some opportunities to use what they know in different subjects. Teachers are confident when teaching ICT skills.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in English and mathematics because the teaching assistants provide effective support under the direction of teachers. At times, when teachers do not match the work carefully enough to pupils' abilities, pupils with special educational needs make more limited progress. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs are supported effectively and achieve well because they receive the help required. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties generally achieve satisfactorily. Pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are managed well, and their self-esteem is effectively promoted.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is a little below average. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance was slightly below average last year.
- Pupils' independence and initiative are fostered well.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are good.
- Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and about the responsibilities of living in a community.

Commentary

8. Attendance was slightly below average last year. Parents who take holidays with their children during term time largely cause this trend. Attendance has dropped significantly this year to date for the same reason. The school liaises well with the education department and takes suitable action to follow up unexplained absences. There were no exclusions last year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.9 |
| National data | 5.8 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.4 |
| National data | 0.4 |

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

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning continue to be good and pupils try hard in lessons. Their achievement is enhanced by the positive way they approach lessons. Boys and girls both commented on their enjoyment of school. The School's Council meets regularly and consults each class about important issues. The Council works well and raises matters important to pupils for the senior staff to consider. Pupils feel valued and therefore are more content about the provision the school makes for them.
10. Pupils' behaviour is good and is better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils mostly play well at lunchtimes and playtimes, but there are occasional moments when play is too boisterous and results in minor injuries. Pupils move around the school calmly and they are very polite. Behaviour is particularly good when the work pupils have to do is well matched to their abilities. Pupils are well aware of the school's rules and reward systems and fully understand the difference between right and wrong.
11. Most children in the Nursery and Reception classes are on course to meet or exceed the expected standards in their personal development by the end of the Reception year. Relationships between adults and children are good, which allows children to make progress with their work in a calm atmosphere.
12. Pupils' social and moral development is good and it is promoted well by the school through whole-school assembly themes. For example, the headteacher talked to the school about the value of doing things well in one assembly. This process of raising issues with pupils has a positive influence on pupils' attitudes and the quality of their work. Teachers encourage pupils to think of others by raising money for charities. Pupils show good levels of co-operation with each other in class discussions and group activities. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Relationships between ethnic groups are also good.
13. Teachers explore the spiritual dimension of collective worship themes and pupils are developing their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness adequately. They have good opportunities to reflect on issues raised in assemblies. Opportunities for pupils to explore the beliefs, festivals and customs of a range of faiths have improved and are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory, overall. Teaching and learning are sound, although assessments of pupils' progress and knowledge are not used well enough to guide teachers' planning. Learning outside the school day, and the accommodation are good. Links with parents and the community are good. The school takes very good account of pupils' views.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessment procedures and their use are limited in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Thirty-five per cent of the teaching observed was good or better but five per cent was unsatisfactory.
- Teaching in the Nursery is good but some lessons for Reception children do not fully meet their needs.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- Aspects of teaching have improved since the last inspection.
- Teachers' use of assessment in some subjects is too limited and pupils' work is not well matched to their abilities.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 3 (8%) | 10 (27%) | 22 (60%) | 2 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show equivalent percentages.

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

14. Aspects of the teaching are better than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers give tasks to pupils that are more achievable than in the past, pupils now take more pride in their work and their handwriting and presentation are better. Teachers' learning targets are clearer in their planning, which aids pupils' progress. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and concentration. A major reason for the above average standards in Year 6 is that pupils respond well to the orderly regime, and they make better progress as a result. Good use is made of homework in Years 3 to 6. The provision supports and reinforces pupils' progress.
15. Relationships between adults and children are good in the Foundation Stage. The Nursery staff carefully assess the children's development and use the information gathered to plan further learning opportunities for children. Adults model language well for children in the Nursery and give them many opportunities to talk about their activities. Children therefore make good progress. In the Reception classes children do not have enough opportunities, for example, to practise writing in a range of purposeful play activities such as writing lists, cards or invitations. In some lessons the activities planned are too formal for the younger children, who need more guided play activities to consolidate their learning.
16. Teaching of the many small groups, and for pupils with statements who need extra help, is well organised on a day-to-day basis. Pupils are well supported by the good ratio of adults to pupils. The teaching assistants are well informed and provide good levels of guidance and encouragement for pupils. Pupils' self-confidence increases, consequently, and they tackle their work with positive attitudes. This provision, however, has not been evaluated by teachers to see which elements are more successful than others. Virtually all pupils using English as an additional language speak and write English competently and they achieve as well as their peers in all subjects.
17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in classes is satisfactory. Pupils' needs are effectively identified in their Individual Educational Plans and, with additional adult support, pupils have chances to focus specifically on these targets and make steady progress towards attaining them.
18. The teaching of English is satisfactory, overall and in mathematics it is good. The teaching is best in Years 2, 5 and 6, where teachers' knowledge of the subjects is particularly good.

