

INSPECTION REPORT

HAVELOCK INFANT SCHOOL

Desborough, Kettering

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121816

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Jones

Lead inspector: Dennis Maxwell

Dates of inspection: 12th - 14th January 2004

Inspection number: 260644

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	215
School address:	Havelock Street Desborough Kettering Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN14 2LU
Telephone number:	01536 760486
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Bindley
Date of previous inspection:	26 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Havelock Infants is a community school that is of similar size to other primary schools. There are 215 pupils on roll from reception to Year 2. The school's intake is mostly of White British background, and there are small numbers of children from a few minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The level of mobility is broadly average. The socio-economic circumstances of the families with children at the school are less favourable than usual, although the proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below the national average. There is a wide range of attainment amongst the pupils and overall the attainment of the children on entry to the school at reception is below the national average. The school has identified around 36 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Where external agencies are involved, most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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32676	Nicolas Power	Lay inspector	
22397	Stuart Fowler	Team inspector	English Geography History Information and communication technology Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good quality of education for the children and good value for money.

Several exciting ways of working have been introduced that are having a direct positive impact on children's behaviour, achievement and standards. These also demonstrate the commitment by all staff to continuing improvement and the benefits of strong leadership and management by the headteacher. All members of staff combine a high level of thoughtful care with high expectations of the children for behaviour and learning. Senior staff provide good leadership and management. The trend in standards is below the national trend over the past four years. This is mostly explained by the trend in the children's attainment on entry which is now below average and shows an increasing number of pupils with significant learning difficulties, particularly in language skills; and by the lower than expected performance in pupils' writing. Standards in the work seen are average by Year 2 because pupils respond well to the lively teaching and high expectations.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well through the school. Standards in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education are above average.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour and maintain interest in their work.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, supported by very good assessment procedures. The imaginative and productive use of the ICT interactive white-boards is a notable strength.
- The school provides a rich curriculum, amply supported by good quality resources.
- The arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are very good.
- The partnership between the school and parents and the local community is very good.
- The leadership and management are good, including the governance of the school.
- Pupils' performance in writing was well below the national average in the 2003 national tests.
- The improvement plan does not cover all major aspects of the school's work.

The school has made good improvement in its provision and effectiveness overall since the last inspection. It has embarked on innovative practices to extend pupils' concentration that have a positive effect on their behaviour and hence on their achievement. Provision for mathematics has improved through the impact of good leadership by the current and previous subject leaders. The quality of teaching has improved further and is more consistent. Teachers are very confident and skilled in using new technology and pupils usually watch with close attention. The good emphasis on evaluating strengths in teaching and applying performance management targets has been effective although there is further work to do to develop pupils' writing and to extend the higher attaining pupils. The very good ethos of care and consideration, with a high level of inclusion for all pupils, provides a very good context for children to learn.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Children achieve well through the school overall because good teaching and well-structured activities are matched closely to their stages of learning. In the reception classes children achieve well because of the high quality planning, the rich curriculum and thoughtful

teaching, although standards overall are likely to be below average by the end of reception. Standards in reading are average by the end of Year 2, although standards in writing are lower because children need more opportunities to practise their writing in reception and to develop skills for extended writing in Years 1 and 2. Standards in speaking and listening are average. This represents good achievement over time in reading and in speaking and listening. Standards in mathematics and science are average and pupils do well in ICT, in art and design, design and technology and physical education. In the national tests of 2003, in comparison with similar schools, standards in writing were very low and in the lowest five per cent nationally, although the social backgrounds of the families with children at the school are less favourable than the 0 - 8 per cent free school meals would suggest.

Pupils' personal qualities, such as relationships with others, are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because the school gives a good emphasis to personal and social responsibility. Pupils' standard of behaviour and their level of interest in tasks are very good, showing good improvement since the last inspection. The level of attendance is very good and helps pupils' achievement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good and has improved since the last inspection through the impact of good leadership. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and support staff form a strong team, where carefully targeted provision is directed towards pupils' individual learning needs, including those with learning difficulties and English as an additional language. Assessment procedures are very good. The curriculum is planned well, although more opportunities are needed to extend the quality, range and skills of pupils' writing. The school provides a high level of thoughtful care so that pupils enjoy their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Senior members of staff provide good leadership and management by identifying and overseeing school developments. The headteacher has a far-sighted vision and understanding of how children learn and she has very good leadership and management skills that motivate staff. Provision for children with learning difficulties is managed very well so that they are enabled to take a full part in activities. The subject leaders generally provide good direction and support although there is very little evidence of writing development in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. The governors keep a close eye on developments such as the outdoor space in reception and give good strategic direction by keeping learning in mind. They comply with statutory requirements and pay good attention to obtaining best value in their financial decisions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high regard for the school that is well justified. Children are to be seen running eagerly into school and they take pride in it.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Review and strengthen the approach to writing in order to raise standards.
- Review the structure of the school's improvement plan and ensure that targets for identified priorities, including writing, are set out across all major aspects of the school's work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children **achieve well** through the school. There is a wide range of attainment amongst the children on entry to reception and overall attainment is below average in the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Standards in the work seen are broadly average by Year 2. Standards exceed the expectations in ICT, art and design, design and technology and physical education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in reception make good progress from a low start, particularly in language skills, because provision is good.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are average by Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, although standards in writing are below average.
- There are several examples of good quality work for the age, such as that in design and technology.
- Children with learning difficulties make good progress because of the well-targeted support and very good management.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.6 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.3 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Pupils' performance in the 2003 national tests was below the national average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. In comparison with schools having a similar proportion of free school meals, standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and very low - in the lowest five per cent - in writing. However, the national indicators of socio-economic background suggest that the families with children at the school are in a less advantaged area than the free school meals comparison would suggest and that the comparative grades should be treated with caution. The experience of the governing body concurs with this. The school's tracking procedures partly predicted the lower than expected performance, although fewer girls than predicted gained the expected level in writing, while more pupils gained it in mathematics. The trend in standards has been below the national trend over the past four years, notably in 2002 and 2003. Unlike in previous years, a high proportion of the pupils taking the tests in these year groups had entered the school with below average attainment levels. This largely explains the lower performance, although pupils are given very little written work in some subjects so that opportunities are missed for them to develop their writing and recording skills.

