

INSPECTION REPORT

CHIEVELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newbury

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109810

Headteacher: Mrs H Broomfield

Lead inspector: Mr J G Quinn

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 February 2004

Inspection number: 260657

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: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 85

School address: School Road
Chieveley
Newbury
Berkshire
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Telephone number: 01635 248281
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr A Singleton

Date of previous inspection: 28 September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Chieveley Primary School is situated in the village of Chieveley just north of Newbury. There are 85 pupils on roll which makes it much smaller than average. Numbers have fallen since the school was last inspected. There are approximately twice as many boys as girls in the school. Most pupils attend from a mixture of privately-owned and local authority housing in Chieveley and neighbouring villages. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school at other than the usual times. It regularly loses pupils to independent schools in the neighbourhood.

Approximately one-third of pupils have Special educational needs which is an above average proportion. Most have moderate learning difficulties. There are currently no pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need.

There are a very small number of pupils from families of ethnic minorities, none of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

Pupils begin in Reception up to two terms before their fifth birthday occurs. Attainment on entry to the school for many children is below average.

The school received an achievement award in 2001 and a healthy schools award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15676	Gerry Quinn	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Religious education History Geography Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school functions effectively at the centre of its village community and provides a sound education for its pupils. It is satisfactorily led and managed. The curriculum is good and the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and often good. A significantly large number of pupils begin or leave the school at other than the usual times. This has a detrimental effect on general achievement. Taking into account the high costs of educating each pupil and the favourable pupil-teacher ratio, compared with the average standards that pupils attain, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Mathematics is above average by Year 2, as is reading by Year 6. Art is above average throughout the school.
- Provision for children beginning school in Reception is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good.
- The accommodation and range of resources are good.
- Multicultural education is very good.
- There are very effective arrangements to promote good attendance.
- Very productive links have been established with other schools and colleges.
- School administration is very efficient.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not always appropriate.
- Arrangements for the recruitment and deployment of support staff are in need of review.
- The role of senior management in monitoring, supporting and motivating staff is underdeveloped.

The school has made good progress on the key issues raised at the time of the last inspection through a well-considered action plan. This has improved its effectiveness in these areas. There are now consistent planning procedures throughout the subjects of the curriculum and assessment procedures have been developed well. There have been improvements to provision for the youngest children and more are planned. The quality of teaching is similar to that seen previously. Although standards appear to have fallen, this is an unfair comparison due to small numbers in each year group and a higher than average proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at other than the usual times.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	E	A*	A
Mathematics	A	B	A	C
Science	C	C	A*	A

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

The numbers taking the tests each year are small and so care should be taken in interpreting data where each pupil is equivalent to several percentage points.

Achievement overall is satisfactory. The majority of children enter the school with basic skills which are below average but achieve well in Reception and Year 1 as the result of consistently good teaching. Consequently, most Reception children are on course to achieve the expected standards by the time they begin in Year 1 and some will achieve beyond these. Overall, pupils achieve

satisfactorily throughout Years 2 to 6 where teaching is more variable in quality. Pupils' attainment is above average in mathematics by Year 2 and in reading by Year 6. Art is above average throughout the school. In all other subjects attainment is similar to that found in most schools. Pupils with Special educational needs achieve well within small groups where they are effectively supported.

Pupils' spiritual awareness, respect for each other, understanding of right and wrong, and their social skills are **good**. Their appreciation of their own cultural traditions and those of others are very good. Overall pupils have **good** attitudes and behave **well**, but the behaviour of a minority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 gives cause for concern.

The school's action to promote good attendance is very effective. As a result, attendance levels are high. Almost all pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall. The school enjoys a higher teacher-pupil ratio than that found in the majority of schools. Teaching is **satisfactory** and in approximately half the lessons seen it was good and very occasionally it was very good. There was a high proportion of good teaching for children in the Reception/Year 1 class. In the best lessons teachers make effective use of support staff to assist groups of pupils and individuals. They plan lessons well and make good use of the teaching time available. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not have suitable expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and provide them with tasks that do not challenge them appropriately. Consequently, pupils do not always learn as well as they should and do not make the progress of which they are capable. In a small minority of lessons teaching is dull and uninspired and pupils are insufficiently motivated to learn as a result. There are weaknesses in the teaching of literacy in Years 3 to 6. The school's curriculum is **good** in many respects. It is broad and balanced and benefits from a wide range of additional activities, such as visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs.