Pupils made good progress in many lessons in these years. Most teachers have participated in the required training for the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy in the past. The training enables them to provide an appropriate structure to their lessons, which allows pupils to make steady progress.

19. There are a number of key strengths in the teaching of mathematics that assist pupils' progress. Teachers across the school provide good opportunities at the beginning of lessons for pupils to practise mental arithmetic skills and consolidate what they know. Lessons are well paced with enough time for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. The carefully chosen activities are well matched to pupils of all abilities, including the more able. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, to discuss and to explain their work with partners and to the teacher. In the least effective lessons in some other subjects observed, teachers' planning was unclear and pupils' needs were not met well enough. Some work set was either too easy or too hard for pupils, for example in history in Years 3 and 4. Pupils made limited progress.
20. Teachers' use of assessment to match work to pupils' capabilities is unsatisfactory in some subjects, which means that pupils do not learn all they can. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards are more efficient in English and mathematics and pupils have work that is generally a good match to their abilities. Teachers' marking often provides helpful suggestions for pupils' improvement. Targets in mathematics and English focus pupils' attention on the next stage of their learning effectively. There are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' learning in many other subjects. Information about pupils' skills and knowledge is not, for example, passed to the next teacher to enable pupils to make good progress from year to year.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. Overall, it meets the needs of all groups of pupils. There are good enrichment activities to enhance pupils' learning. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are included in all that the school provides.
- The school is well staffed and the accommodation is good.
- The two-year teaching programme used for some subjects has some inadequacies.
- A good range of additional activities, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum.

Commentary

21. All National Curriculum subjects are taught and statutory requirements for the teaching of religious education and collective worship are met. In contrast to the findings in the previous inspection, mathematics and science now have appropriate allocations of time for lessons. This is having a good effect on pupils' standards in both subjects. English and mathematics planning follows the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy respectively. These provide good frameworks for teaching and learning and teachers use them effectively. The strategies are helping pupils to make better progress now, such as in writing.
22. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved with the completion of the computer suite. Pupils have improved access to computers. Teachers use ICT effectively to support work in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics and history. The school is responding positively to the challenge of developing a coherent curriculum generally for Years 5 and 6 and is adequately preparing its Year 6 pupils for the next stage in their education.

23. The curriculum includes all and provides soundly for different groups in school regardless of age, gender, background, ethnicity or attainment. However, teachers do not have a register of the gifts and talents of the most able pupils. The school has appropriate plans to address this matter later in the year. The school provides appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils' differing needs are met in a variety of small groups and individually. Pupils take this work seriously and work hard. However, the success of the provision, in terms of the degree of progress that pupils make, has not been established.
24. Work planned in subjects other than English and mathematics follows national guidance. However, there are some inadequacies in the way lessons in these subjects are organised and taught. Although classes in Years 3 to 6 contain single age pupils, pupils in Years 3 and 4 and in Years 5 and 6 are taught the same topics following a two-year programme. Shortcomings in some teachers' planning mean that some of the tasks set in lessons are too hard or too easy. Pupils are not always working at the appropriate level of difficulty for them.
25. The range of visits and other activities to enrich and support the curriculum is good. These include planned enrichment weeks, such as Science Week and Arts Week. These give pupils extended opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in these areas. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. They include choir, drama, computing, recorders and sporting opportunities, such as netball, football and athletics. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning in many areas of the curriculum. Older pupils take part in exciting residential visits. This provision successfully encourages pupils to be positive about school and develops important skills that are not easy to teach in school, such as outdoor and adventurous activities in physical education. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory.
26. There is good provision of teaching and support staff with relevant qualifications to teach the curriculum. Books and equipment for teaching and learning are adequate. Recent changes to the building have resulted in much improved accommodation, with the exception of one classroom, which has remained unaltered and is cold and damp.

Care, guidance and support

There are sound arrangements to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Pupils receive sound support, advice and guidance. Teachers actively seek pupils' views and they are highly valued.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been recent improvements to the welfare, health and safety provision.
- There are good arrangements to induct young children into the Nursery.
- The School's Council allows pupils to have a voice about everyday matters.
- Teachers are aware of their responsibilities for child protection, but the co-ordinator has not attended the latest training.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are not always used well when planning lessons.

Commentary

27. The school, appropriately, has recently asked for guidance from the local education authority about health and safety matters. This is an example of the rigour that the newly appointed headteacher has brought to the school. Risk assessments for trips and visits out of school are in place. There are suitable arrangements to deal with first aid emergencies. Servicing of equipment and appliances used in the school meets requirements. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised with sufficient frequency to ensure everyone knows what to do.

Teachers are familiar with child protection procedures and are vigilant. There is prompt contact with support services in the event of a concern. The co-ordinator is fully aware of procedures, but has not attended the most recent training yet.