2. Children in the reception classes achieve well because very good, carefully planned provision takes full account of their learning needs. There is a wide range of attainment amongst the children on entry to the reception classes but, overall, their attainment is likely to be below the expectation in several of the goals children are expected to reach, by the end of reception. Standards in their personal development and creative development are likely to meet the expectation by the end of reception. Standards in communication and language and in mathematical development are likely to be below the expectation by the end of reception.

3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. They are provided with extremely good levels of support from their teachers and the learning support assistants. Pupil targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are set to aid progress, when required. These targets are specific, appropriate and measurable and help to ensure that good progress results. Pupils are removed from the school register for special educational needs when they have achieved the required standards. Children whose home language is not English achieve well, through the impact of good support and provision.

4. In Years 1 and 2, standards in the work seen in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, science, geography, history and music meet the expectations, while in writing standards are currently below average. In art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education standards exceed the expectation through the impact of good and imaginative teaching. The pupils achieve well overall in lessons across all subjects. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well because teachers promote an active approach to learning and set high expectations for their behaviour.

5. Significant barriers to learning are the low level of pupils' language skills, particularly speaking and listening, and the higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher has established very good assessment procedures which she uses well to track pupils' progress and to set individual targets, as well as to target groups of pupils. For example, good arrangements are in hand to provide weekly English, including writing, and mathematics sessions to challenge those pupils thought capable of exceeding the expected Level 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are **good**. Pupils' cultural development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's management of behaviour is very good.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils are very good.
- The opportunities provided for pupils to help in school are very good.

Commentary

6. The school has very good systems for the management of behaviour. These systems are applied consistently throughout the school. All transgressions are linked back to the school's Golden Rules. This means that all pupils know exactly what is expected of them and what constitutes good behaviour. Each class has pegs identified by pupils' names that are clipped either to a 'happy', 'wobbly' or 'red' face depending on their current level of behaviour. Every pupil knows how this works and strives to have their peg clipped to the happy face. The school also awards certificates in its Celebration assembly in recognition of achievement, either academically or socially. Pupils who consistently behave well receive first choice of activity in the class' weekly 'Golden Time'. These comprehensive strategies encourage all pupils to behave well and to work hard, and have a good impact on achievement. One pupil was excluded during the last school year.

7. Pupils' attitudes are very good because of the very strong behaviour management, the very good relationships between all staff and pupils and the very good range of opportunities provided for pupils to exercise responsibility. A rota system means that all pupils are involved in helping their school to run smoothly, for example, by the distribution of fruit or the collection of lunchbox trolleys.

8. Pupils with learning difficulties enjoy good relationships with their support assistants and work effectively as individuals or in small groups. They try hard and are happy to be withdrawn from lessons when required to do so. The school develops pupils' personal qualities well. They develop their moral and social understanding very well. For example, in assembly pupils are encouraged to sit where they want to. This could be with brothers or sisters or with friends in other classes. This helps to develop their independence and decision making abilities. However, although pupils' cultural development is well planned and has many good features, some cultural traditions are given less attention because they do not form part of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school helps children to celebrate some of the festivals of these religions at appropriate times which helps their understanding of other cultures than their own.

Attendance

9. The school regularly examines attendance figures and identifies those whose attendance is a cause for concern. The school's very good relationship with external bodies and parents means that poor attendance is normally addressed very quickly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
136
5
1
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** standard of education. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good and one of the strengths of the school. The quality of teaching is good overall and has a good impact on pupils' achievement. The quality of the curriculum is good, providing pupils with interesting and worthwhile tasks that are matched well to their stages of learning, although there is less evidence of opportunities to extend children's writing skills in subjects such as history. The school is highly inclusive in its consideration, care and management of the pupils. The enthusiastic adoption of strategies to promote active learning is effective and a significant factor in behaviour management. There is a very good partnership with parents and the community which plays a positive role in supporting standards.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** through the school so that pupils achieve well. Procedures for assessment are very good and are used to track pupils' progress closely.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In reception, there is a very wide range of practical activities to stimulate children and support their learning.
- Teachers make very good use of the interactive whiteboards.
- Teachers offer good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills although there is less emphasis on writing.
- Children's progress is monitored very thoughtfully and efficiently so that all teachers know what individual children need to learn next.
- Teachers set very high expectations for standards of behaviour.
- Assessment procedures are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good so that they achieve well.
- The teachers provide detailed planning and organisation for those who are working with the children.

Commentary

10. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good so that pupils make good progress. In several lessons, for example in English, mathematics and science, teaching is of a very good quality. There is a strong emphasis on helping pupils to develop a wide range of skills through well-planned and enjoyable activities. A strong feature is the very good use that teachers make of the interactive whiteboards, which are used very effectively to enhance learning. Teachers give lively and thoughtful presentations that encourage pupils to engage in their work. Pupils have a very good capacity to work together, which benefits their learning. The teachers have worked very hard to master the use of this new technology and use it imaginatively in a way that has a significant impact on pupils' learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3 %)	6 (18 %)	17 (52 %)	9 (27%)	0 (0%)	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 percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

11. The shared year group planning helps to ensure that all pupils receive similar experiences and that tasks provide good equality of access to the curriculum. Teachers follow a good mixture of national guidance and courses adapted for the needs of pupils in the school, so that learning is relevant. In a few lessons there was some lack of pace which allowed insufficient time for pupils to complete their independent work. In a few lessons also, there was insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils, for example in how much they were expected to write.