28. Relationships between teachers and most pupils are positive and pupils confidently share concerns. Teachers know pupils well, which enables them to respond to pupils' personal needs effectively. The school is sensitive to the needs of all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, gender or ability, which gives all groups a sense of belonging. Induction arrangements for the Nursery are effective and help young children to settle well and make good progress. Teachers' checks on pupils' personal development are informal, although they are summarised effectively in annual progress reports to parents.
29. Teachers' checks and records of pupils' academic progress are inconsistent. In some subjects there are too few records to help teachers plan lessons successfully, which affects pupils' progress negatively. Teachers' marking of pupils' work usually helps them to understand what they must do to improve their work and praises pupils for good work. Pupils receive good support in the main and this aids their confidence and progress. Arrangements for all pupils transferring to secondary education are being planned suitably to meet pupils' personal and academic needs.
30. Arrangements for seeking the views of pupils through the School's Council are very effective. Teachers ensure all pupils have a voice that is heard. Pupils value this opportunity and express views responsibly. They feel valued, which makes them happier about school and therefore this provision has a beneficial effect on their progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a good partnership with parents overall. Links with the community are good. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Verbal communications between the school and parents have improved recently.
- Parental support for the school and the Parent-Teacher Association is very positive.

Commentary

31. There have been recent significant improvements in the school's partnership with parents. Parents feel more confident about the school because the new headteacher has actively sought their views about school policies and their children's education. In addition, there has been an open question and answer meeting with parents' representatives. Parents are invited to submit questions in writing for a response at the governors' annual meeting. Parents value this approach and they feel more able to contribute. Inspectors judge that the school's written communications to parents generally are sufficient in number and quality.
32. Despite regular newsletters, which parents may opt to have sent by email, they would like to see further improvements to communications. In particular, they would like meetings about how they can help their children at home and better advance warning of school events. Inspectors support this view. Open evenings each term are well attended and provide good opportunities for parents to see their children's work and to talk with teachers. Some parents, nevertheless, do not feel adequately informed about their children's progress. Annual progress reports are satisfactory. They are most informative in English and mathematics and contain evaluations of what pupils know and can do. Pupils' progress and standards attained are not always reported as well in other subjects. Pupils' targets are not always expressed so that parents understand what their children must do to improve; for example, 'to develop

confidence to promote a more positive attitude'. This lack of clarity reduces parents' capacity to help their children. In some subjects reports focus substantially on work covered. Attitudes to learning and personal development are reported well.

33. The Parent–Teacher Association is successful. A group of parents is very supportive towards the school. Other parents help with trips and visits and with cycling proficiency preparation and tests. Parents are usually confident about approaching the school and know that concerns will be dealt with efficiently.
34. The school uses the community well to extend classroom learning, for example, through a wide range of visits to local places. There are many and varied visitors to the school, both to enrich learning and to extend opportunities for personal development. For example, pupils have seen a Wildlife Roadshow, heard musicians and met 'The History People'. Pupils take an active interest in the wider community, such as when they decide which charities to support. The community and governors strongly supported the school's successful building project. The efforts of many local people have boosted the provision the school makes, such as in the new Nursery classroom.
35. Arrangements for young children starting in the Nursery are well planned and ensure that they settle well. For the first time Year 6 pupils will transfer to secondary education at the end of the current school year. Planning is well advanced to ensure the smooth transfer of records.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Leadership and management are both sound. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior teachers have made a good start in moving the school forward again.
- Governors' leadership of the school is effective in many areas, but governors have not ensured that two statutory requirements are met.
- School development planning identifies issues for improvement well.
- English, mathematics, science, ICT and the provision for pupils with special needs are well co-ordinated.
- Teachers have not evaluated the extra group provision for pupils who need extra help.

Commentary

36. Governors have effectively helped shape the direction for the school for a number of years. Their work to ensure that the school has a good building to work in since reorganisation has been successful. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. Committees of governors bring their expertise to meetings and make good use of it. For example, one governor has much experience of appointing staff, and this has been a key skill during and since reorganisation, when there have been many changes of staff. Governors are well aware of the need to raise standards further now the school is more settled. However, not all statutory requirements have been met. Governors have not reported to parents about the progress of the school's racial equality policy and the child protection co-ordinator has not received the latest training, although she only joined the school recently. The school had an unexpected deficit budget last year. Governors realised that a close watch had not been kept on the preparation of the budget. Governors had not compared the school's spending profile with that of other similar schools, to see if there were any anomalies. Governors have learned from the experience and have put procedures in place to ensure this does not happen again. The school seeks best value for its purchases and the efficient office staff have been successful in doing this.