12. Teachers establish pupils' interest and attention well so that they listen and are keen to contribute. They have a positive, encouraging questioning style that includes all pupils well. They demonstrate good subject knowledge that is used to good effect in their choice of tasks and generally use an effective, interactive approach that encourages pupils to take part in discussions. The teaching methods are generally very good and include all pupils very well. Teachers use highly skilled questioning strategies at times to encourage pupils to explain their ideas and methods, although this could be extended. Relationships are warm and friendly. Teachers have high

expectations of the pupils for behaviour and effort, breaking lessons up into short sections to aid concentration, which has a positive impact on achievement. They make perceptive observations of the pupils during class discussions and individual work, and use these well to respond to pupils' difficulties and to reinforce the ideas. While whole-school assessment procedures are very good and enable the headteacher and teachers to keep a very close track on each pupil's progress, the need for further emphasis on writing was not applied to lesson planning and teaching. The classroom assistants are effective in their support of lower attaining pupils and maintain very good communication with the class teachers.

13. The school has ensured that teachers receive relevant training for school priorities and initiatives. This has increased teachers' subject expertise and confidence, for example in ICT and in behaviour management, and contributed significantly to improving standards. In history and geography, most of the work is done verbally which makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, pupils are given very little written work in these subjects so that opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their writing and recording skills.

14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils learn very effectively at their own pace because of the good quality individual learning programmes that are provided and the support that they receive from teachers and learning support assistants within lessons. The learning support assistants are very effective because they liaise closely with the special needs co-ordinator and individual teachers and feel part of a professional team. There is a good level of support for the few children with English as an additional language. Overall, learning support assistants give good support to both individuals in their care and to groups of pupils within lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is **good**. It is enhanced through a **good** range of enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has been innovative in adopting new initiatives, which have a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of educational visits and visitors.
- There is good provision and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers make very effective use of ICT to help engage and interest pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

Commentary

15. The school's curriculum is broad and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. It is broad and gives pupils good opportunities to make progress in their learning. Personal, social and health education is a strong feature of curricular provision. In addition, the school implements a range of national initiatives that have a positive impact on curricular provision and learning. For example, all teachers and support assistants are committed to "Brain Gym" initiatives to improve the links between teaching and learning by developing pupils' thinking skills. All pupils have access to drinks of water and fruit at arranged times throughout the day and there has been considerable financial investment in new technology as a means of developing interactive learning through the purchase of interactive whiteboards. Although some of these innovations have only been recently implemented, they are already having a positive impact on pupils' thinking and concentration skills and illustrate the school's commitment to providing an effective and stimulating curriculum.

16. At the time of the previous inspection, there was a good programme of educational visits and visitors and this remains the case. For example, pupils visit Wicksteed Country Park as part of their geographical studies and Snibston Science Park to develop their understanding in science. Visitors

to the school include the school nurse and officers from the local fire brigade. All of these experiences enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with good opportunities for learning. Displays provide pupils with a stimulating learning environment.

17. The school is well resourced and benefits from good accommodation, which has seen a number of significant improvements since the time of the previous inspection. The “Hipadrome” project has considerably improved the outside environment and the very good outside play facilities contribute to the positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils. The good standard of display work ensures that pupils work in an attractive learning environment.

18. Teachers make very effective use of ICT to help engage and interest pupils. In almost all lessons, good use is made of the interactive whiteboards and both teachers and pupils access them with confidence. The school’s heavy investment in new technology has proved very beneficial.

19. The weakness of the curriculum is that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. Many pupils enter school with poor speaking and listening skills and the staff rightly concentrate their efforts on developing this area of learning. They do this successfully and, consequently, pupils achieve well and most leave school with standards that are at least in line with national expectations. However, several pupils enter the school with above average attainment levels yet most pupils leave school with standards of writing that are below average and very few achieve the higher grades in National Curriculum tests. There are missed opportunities for pupils to write regularly in a range of subjects and high attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop structured, imaginative writing for a range of different purposes and audiences.

20. Overall, the school is effective in ensuring that all pupils are given equal access to the statutory curriculum and all other activities provided. The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs are good. The special needs co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and manages this aspect very well. She has clear procedures for dealing with pupils with special educational needs and a good understanding of the Code of Practice. She works well with other teachers and receives very good support from the learning support staff. The governor with responsibility for this aspect is a learning support assistant who has a background in special educational needs and consequently gives good support to the school. Pupils’ individual education plans are of good quality and are reviewed each term. Although pupils with special educational needs are sometimes withdrawn from lessons for additional support, teachers try to ensure that they are given opportunities to catch up with anything that they have missed.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides for pupils’ care, welfare, health and safety **very well**. The advice, support and guidance that the school gives its pupils are **very good**. The school seeks to involve pupils in its work and development **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school’s arrangements for the induction of new pupils are very good.
- The school is very safe and secure and health and safety procedures are thorough.

Commentary

21. The school looks after its pupils very well. The school site is secure, well cared for and clean. Health and safety assessments and controls are thorough. The school has a good number of members of staff qualified to administer first aid. Procedures to protect children are clearly understood by all staff.

22. Before pupils start school they attend an assembly and participate in a trial session. They collect an induction pack of information from their future teacher and have their photograph taken during the first few weeks. The school seeks information about children before they start school, from the local nursery. As a result teachers already know their pupils a little before they start and this helps them to settle quickly to their new school.

23. The very good relationships between pupils and their teachers, mean that all pupils know they can talk to someone they trust if they need to. The constant reinforcement of good behaviour means that pupils understand how to behave properly from an early age. Teachers are able to support their pupils very well because they know them well and have effective support from others within the school and from outside agencies such as Social Services and the Education Welfare Service.

24. Pupils' academic performance is carefully monitored by the class teachers and this allows them to offer good quality advice and guidance to both pupils and parents. The school encourages children to become involved in its work by giving them opportunities to take responsibility and listening to their views. Clear records of children with learning difficulties are kept, and effective monitoring by the co-ordinator and class teachers contributes to the good progress of all groups of children. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed and a wide variety of information is recorded to help identify pupils' current attainment. The information gained is used most effectively to provide suitable new work for individual pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works **very well** with parents and the community. The school works **well** with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are very involved in their children's education and school life.
- The Parents' Association is active and supportive of the school.
- The school has very good links with local faith communities.

Commentary

25. Parents have confidence in the school. The school's 'Open Door' policy means that close working relationships between staff and parents form readily and that concerns and complaints are quickly resolved. The school sends letters to all parents informing them about the topic work their children are going to be starting every half term and also takes the opportunity to request help from the parents in providing resources or help as necessary, related to their children's work. It also sends frequent letters to parents to inform them about events and other important information. The relationship that teachers have with parents is very good and the parents appreciate the contact that they have with teachers. Parents run the Home/School library and track the frequency with which all pupils change their books.

26. Reports to parents contain a lot of information about what pupils can do and the work they have, and will, cover. Parents receive verbal reports during the year on how their children might improve although in the final, written reports there is less information about this. This means that some parents do not receive feedback about how they can help their child. The school receives good support from parents of children with learning difficulties. They regularly attend review meetings to contribute to their children's learning. Parents are generally happy with the level of support that the school provides.

27. The Parents' Association raises substantial funds for the school. Events that are organised by the Parents' Association and the school are well attended. These events play a significant part in maintaining the close partnership between the school and the parents.

28. The school has very good links with local churches and uses these links effectively to enhance pupils' appreciation of living in a community. The pupils visit the church on several occasions throughout the year and clergy frequently visit the school. The school is involved in the Desborough Carnival each year and also visits the nearby senior citizens' home.

29. The school has a good relationship with other local schools. This means that when pupils join the school from the local nursery, or leave to go to the junior school, their transition is smooth and

does not disrupt their education. When pupils are in Year 2 they receive individual letters from past pupils in Year 3 at the adjacent junior school to help to prepare them for the change of school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior staff provide successful leadership that has resulted in good improvement to the school's effectiveness since the last inspection.
- Leadership and management are very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the quality of children's learning that directs decisions and action.
- The continuing professional development of staff is directed very well towards school improvement.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school.
- There is a high level of commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school.

Commentary

30. The leadership by the headteacher is very good and promotes a strong sense of effort towards school improvement. The very good attention to identifying and managing initiatives is a significant strength. The leadership roles of those in senior positions are fulfilled well. The school runs efficiently and with good purpose. The governing body provides good governance.

31. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection because all members of staff have worked as a team under the strong leadership of the headteacher. The issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed well although there is further work to do in challenging the higher attaining pupils. The school has also embarked on ambitious initiatives to help provide further enrichment and depth to the children's learning. These initiatives are managed very well by the headteacher, through attention to staff development as well as every-day arrangements in the classrooms. Evidence indicates that the regular breaks for physical activity during lessons are having a strong impact on pupils' behaviour and on their ability to maintain concentration. As a result children demonstrate good achievement. The monitoring and evaluation procedures are thorough and include very close tracking of pupils' performance through regular assessments.

32. Further evidence of a strong common purpose is shown by the imaginative and very well managed introduction of interactive white-boards in all classes. All teachers have adopted these with enthusiasm, sharing good practice and considerably enhancing the quality of pupils' learning. All members of staff are highly committed to inclusion and take very careful account of the needs of individual children. There are good monitoring procedures. The headteacher has a hands-on approach to addressing problems and needs in the classroom, gaining a good informal insight into provision. In addition, she and the senior staff make regular lesson observations which are used constructively to make improvements. Performance management is very good and ensures that school improvements are successful. The deputy headteacher provides clear direction and purpose by her very good example. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator gives very thoughtful and perceptive leadership which results in high quality provision. Across the school, subject leaders demonstrate commitment and good understanding in their role.

33. The headteacher fulfils the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator. She is knowledgeable and manages this aspect very well. She has clear procedures for dealing with the large number of pupils with special educational needs and has a good understanding of national guidance and requirements. She works well with other teachers and the learning support assistants. She keeps clear records of the progression of pupils over time.

34. The governors have good procedures to ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements. They take a close interest in the life of the school and have good arrangements for school visits. The governing body provides satisfactory strategic direction and the school improvement plan provides a satisfactory outline of identified priorities. However, further work on writing is not included as a target and the design is not arranged to include all aspects of the school's work. The school's financial management is good and is supported well by the finance secretary. The governors take good account of the principles of obtaining best value in their financial decisions and monitor school developments closely to ensure that their financial decisions help to improve learning and standards. For example, the outside play area for reception children has considerably enhanced opportunities for physical and other experiences. The expenditure per pupil is broadly average in comparison with similar schools. The balance carried forward to the following year is higher than usual in order to maintain the staffing level if the school's roll drops.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	519 304
Total expenditure	501 055
Expenditure per pupil	2 330

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39 060
Balance carried forward to the next	57 309

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the foundation stage is **very good**.

35. Children are admitted to the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five, attending school on a full-time basis from the end of October. From the evidence of lessons seen and examination of samples of children's work, children enter school with a wide range of attainment. Overall, this is below average in most areas of learning and the majority of children are unlikely to attain broadly average standards in the areas of learning before they move to Year 1.

36. The provision is managed very well and as a result achievement is good in all areas of learning. The main strengths of teaching, which is consistently good in all three classes and areas of learning, are:

- There is a very wide range of practical activities that stimulates children and supports their learning well.
- Teachers give immediate recognition when children achieve well, with rewards for good behaviour and effort.
- Staff and helpers work extremely well together as a team because of the detailed planning and very good organisation of the classes.
- Children's progress is monitored very thoughtfully and efficiently so that all teachers know what individual children need to learn next.

37. The strengths of the last inspection have been maintained well and the areas outside the classrooms have been significantly improved to provide a wider range of stimulating activities, using very carefully and imaginatively selected resources. There are very good induction arrangements and strong links with the nursery school and playgroups.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because the good teaching and routines established encourage them to grow in confidence and co-operate with each other.
- Most children are likely to reach expected standards by the end of the year.

Commentary

38. Staff provide a warm and secure environment where classroom routines are quickly established. Children sit quietly when the register is taken and join in early morning routines confidently. The majority of children co-operate with each other in group activities and some small groups already work well independently without an adult, when necessary. Other groups find this more difficult and benefit from adult interventions because they prefer to follow their own interests and still move from one activity to another. Staff provide a good balance of directed and self-chosen activities and there is a purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. This encourages children to work with others and grow in confidence. Some children are not yet at a stage when they find it easy to sit quietly and work independently but should reach average standards in this area.