37. Over the past year, the school has improved in effectiveness because governors have placed academic improvement high in their priorities. Standards are higher and pupils' achievement is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Performance management has had a positive impact on raising standards. There has been a considerable turnover of staff, which has had an unsettling effect on the school. New teachers have been inducted well into the school. Recently appointed newly qualified teachers have received their full entitlement to, for example, additional training and visits to other schools.
38. The recently appointed headteacher has begun to provide good and effective leadership and has managed the school with a clear vision, for example, to honestly appraise the school's situation and open channels of communication with all. She and the senior staff work well together. The headteacher has begun to address the weaknesses identified. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics have managed their subjects well. Their good strategic plans reflect the results of the researches that they carried out into pupils' achievement and improvement is present. The senior staff is an effective team. The team has a clear sense of purpose and a good focus on improving pupils' achievement, which is shared by governors.
39. The headteacher and senior staff have evaluated lessons effectively, for example in mathematics and science. The information gained has enabled them to determine what the school should do now. The headteacher has begun to address some of the barriers to learning. By raising questions, she has caused the staff to look more thoroughly at the school's provision. The school is in a better position to make the further improvements necessary. There is a shared understanding beyond senior staff of what needs to be done.
40. The co-ordination of English, mathematics, science and ICT is successful. Pupils' standards of work are improving. The co-ordinators have an in-depth knowledge of their subjects. The provision for ICT has grown considerably since the last inspection through the efforts of several co-ordinators and the effective use of government grants.
41. The changes of staff and of their co-ordination roles have limited the school's capacity to improve in some subjects, such as music, geography and physical education. Many subject co-ordinators have had few opportunities to see their colleagues at work in classes. Hence some good practice has gone unnoticed and the capacity of teachers to learn from each other is limited.
42. The present provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well day-to-day. Pupils have enough adult support for them to make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets. Some pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to correctly identify pupils' needs and she efficiently administers the provision. The extra support for individuals and groups outside class lessons provided by teaching assistants is not sufficiently well monitored. The school does not know how effective each activity is and whether energies could be better employed elsewhere to raise pupils' attainment.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 420 589 |
| Total expenditure | 423 972 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2 330 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 24 374 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | -3 383 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children start school in the Nursery after their third birthday and attend part-time. Children join the Reception classes in the term following their fifth birthday. Children whose fifth birthday falls in the summer term start in Year 1 in the following academic year. The school is currently planning to move to one time of entry to Reception in September 2004 in line with the local education authority's policy. During the inspection the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage was on maternity leave. The children's overall attainment on entry is above average, although there is a range of attainment in any one year and from year to year. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall and is good in the Nursery.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. However, the new Nursery class area is a great improvement. The curriculum is planned to cover the nationally recommended Areas of Learning for the Foundation Stage. All staff work well together to form effective teams for the benefit of the children. The curriculum and the quality of teaching are satisfactory overall, though in the Nursery, practice was consistently good.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction procedures are good and help children to settle happily into school.
- Adults have good relationships with children and provide good role models for them.
- Children from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
- Further opportunities are needed to develop children's collaborative play for Reception age children.

Commentary

43. Most children are on course to meet the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. Their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching in this area is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception classes. Relationships between adults and children are good. The Nursery staff carefully assess children's personal development and use the information gathered to plan further learning opportunities for the children. The good assessment in the Nursery enables staff to plan good support for children from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with special educational needs. At the time of the inspection some children had only been in school for ten days. The teacher and Nursery nurse were very sensitive to their needs and helped them to settle into school and feel secure. Parents and carers are encouraged to stay and help settle their children for as long as they need to. Activities provide good opportunities for children to co-operate with others so that they learn to share and take turns. In the Reception classes there are occasions when children do not have enough opportunities to develop their social skills through good quality play experiences rather than through the more formal lessons appropriate for Year 1 pupils.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to attain above average standards by the end of the Reception Year.
- In the Nursery adults model language well for children, enabling them to make good progress.
- Children at the early stages of learning English make good progress because of the focus on language activities.
- Children enjoy looking at books and have good opportunities to practise writing in a range of play situations in the Nursery.
- Reception children do not have enough opportunities to practise writing in a range of purposeful play activities

Commentary

44. Children are on course to reach standards that are above average by the end of the Reception Year. Their achievement is satisfactory. The teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception classes. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress owing to the good support they receive. These children attain standards in line with those of their peers. Most children have a well developed vocabulary and their sentence construction is good. They express their needs confidently and are becoming fluent and articulate. Adults model language well for children and give them many opportunities to talk about their activities. Children enjoy books. At the start of each session parents are encouraged to stay and to share books with their children. As well as providing a calm start to the session this is very helpful in developing children's knowledge of books and helps their reading skills. In the Reception children do not have enough opportunities to practise writing in a range of purposeful play activities such as writing lists, cards or invitations. In some lessons the activities planned are a little formal for the younger children, who need to consolidate their learning and practise their writing skills.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attainment in mathematics is well above average.
- Children's counting and number recognition skills are very well developed.
- Children have very good understanding of mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

45. Children are on course to reach standards that are well above average by the end of the Reception Year, including the youngest children. The quality of teaching is good and enables all children to make good progress. Their achievement is good. Children have very good understanding of number and shape. Children count accurately to twenty and some count reliably beyond this. They count on and back accurately from a given number. In the Reception classes children enjoy playing board games and confidently move counters along a track according to numbers thrown on dice. They show good understanding of ordering numbers and put pictures in order from first to fifth. Children recognise coins and add different amounts to a given value. They know that if the teacher has 4p, she will need one more to make 5p. In the Nursery, when changing the date on the calendar, children say that

the number between 6 and 8 is 7, and change the date correctly allowing for the weekend. When reading stories the teacher made good use of opportunities to develop children's counting skills, such as counting the different fruits in the story 'Handa's Surprise'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision for this area of learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to use ICT as a tool for learning and to promote children's cultural and religious understanding.