39. Staff teach children rules and responsibilities. They prepare for snack times systematically and clear away sensibly. Children appreciate others' achievements and quickly praise them for good writing or behaviour. Children with special educational needs are well integrated and receive good support.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff make good opportunities to develop children's language skills by good use of questioning and assisting children with their responses.
- Early reading skills are taught systematically and well.
- Children need more opportunities to practise their writing.

Commentary

40. Several of the children have under-developed speaking and listening skills. All adults speak clearly, ensuring clear explanations of the tasks expected of children. They often model back clear speech of children's replies to questions. Children respond well to teachers' clear signals to stop and listen. Staff ensure that children develop their imaginative play in the busy outdoor area. They discuss how high their wind-socks are flying as they blow in the wind and go for petrol for their 'car'. Children listen attentively to stories and introductions to mathematics lessons. A few children find it difficult to wait for adults to finish their instructions and rush into tasks, but respond to reminders well.

41. Children want to learn to read and enjoy taking books home to read with their parents. They handle books with care and some are reading individual words and short phrases. Children learn initial sounds and letter names securely because these are taught daily and learning them is fun. Useful notices and writing around the room encourage reading. For example, some recognise important words around the room during activities. In group reading, one child points out 'mum' on the window and another sees 'the' which is part of the word 'there' that they are reading. Staff provide a wide range of exercises and activities to help children develop essential skills for holding a pencil and develop smooth movements for writing, but are aware that there are not enough opportunities for children to attempt to write short sentences. Children are full of admiration for anyone who writes on a picture and most would not find it too challenging to make their own attempts to display on the wall. The majority of children are unlikely to meet the requirements of this area of learning by the end of the year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of well thought out practical activities ensures that early number work is covered well.
- The mental mathematics session each morning is improving children's understanding of sequencing of numbers.
- Numbers are used well in other activities to reinforce learning.

Commentary

42. Children are provided with interesting tasks that ensure that they have secure learning of numbers before they move on to using them in problems. For example, children create sets of two, consolidating their recognition of colours and shapes at the same time. Teaching and learning are

good in all lessons because adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical language and ask questions. They learn to sequence the days of the week as they complete the daily calendar and count on to the end of the week. Children learn positional language in experiments and physical education lessons, or when building towers. They enjoy playing games that reinforce their recognition of numbers and quantities.

43. When reinforcing counting skills, children order cards from zero to ten and work out that 'if one person was away, there would be 22 in the class today.' Children work with good concentration in the sand and water, and, although most are still exploring the range of activities they can do there, they understand full and empty. It is likely that approximately half of the children will be close to meeting the requirements for this area of learning at the end of the year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults ask challenging questions to make children think and extend their learning.
- First hand experiences and good teaching mean that children enjoy finding out for themselves and learn to answer their own questions.

Commentary

44. All adults ask challenging questions to develop children's understanding and encourage children to work out the answer by experimenting. For example, in the middle of a sounds lesson, a child asks if the letter is magnetic. The teacher suggests that he finds out by testing it himself. He selects a magnet from a display and informs everyone that it is magnetic, but points out that another letter is wood and therefore not magnetic. At any time during the day, children's questions are followed up well and children frequently stand in groups testing different materials. Children discover which clothes and toys are suitable for different weathers when they test the contents of carefully selected topic boxes outside. Children have ample opportunities to use construction kits of different shapes and sizes in the areas between the bays. They build imaginatively, working out how many more bricks their shape needs and how good a design it is by asking their partner what they think. Pupils enjoy using computers. They are improving their control of the mouse and find it fun to move objects on the screen when, for example, working on a teddy bear program. With skilled adult support, they learn to program a 'Pixie' and find out for themselves how to move it forwards and sideways on a board.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this important area of learning, but the work and skills seen in a lesson and in the playground indicate that it is good. There is good provision for development of fine manipulative skills. Children are likely to meet the standards for this area of learning by the end of the year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for the development of imaginative play in the classroom and outside which are developed well by the interventions of adults.
- Staff encourage children to develop skills in playing instruments and painting through a wide range of interesting activities.

Commentary

45. Staff have planned very carefully to provide a rich range of opportunities for imaginative and social play. Themes change regularly, from the Post Office to Jack's Cottage or a Garden Centre. Children build up stories as they create models with bricks, becoming a creature or an astronaut. They dress up to play roles in stories they create and there are some very good opportunities for development of language and social skills. Adults watch carefully and intervene sensitively when they feel the children's play is becoming repetitive or needs extending.

46. Children mix colours and use brushes very carefully. Skills in mixing colours are taught very well so that pupils can explain what they are doing and explore different tones of blue. Children paint portraits that are recognisable and complete attractive collages with a wide range of materials. Many examples of their work are attractively displayed around the classroom. Almost all children will at least meet the required standards in this area of learning, and some will exceed them. They demonstrate similar care and enthusiasm when playing and selecting instruments in music sessions

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Standards in writing are below average.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- There is good subject leadership.
- The subject has been well monitored and pupil performance data is used effectively to raise standards.

Commentary

47. In the National Curriculum tests for 2003, standards in reading were close to the national average but standards in writing were well below average. For this current group of Year 2 pupils, standards in reading are likely to be slightly higher, although evidence from the work scrutiny and lesson observations suggest that writing standards will remain below the levels expected for pupils of this age. Standards in speaking and listening are average. This represents good achievement over time in reading and speaking and listening as pupils join the school with standards of attainment that are below average, overall. Achievement in writing is satisfactory.

48. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and this enables pupils to make good progress. It is evident from lessons that teaching is of a high quality with emphasis on helping pupils to develop their literacy skills through purposeful and enjoyable activities that enable them to achieve well. For example, in one story lesson, the class teacher engaged in role-play with pupils to act out a scene from their class book and this helped them to enjoy the story content and to appreciate the problems that the central character faced. A strong feature of teaching is that teachers make very good use of ICT within lessons. There are interactive whiteboards in all Year 1 and 2 classrooms and these are used very effectively to enhance learning. Teachers are very confident to use new technology and pupils are often given opportunities to show that they share this confidence. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, individual pupils were able to “drag” words and to place them into speech bubbles. Individual computers are also used in most lessons, such as when pupils in Year 1 confidently used the appropriate tools to edit their sentences. Another strong feature of teaching is the way that teachers plan together to ensure that all pupils receive equality of access to the curriculum. The weakest element of teaching is that some lessons lack pace and often a long introduction by the teacher allows insufficient time for pupils to engage in independent work. There is also insufficient challenge for high attaining pupils, particularly in writing lessons.

49. All adults, including teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff make a positive contribution to the development of pupils’ speaking and listening skills. Pupils are encouraged to talk to and listen to adults and their peers in virtually every lesson. Teachers are very effective at engaging pupils with probing questioning that encourages them to think carefully before responding. Virtually every lesson contains an opportunity for pupils to share their work with the rest of the class and such regular and good opportunities enable pupils to develop their language skills and their range of vocabulary.

50. It is important to point out that the school has concentrated its efforts on developing pupils’ speaking and listening and reading skills within Years 1 and 2 because many pupils enter school with poor levels of language skills. However, the quantity and quality of writing is below that seen in many schools and opportunities for writing are missed in some lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, there were no planned writing activities for high attaining pupils “because they had completed writing

activities during the lesson on the previous day". In some lessons, the introduction by the teacher is too long to enable pupils to have sufficient time to develop their writing skills through independent and group activities. There are pupils within school who have very good literacy skills. A pupil in Year 2, for instance, had selected a challenging non-fiction, reading book and she read words such as "pollination" and "germination" with great fluency. There is a need to challenge such pupils to use these reading skills to develop structured, imaginative writing for a range of different purposes and audiences.

51. The above average number of pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support that they receive from their effective learning support assistants, who work closely with teachers to plan appropriate work and to record the progress of individual pupils. Their observations and assessments contribute positively to future planning and they have established very positive relationships with individuals and groups of pupils. The learning support assistants liaise effectively with the co-ordinator for special educational needs to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in English.

52. The subject leader gives good leadership. She has a clear view of standards within her subject and works closely with other members of the staff to ensure continued improvement. She has very good subject knowledge and has done much to secure improvements since the last inspection. There is now a policy and scheme of work that take account of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and the co-ordinator regularly monitors planning and teaching throughout the school. She has developed a structured home-reading scheme that enables parents to contribute to their children's reading development.

53. The school makes good use of data analysis that includes effective systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils. There is a planned programme of assessments and this provides information that is used to develop termly targets in reading and writing for each individual pupil.

English across the curriculum

54. Although pupils are given very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills across other areas of the curriculum, there is very little evidence of writing development in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. If writing standards are to improve, there needs to be an increase in planned opportunities for pupils to write in these other subject areas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is structured well to meet the learning needs of the pupils.
- Pupils achieve well because tasks are adapted carefully to meet the differing stages of learning of the pupils, and teaching is good.
- The use of ICT and the interactive white boards is a particular strength.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and management.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average, maintaining the position at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics, and for many children this is against a weak background in mathematics when they enter the school. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because the teachers and support staff make good provision, linked to their personal targets. While the overall standards were well below the national average in the 2003 national tests, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 was at the national average. This was a slight improvement over the results of 2002 and confirms the progress

pupils are making. It is the lower proportion of pupils exceeding the expectation that leads to the below average performance. Standards are also well below the average for similar schools.

56. By Year 2 the majority of pupils skip count confidently in 2's, 5's and 10's. They count, add and subtract numbers accurately to at least 20, although several pupils rely upon finger counting which indicates their number knowledge is not yet secure. In a very good lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher's very good use of the white-board to illustrate a number-line, supported by lively explanations, led to pupils understanding how to take 1, 2 or 3 away from a given number. The teacher used her close observations of the children productively in the final whole-class session by providing further clear consolidation of the ideas. Pupils record their work appropriately and the standard of presentation is generally satisfactory.

57. Pupils respond well to the practical nature of tasks, which is a strong feature of lessons, with very good attitudes and behaviour. They have an early understanding that multiplication is 'five sets of four objects', for example. In a further good lesson, tasks were very well planned for the differing groups of pupils to provide challenge in forming multiplication questions. High attaining pupils demonstrated good understanding by using spinners to make up sums, which they usually answered in their heads. The lower attaining pupils used drawings to illustrate multiplication and a counting process to find the totals. Pupils' previous work indicates that pupils are making good progress across the mathematical topics and that most pupils are set to reach the expected standard. Good arrangements are in hand to challenge the higher attaining pupils by grouping them together for one session a week, which is also planned for English.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers follow the approach of the national Numeracy Strategy but adapted very well by the subject leader to give the emphasis chosen for the pupils. Thus, pupils have good opportunities to build mental number facts and to recognise patterns and relationships. For example, in a well-prepared lesson, the class teacher projected a 100 square onto the screen and while the children skip counted in 5's one pupil tapped 5, 10, 15. to reveal the columns ending in 5 or 0. Teachers generally ask pupils to explain their methods for their calculations, although these are not then used to reinforce processes for all pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge that is used to good effect in their explanations. Relationships are warm and friendly with high expectations for behaviour and effort, which have a positive impact on achievement. The teaching methods are generally very good and include all pupils very well. The use of the ICT white-board is a particular strength. Teachers use their perceptive observations of the pupils well to intervene during tasks and to reinforce the ideas.