Commentary

46. Children are on course to reach standards that are above those expected nationally. Their achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Children have regular opportunities to use computers. They enjoy using the paint program to make pictures and know how to print their work. They have sound ICT skills because they have regular opportunities to use computers. In the Nursery children's inquisitiveness and investigative skills are promoted well through a range of interesting activities both indoors and out. During the inspection a parent of one of the Nursery children came to talk to the children about the celebration of Chinese New Year. Children greatly enjoyed learning about this and another child in the class had brought in a Chinese calendar after a visit to the celebrations in London. In the Reception classes this aspect of learning is less well developed. In their free choice of activities there is not enough questioning to develop children's skills of enquiry and exploration.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to reach above average standards by the end of the Reception Year.
- The range of opportunities for physical development in the outdoor learning area is good in the Nursery. It is less well developed in the Reception classes.

Commentary

47. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Children's achievement is satisfactory. The outdoor learning area for the Nursery provides a good range of activities to help children learn to climb, balance and use wheeled toys. Children ride wheeled toys confidently round the track provided showing good awareness of others around them. In the classrooms children use pencils, crayons and other small tools with increasing skill. Children manipulate a satisfactory range of construction toys such as plastic bricks and make models from malleable materials. Children are aware of space and enjoy moving rhythmically to a range of recorded music. The outdoor learning area for Nursery children is well used and children enjoy the stimulating and varied range of opportunities for movement. In the Reception and Year 1 classes, children take part in the physical activities provided for Year 1 and do not have free access to a secure outdoor learning area. However, their physical skills are well developed and they are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy singing and sing a range of songs from memory.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Children's achievement is satisfactory. In the Nursery children have some good opportunities to engage in imaginative role-play but these were not observed during the inspection. During the inspection there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about provision in the Reception and Year 1 classes on this aspect of learning. The children have satisfactory opportunities to paint and make collage pictures, using a range of materials.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards of work are above national expectations in Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement has improved in Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory.
- Pupils' standards of writing are below average at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers.
- The co-ordination of the subject is good; teachers are making a concerted effort to improve pupils' standards of writing.

Commentary

49. Evidence from tests children took in the past on entry to the school shows that they entered with average attainment in some years and above average attainment in others. The present Year 2 showed average attainments in English on entry to the school and Year 6 pupils above average standards. Pupils' standards of work are now average and above average respectively. The single most telling factor that determines pupils' standards are their abilities on entry to the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across the school. Overall standards by the end of Year 2 have risen faster than in schools nationally since the last inspection.
50. The school has isolated several of the factors that have led to consistently lower standards in writing in Years 1 and 2. The school has taken action to make lessons more interesting and to counter some pupils' lack of desire to write. The co-ordinator intends to evaluate the success of the extra teaching programmes provided for different groups of pupils and to check the consistency of teaching across the school. Some teachers have a great deal more experience of teaching generally, and of teaching in the school, than others do. Teaching styles and expectations of pupils vary from class to class. This feature partly explains variations in the provision and in the quality of teaching and learning.
51. Teaching seen in lessons varied from satisfactory to very good, and is satisfactory overall. Relationships in lessons are usually good, and many lessons start well. Lesson targets are specific and therefore the group tasks for pupils to complete are well focused and allow pupils to make steady progress. Ongoing assessment in lessons is sound, and there is a good

awareness amongst some teachers of what should be expected from pupils in each year, particularly those who should be reaching higher levels in writing in Years 2, 5 and 6. The records of progress (tracked records) are valuable tools that help teachers set realistic targets for pupils in Years 2 and 6.