59. The subject leader provides good leadership and management, and the staff work hard to raise standards. The work of the classroom assistants is effective in supporting pupils with learning difficulties so that they make good progress. The subject leader has given considerable time to developing the scheme of work to match the preferred approach and this is effective in giving a very good basis for lesson planning. She has good assessment procedures and monitors curriculum coverage and progression closely. The assessment information is used well to set clear targets for pupils. The quality of resources is good in support of pupils' learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Teachers bring a good range of mathematical ideas into other subjects. These help children to understand everyday applications and to see the value of mathematics around them. In physical education, for example, children find space to work in and move along apparatus. In design and technology children designed imaginative repeating patterned wall-papers for their model rooms and used them to cover the wall surface. In science children explored the effects of pushes and pulls on movements and in music they recognised the beat. The frequent songs and actions children make as part of the brain gym activities, reinforce ideas of position and pattern. All these are actively promoted by the teachers in a constructive way.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in science is good so that pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum and tasks are designed well to meet the differing stages of learning of the pupils.
- Teachers provide good practical experience for the pupils.
- The use of the interactive white-boards is effective.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and management.

Commentary

61. The activities in the reception classes provide a wide range of relevant experiences which are a good basis for developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the world, many against a weak background in knowledge and understanding when they enter school. The good practical and experimental approach continues in Years 1 and 2 so that teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well.

62. Standards by Year 2 are average, maintaining the position reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good because teachers provide a good practical basis of experience. In a well managed lesson in Year 1, for example, after careful discussion to prepare pupils, the pupils spent five minutes at each of five activities. Pupils manipulated and made shapes with play-dough, built models with Lego and experimented with a variety of moving toys. By doing so pupils talked about what they observed and tried out and understood the application of forces in many everyday actions. In a very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher challenged the higher attaining pupils to explore how to move objects using string or a ruler. These pupils demonstrated good practical skills and understanding. In the national tests for 2003, the teachers' assessments show standards to be well below average. The school ensures that equal emphasis is given to all aspects of science, although the teacher assessments indicate that the pupils still find work on physical processes more difficult. Pupils' previous work indicates good achievement from reception.

63. The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on learning and achievement. Teachers' generally good subject knowledge is shown in their discussions with pupils and lively presentations of the ideas, using the interactive white-boards to good effect. Teachers establish pupils' interest and attention well, so that they listen and are keen to contribute. Teachers have a positive, encouraging questioning style that includes all pupils well. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, as well as involving all pupils in practical activity and directing the classroom assistant to work with lower attaining pupils, the teacher extended pupils' understanding by helping them to analyse what they did and their observations.

64. The curriculum is well-structured to provide good subject coverage and progression. The subject leader provides good support and direction for colleagues that promote practical, first-hand experiences for the children. She has established good assessment procedures which help inform teaching and planning. Leadership and management are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a recent improvement in resources and staff expertise.
- ICT is used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership.

65. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and are continuing to rise because of the recent improvement in resources and good staff expertise. The training of teachers has been carried out and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence, and contributed significantly to improving standards of teaching and learning within the school. There are networked computers within each classroom and all classrooms in Years 1 and 2 are equipped with interactive whiteboards. On occasions when problems with equipment occur, there is good technical support to overcome them and to ensure that the pace of the learning is maintained. Teachers are supported well by teaching assistants, particularly in the use of programs that provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs.

66. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and discuss their work confidently and enthusiastically. Many pupils in Year 2 are already able to save information and to find and use appropriate stored information. They work well as individuals within lessons when required to do so, and share equipment sensibly when working in pairs. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, pupils were confident in the use of appropriate tools to edit their sentences. They were prepared to share equipment and to help each other when problems arose and this successfully promoted their social and moral development. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons and most are eager to demonstrate their skills when given opportunities to use the interactive whiteboards. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils were keen to demonstrate how to add capital letters and full stops to their sentences. Good planning allows pupils to work at their own pace and good levels of co-operation result. Although no discrete lessons were seen during the inspection, it is clear from discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, and a scrutiny of planning that all aspects of the curriculum for ICT are covered.

67. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has developed a scheme of work based on good, whole-school curriculum guidelines. Teaching now places an emphasis on the systematic development of computer skills. She has very good subject knowledge and gives good support to her colleagues. She monitors planning on a regular basis and has had opportunities to observe colleagues using the whiteboards. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to improve standards and has drawn up an action plan for future development. This highlights a commitment to update provision for the Foundation Stage, to monitor the effectiveness of assessment procedures and to explore greater use of the internet.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. ICT consistently supports learning in other subjects of the curriculum. Almost all lessons begin with an introduction based on the use of the interactive whiteboard. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were able to develop their geographical skills by following the voyage of Christopher Columbus on a projected world map, and historical awareness for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was enhanced by the use of projected photographs reflecting past times. Teachers make good use of the digital camera to record learning activities.

HUMANITIES

During the inspection, although lessons in **religious education** took place, the inspectors were not able to see any. Also, there was very little written evidence in pupils' books. It was, therefore, not

possible to make an overall judgement about provision in this subject. However, it was possible to talk to the co-ordinator about her work. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced in the role and has done much to raise the profile of religious education within the school. She has re-written the policy and scheme of work based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, developed good resources and monitored planning and curriculum delivery in order to evaluate the standard and quality of teaching and learning. A new assessment system is in place, and expectations sheets form part of the planning process. The co-ordinator has ensured that a programme of visits to local churches and visitors, including local ministers, a nun and a Jewish lady, enriches the curriculum. The subject action plan is now to focus on developing religious education in the Foundation Stage, since at present the school is using a special unit of work and in future it plans to use a nationally designed unit of work. The curriculum is well balanced and covers the Christian and Jewish faiths. It is planned on a two-year cycle to take account of the mixed-age class. Pupils learn about other religious beliefs and also how to apply these principles to their own lives. A display of work based on the Jewish faith showed that teachers make very effective use of artefacts to support learning. Assemblies and circle times are planned carefully to support learning in this subject area. It is clear that the work undertaken in religious education contributes significantly to the good attitudes that are seen throughout the school. Religious education is often linked to other curricular areas, particularly in its contribution to standards of speaking and listening within the school. However, as the curriculum is planned to enable pupils to talk rather than to complete written tasks, the subject makes very little contribution to raising standards of writing.

History and geography

Provision in history and geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subjects link well with other curriculum areas.
- A planned programme of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write about their studies.

Commentary

69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average, which is a similar picture to that seen at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers use resources effectively to make lessons interesting and maintain pupils' interest. A particularly effective strategy is the use made of ICT within the curriculum. Almost all lessons begin with an introduction based on the use of the interactive whiteboard. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were able to develop their geographical skills by following the voyage of Christopher Columbus on a projected world map and historical awareness for pupils in Year 1 and 2 was enhanced by the use of projected photographs reflecting past times. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and this enables them to make similar progress to their classmates. In one lesson in Year 2, for example, a small group of pupils worked with a learning support assistant in the library area. Their learning objective was to identify countries on a world map and her support and effective questioning enabled all pupils to make good progress and to become increasingly independent as the lesson developed. Displays of work, such as that featuring artefacts and pictures of old and modern bicycles, are attractively presented and the school makes good use of the digital camera to provide interesting photographic evidence.

70. The curriculum is well balanced and carefully planned to cater for the needs of all pupils in the school. It is taught within topics that include planning for other curricular areas, such as English and ICT. A planned programme of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. These opportunities interest pupils and stimulate learning. Pupils in Year 1 and 2, for example, have opportunities to develop an understanding of change over time when visiting Sacrewell Farm to experience a mill and an old kitchen and the geography curriculum includes a walk to Desborough town and a visit to Wicksteed Park.

71. Most of the work in history and geography is done verbally and this contributes significantly to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils have good opportunities to handle and discuss artefacts and this helps them to acquire knowledge and understanding. However, very little written work takes place in these subjects and there are missed opportunities within lessons for pupils to develop their writing and recording skills. Some lessons lack pace and challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. In one lesson, for example, the teacher read the story of Christopher Columbus, whilst pupils acted out the story. This was a long session and there were no opportunities for pupils to develop their own dialogue, or for higher attaining pupils to write about the story or the characters. The scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that the curriculum for history and geography does not make a positive contribution to standards of writing throughout the school.

72. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator for humanities has improved resources and is currently trialling new assessment procedures. Her plans for future development include a review of the current schemes of work to ensure that they relate more closely to pupils' own experiences and to make more use of the local environment.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson in **art and design** in Year 1 was seen and this was of a high standard. Displays around the school and photographs of work completed previously, indicate that standards are above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils develop their skills as they move through the school and build on the good start made in this subject in Reception. In the lesson seen, pupils in Year 1 became engrossed in their observational drawings of toys and produced work of a high standard because of the time taken by the teacher to demonstrate the skills required to produce accurate and interesting work. Resources for the subject are good and there are regular visits from artists to work with pupils in a range of media, such as ceramics. Achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the subject is managed well. No lessons of **design and technology** could be seen, but pupils' work was studied and the subject discussed with the co-ordinator. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good sketches and plans of what they want to make. Parents, and grandparents, have been involved well in days planned for the completion of a design and technology project. Finished products are of good quality and pupils' evaluations of their work are reflective and interesting. There is a wide range of materials available for the projects and when pupils made models of playground equipment, everyone visited Wicksteed Park to prepare their plans. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the subject is led well. Although only one lesson in **music** was seen, the evidence indicates that provision is good and that children reach the expected standard by Year 2. There is a good range of good quality musical instruments, which includes several from other countries. These support children's learning well. In a well-managed lesson in Year 2, pupils sang a melody tunefully. They know some of the signs for controlling the sound - to be quiet, for example. The class teacher gradually extended the level of challenge during activities, for example by arranging for pupils to beat two rhythms in sequence, then three and four rhythms. All pupils were included well in the activities and they demonstrated respect for the instruments as they played. The subject leader has a high level of interest in the subject and promotes it well through the school using a good variety of teaching and learning resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards exceed the expectation by the end of Year 2.
- There is some excellent and very good teaching.
- Pupils behave very well and try very hard to do well during lessons.

Commentary

73. Teachers establish very good attention and control so that children listen and follow instructions well. All pupils are included very well in the activities. The lessons are introduced carefully, with activities that provide a little challenge so that pupils try hard. Activities are gradually extended so that pupils build upon their skills by applying them to new contexts. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, children learnt to jump and turn, then used more imaginative moves after other children had demonstrated their ways. Several higher attaining pupils demonstrated good control and coordination, landing with good balance. Their skills were further extended by the teacher's challenge to perform two types of turn in sequence. In the excellent lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2, the class teacher demonstrated exceptional skills in managing and motivating pupils, many of whom have challenging behaviour. As a result, their very good behaviour had a strong impact on their achievement. Pupils achieve very well in some lessons and overall achievement is good.

74. The teachers provide a good variety of tasks in lessons. Pupils followed the instructions for setting out floor apparatus in groups very carefully, taking some pride in doing it properly, while the other pupils waited patiently. All the pupils used the apparatus in an orderly and controlled way, helped by the teachers' calm but motivating manner. The pupils in the Year 2 class worked hard to improve their skills, using the ideas demonstrated by other pupils, and bringing a good measure of originality to their moves.

75. Teachers provide a safe and caring atmosphere in lessons, giving good attention to health and safety matters, and following the guidance of the subject leader. The school has provided good opportunities for in-service training for teachers and this has been effective in giving teachers knowledge and confidence. The subject leader has a good understanding of the role.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programme is carefully planned to extend personal development and help pupils to grow in confidence.
- Pupils learn to consider issues maturely and sensibly through 'circle time.'

Commentary

76. The school has a good personal, social and health education programme that provides opportunities for pupils to increase their confidence and self-esteem in the daily life of the school. On occasions when the whole class, or school, come together, achievement is recognised and celebrated. Pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 revisit the 'Golden Rules.' Reception children think of what 'looking after their property' means and in Year 1 pupils discuss a similar theme with a partner. Pairs of pupils have a wide range of thoughtful suggestions to make. In attractive displays, pupils are reminded that they have rights and responsibilities and learn about appropriate ways to treat others. Teaching is at least satisfactory, as is pupils' learning and achievement. Visits from parents who work in hospitals, the fire service or police make a good contribution to this programme when they give talks on for example, x-rays, being in hospital or keeping safe.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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