52. In the best lessons, not only are relationships good but there is a sense that pupils are keen to build on previous learning and enjoy the progress they are making. Teachers have responded well to the added demands of the first Year 5 and 6 classes in the school's recent history. In Year 6, pupils had the task of recognising features of a good story opening and then beginning to write one for themselves. The teacher skilfully used visual displays of different kinds to help pupils learn what complex sentences are. She gave good prompts about how pupils might write interestingly and used selected pieces from their previous work as good examples. Pupils found this activity interesting and throughout the lesson their attention was good. The tasks pupils had to complete were well matched to their abilities.
53. In Year 2, the teacher organised the class very well in one lesson observed. The lesson was purposeful and its intention was to raise the quality, depth and interest level of pupils' writing. The lesson was successful because the teacher has a very good understanding of how to break down the skills of writing in a purposeful manner. She gave pupils a 'writing frame' which allowed pupils to position their ideas on a piece of paper and to think about each element of what it was they wanted to say. Their writing was undoubtedly more interesting because of the teacher's understanding of how pupils learn.
54. Pupils make sound progress in reading throughout the school. Standards vary from year to year, because in some years pupils have greater or lesser abilities. They were higher last year for example, than this year. Standards of speaking and listening and in reading are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Systematic use of homework and individual and group reading tasks ensure that pupils receive the support needed to achieve satisfactorily overall. The goal is to enable more pupils to reach the higher levels in the National Curriculum in the infant classes. Opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' reading effectively straight after lunchtime. In one instance, pupils were noisy and little reading took place away from the two adults who were hearing small groups of pupils read.
55. Attainment in writing is below average in Year 2 and is above average in Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 are taught to write for different purposes well now. Pupils in Year 6 use these skills effectively to produce sustained imaginative pieces of writing in other subjects such as religious education. The attention to the improvement in pupils' writing is having a positive effect on standards.
56. Subject leadership and management are good and have led to improvement in standards. Over the course of next term, when it is the turn of English to receive extra attention, the subject leader will continue to analyse pupils' work, begin to monitor teaching in classrooms, rewrite the English policy and arrange training for some members of staff as needed. The subject leader has produced a well-focused action plan, and the prospects for further improvement are good. The subject leader is well aware that an important part of the task is to continue the induction process for many teachers who are relatively new to the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Sound use is made of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. One of the main thrusts for improvement is for pupils to use their writing skills more often in different subjects. The reasoning is that if writing is used regularly to communicate ideas interesting to pupils, then they become more interested in writing and will produce more and better work. In a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 6, pupils jotted down ideas about thinking and learning. Speaking and listening skills were important as pupils built up ideas in class

discussions. Writing was used as a means of transmitting pupils' key ideas and for linking causes and effects. For example, pupils recorded links such as – 'learn new ideas' – from teacher – from the Internet – from reading.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2 and 6 are above average.
- There is good teaching of the subject.
- Teachers' attention to helping pupils solve mathematical problems is good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

58. Standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below average. In 2003, Year 2 pupils' standards were well above average compared with those of similar schools. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are now above average. Attainment in other year groups is also above average. The increased time allocation for mathematics since the previous inspection has contributed to this improvement since pupils now have more opportunity to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills.
59. Pupils achieve well and there is no discernible difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Those pupils with special educational needs and minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress because of the support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants. Tasks are modified to suit their abilities and provide appropriate challenges in lessons for all pupils.
60. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. There are a number of key strengths in the teaching that assist pupils' progress. Teachers provide good opportunities at the beginning of lessons for pupils to practise mental strategies and basic skills. Lessons are well paced with enough time for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. The carefully chosen activities are well matched to pupils of all abilities, including the more able. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect, to discuss and to explain their work with partners and to the teacher.
61. Though standards are good overall, some teachers' use of day to day assessments of pupils' progress to help them plan further lessons and to set individual and group targets for pupils to attain are not well established. In less successful lessons, the endings are too rushed and do not allow pupils time to assess their own success against the learning targets of the lesson.
62. The National Numeracy Strategy provides good consistency for teachers' planning and pupils' learning. The training programme for the National Numeracy Strategy has helped most teachers develop good subject knowledge. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' numeracy and problem solving skills. This is having a positive impact on pupils' capacity to solve problems in real life situations. The full mathematics curriculum is taught and provides good opportunities for pupils to acquire skills and to consolidate their knowledge in other areas of mathematics, such as shape, space and measure, and data handling.
63. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader is keen to maintain standards and to capitalise on the strengths of the subject. She has a clear overview of standards throughout the school following her analysis of assessment results. She monitors teachers' lesson plans to ensure that the full curriculum is taught and is undertaking a series of lesson observations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Pupils use mathematics effectively as part of their work in other subjects, such as by using bar graphs and tables to record data in science. Not all links are planned but pupils are given sufficient opportunities to use mathematics across subjects and to develop mathematical skills within other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- The teaching now focuses better on investigative and practical activities.
- Investigative work at times is over-directed by teachers.
- The way that science is organised and taught within the two-year programme can affect achievement negatively.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

65. Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved since the previous inspection and meet the national average. This improvement is partly due to the increased allocation of time given to science, which allows teachers to teach the full curriculum and allows pupils to gain knowledge and skills they would have missed previously. Following the reorganisation of the school, the present Year 6 will be the first group of pupils to take the Year 6 national tests in this school. Indications are that they will attain above average standards. Pupils' achievement has improved and is sound. Standards vary from year to year because in some years pupils have greater or lesser abilities.
66. Standards have also improved because teaching now focuses better on investigative and practical activities and this helps pupils to develop a clearer understanding of scientific ideas. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are making good progress because of the support given by their teachers and support staff.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good strengths. Teachers place good emphasis on the development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and their acquisition of correct scientific vocabulary. They encourage pupils to discuss their work, to work well collaboratively, to make careful observations and to record their findings accurately. Teaching and learning in all years are developed through practical activities and investigations and this is having a positive impact on raising standards. However, in a minority of less successful lessons the work is sometimes over-directed by the teacher using pre-determined experiments with recording completed by pupils in a uniform way. Pupils in these lessons are not sufficiently encouraged to make predictions, to design their own investigations and to choose the most appropriate method for recording their work. The use of information and communication technology in science is limited. Computers are not used enough to gather and store information.
68. The subject is well led and managed. Standards and provision have improved since the last inspection. The subject leader has a clear knowledge of standards throughout the school based on her checks on teachers' termly planning, discussions with staff and the results of lesson observations. She has good subject knowledge and provides good support and guidance to other members of staff. Lesson planning is based on national guidance and science is taught on the basis of a two year programme of topics. This arrangement does

affect achievement negatively in some lessons when some pupils are given work that is too challenging for them and other pupils are given work that is not hard enough. Some teachers do not match the work carefully enough to pupils' abilities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computer suite is of good quality.
- The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start with her duties.
- Teaching of ICT skills has good aspects and is satisfactory, but teachers do not provide work that matches pupils' differing abilities in some lessons.
- ICT is used consistently to support learning in some other subjects.
- The school lacks some of the equipment to teach pupils about controlling and monitoring situations using ICT.
- Some support staff lack confidence with ICT.

Commentary

69. In Year 2, pupils' ICT skills meet national expectations. The teaching allows pupils to make steady progress and achieve adequately. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of most aspects of the subject and their achievement is satisfactory. They are on course to meet the standards expected in the National Curriculum by the end of the year. They are less secure in logging information over a period and aspects of controlling devices using computers. Teachers plan to complete this work over the rest of the year.
70. Since the last inspection the school has received funding from the government's National Grid for Learning. This has meant that the resources for the subject have improved considerably. The suite is well equipped in the main. There are enough modern computers to teach whole classes comfortably, one computer between two pupils. The suite has seating that cannot be adjusted up or down, which means some pupils are not able to reach the keyboards comfortably. Teachers' confidence and expertise have developed well through training provided by the New Opportunities Fund, through the school's own response to teachers' needs and through teachers teaching the National Curriculum. Some support staff lack confidence with ICT because they have not received similar training. They therefore cannot always provide the help and support pupils need.
71. Teachers use national guidance as the basis for lesson planning. Pupils' work shows they are learning to use ICT for word processing, to draw pictures, find information on the Internet, handle data and make multi-media presentations that combine pictures and sound.
72. In the lessons seen, teachers' subject knowledge was used well to give pupils clear explanations and demonstrations. Teachers used questioning effectively to confirm pupils' learning and they maintained a reasonable pace in lessons. In Year 2, pupils learned to identify materials successfully by using an identification key on screen in a science lesson. The use of ICT made it easy for pupils to correct mistakes and to repeat the exercise with other materials.
73. There was scope in some of the lessons seen for teachers to match the work better to pupils of differing abilities. Pupils often had similar tasks to complete, which slows the progress of the more able, or occasionally leaves the less able struggling to complete their work. At times, teachers do not make enough reference to records of what pupils already know and can do as they plan lessons. Teachers keep too few examples of pupils' work and there is little evidence of what pupils have done in some years.

74. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start with her duties. The subject is on the timetable for all classes and pupils receive regular lessons of at least satisfactory quality. Computers are reliable and the co-ordinator has a good level of personal knowledge of ICT. Her plans for the future are well written.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Pupils used computers in the suite, for example, to consolidate numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing tasks in English, and to learn about the lives of evacuees using a database in history. Teachers have successfully made a concerted effort to combine the use of ICT with other subjects recently. However, the use of information and communication technology in science is underdeveloped. Computers are not used enough to gather, store and analyse information. The computers for pupils to use in classrooms are not used as often as they might be and this is an area for the school to develop.

HUMANITIES

76. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection to form a judgement about provision, standards, teaching and learning in **history** and **geography**. As well as the observation of a small number of lessons, pupils' work was scrutinised and the content of classroom displays noted.
77. There has been improvement in the books and equipment that teachers and pupils have to use in lessons. However, there is no whole-school system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in the subjects. This leads at times to teachers giving pupils work that is too hard or too easy. The curriculum in Years 3 to 6 is organised so that two year groups, such as Years 3 and 4, study the same topics, use the same sources of information and complete the same tasks. This arrangement does not take full account of the need to match the work to pupils' widely differing abilities across the two years. Some pupils' progress is hampered by this arrangement.
78. In history, higher-attaining pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of events before and after the birth of Christ. They ordered information about the Roman Empire using both positive and negative numbers. In Years 5 and 6, pupils in both classes searched a good database about evacuees' backgrounds. They found this interesting and developed their own questions and made discoveries, such as that one child was evacuated at age two years.
79. Teachers make the geography curriculum interesting by introducing pupils to new ideas through visits to places of geographical interest. In Years 4 and 6 pupils attend residential centres and they learn about the geography of, for example, Swanage at first hand. In Year 2 pupils learn about some of the basics of drawing and understanding maps. Their picture maps have been carefully drawn. In Year 4, pupils make detailed studies of the world's climate and of the British weather. Pupils have used ICT effectively to record some weather facts.
80. Teachers mark pupils' work effectively. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers add ideas and give pupils encouragement with positive but realistic comments. The co-ordinator for these subjects has had few opportunities to make checks on colleagues' work in classrooms or on their planning because he has only recently taken over responsibility for geography and history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good knowledge of some aspects of the subject.
- Some aspects of the subject are repeated in different years, which limits pupils' progress.

Commentary

81. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The teaching is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment meets the requirements of the syllabus and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 considered the significance of a special place. As appropriate for their age they think of places in their homes or those of family members where they feel comfortable and secure. Year 3 pupils also think about special places but extend their thinking to consider a church as a special place for Christian people. They remember the occasions when they have visited churches or know that others have. They associate churches with some of the Christian ceremonies of baptism and weddings. They know that Christmas and Easter are special times for Christians. Older pupils consider the quality of personal relationships after hearing a story about Abraham and his father disagreeing about the importance of idols. They think about times when they have had serious disagreements with people close to them and how these were resolved.
82. Teachers' planning shows that religious education is taught regularly and work in pupils' books confirms this. However, in Years 1, 2 and 3 pupils study the same topic, 'special places'. Although there is a more detailed development of this theme in Year 3, not enough account is taken of pupils' prior knowledge and experience to ensure that learning develops at a good pace for all classes. The co-ordinator is aware of this and the scheme of work is about to be reviewed to address this.
83. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has made an effective start. She has a good view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has written a good action plan to address issues.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. No judgements on overall provision can be made in **art and design, design and technology music** or **physical education** because too few lessons were observed. Pupils' work was scrutinised and the content of classroom displays noted.
85. Only one **art and design** lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning. Displays around the school, teachers' planning and work in pupils' sketchbooks indicate that pupils experience a range of art activities and attain at least satisfactory standards. Year 4 pupils designed tiles in the style of Roman mosaics. They make good use of reference books to plan their designs. Pupils evaluate their own and each other's work and this helps them to improve. Work on display shows that pupils use a range of media and study the works of famous artists.
86. No lessons in **design and technology** took place during the inspection. Scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that the subject is taught regularly. Displays show that pupils cover a range of topics and that skills of designing, making and evaluating are developed systematically.
87. It was only possible to observe one **music** lesson during the inspection. In the lesson observed teaching was sound and pupils attained satisfactory standards. Pupils are secure in their understanding of pitch and rhythm. In the whole-school hymn practice pupils sang

tunefully with good tone. Pupils enjoy good extra-curricular opportunities in music through membership of the school choir. There are plans to develop opportunities further for recorder and percussion players. Teachers' planning shows that music is taught regularly and the national requirements for music are met.

88. Pupils take part in a wide range of **physical education** activities, including dance, gymnastics, athletics and games. Learning support assistants assist pupils with special educational needs in lessons effectively. This provision helps them to make good progress and to achieve as well as other pupils in the class. There are regular swimming lessons for Years 3 and 4 at the local sports centre. Last year all pupils in Year 4 were able to swim 25 metres following the usual period of instruction. Older pupils have a good opportunity to visit a residential outdoor adventure centre. The physical education curriculum is enriched by the sporting activities provided within the extra-curricular programme. Indoor and outdoor facilities for physical education are good.
89. Pupils enjoy their lessons and join in enthusiastically. Standards of behaviour are usually good. Where teaching is good, the teacher gives clear instructions to make the tasks clear, provides good feedback to pupils to help them improve their performance, and encourages pupils to evaluate their own performances and the performances of other pupils. In such lessons pupils are interested and keen to do well. If the tasks lack purpose and there is a lot of activity without much guidance from the teacher, behaviour and progress deteriorate.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

90. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection to form a judgement about provision, standards, teaching and learning.
91. Provision for pupils' personal development through the personal, social and health education curriculum includes work on sex and relationships education, and drugs and alcohol education for the oldest pupils. The PSHE programme outlines suitable areas for pupils' personal development. More detailed planning of content is incomplete because of the temporary absence of the co-ordinator.
92. Arrangements for seeking the views of pupils through the School's Council are very effective. Teachers ensure all pupils have a voice that is heard. Pupils value this opportunity and express views responsibly. They feel valued, which makes them happier about school and therefore has a beneficial effect on their progress.
93. Pupils' speaking and listening skills were important in one lesson in Year 6. Pupils built up ideas about thinking skills in class discussions well. Writing was used as a means of transmitting pupils' key ideas and for linking causes and effects. For example, pupils recorded links about how they learn things and from which sources.

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 | 4 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 4 |
| Pupils' achievement | 4 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 5 |
| 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 | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 5 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 4 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 4 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 4 |
| 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).