Pupils are **well cared for** but there is a health and safety issue which requires the attention of governors. The school has established **effective** links with parents and those with other schools are **very good**.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory **overall**. The headteacher and key staff provide sound leadership and the governors of the school perform their duties satisfactorily. They see the raising of public perceptions of the school to be a priority. The school's finances are managed well by the school's finance officer working closely with the headteacher and governors. The school evaluates its performance effectively and has produced a well-constructed school development plan to help raise standards. The current monitoring systems are insufficiently rigorous in terms of evaluating the impact of teaching on learning to ensure that staff are fully aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are motivated and inspired to improve their practice. The recruitment and deployment of support staff need to be changed to meet the needs of larger classes and those with more difficult pupils in particular.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good opinions of the school in many important areas and have few areas they wish to see improve. Most pupils like school but a minority express an aversion to hard work.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching further by raising teachers' expectations of all pupils, with work that regularly matches their learning needs and stimulates, motivates and challenges them to give of their best.
- Make the monitoring of teaching and learning more regular and rigorous in order to provide teachers with a clear view of where strengths and weaknesses lie and to motivate and inspire them to improve their performance.
- Improve the recruitment and deployment of support staff to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those in larger classes or where behaviour is difficult to manage.

To meet statutory requirements:

- Address the health and safety issue brought to the attention of the governors.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards are **satisfactory** overall. Children achieve well in Reception and satisfactorily in other classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in Reception compared with their below average standards when they begin school.
- Standards are above average in mathematics by Year 2 and also in reading in Year 6.
- Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects.
- Standards in art are above average throughout the school.
- Support for pupils in small groups is good and they achieve well in these sessions.
- Where pupils are presented with work that does not match their needs, they do not achieve as well as they should.
- Spelling and handwriting of a significant minority of pupils are in need of improvement.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.2 (25.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.8 (27.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.6 (28.7)	28.6 (28.3)

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

1. Many pupils enter the school with below average skills in most areas. They are taught consistently well in Reception and achieve well and sometimes very well. Consequently, most children are on target to reach the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 and some will exceed these. The lack of freely available equipment for children to practise their climbing, sliding and jumping skills inhibits their physical development in these respects. However, the school compensates by providing regularly timetabled opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in the school hall, together with the use of particular climbing frame at playtimes and during the lunch hour.
2. An examination of the school's results in national assessments shows that standards in English, mathematics and science have improved in line with all schools. There is tremendous variation year on year in national test results for Year 2 and Year 6. This is explained by the small numbers of pupils in each year group, the high proportion of pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the usual times and variations in the numbers of pupils with Special educational needs. For example, in 2002, results in Year 6 fell because

over half of the pupils had Special educational needs. Also, in the current Year 6, almost half the pupils started at the school at various times during their primary school career. Such factors make any legitimate comparison of results between years invalid. In the most recent results – 2003 - however, Year 2 pupils achieved above average results in writing and mathematics and average in reading. Compared with schools having a similar context nationally, they were below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. In the same year, pupils in Year 6 attained very high results in English and science – in the top five per cent of all schools - and well above average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, results were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and science was well above average. Although test statistics show that girls outperform boys, there was no significant difference revealed during inspection. This supports the school's evaluation in this respect.

3. Lesson observations and examination of pupils' previous work show that standards are average throughout the school in all subjects, except for mathematics which is above by Year 2, reading which is above average at Year 6 and art which is above throughout the school. Overall, pupils with Special educational needs (SEN) achieve well when they are supported in small groups. When they work as part of a whole class, however, when no support is available, many find work difficult and do not give of their best.
4. A strong feature in written work is the way in which pupils practise their skills in connection with other subjects. For example, a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4 was based on pupils' history topic about Ancient Egypt. They employed skills such as using bullet points to make notes on mummification. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also write expressively and use evocative phrases to add colour to their work. For example, a Year 3 pupil wrote '*...suddenly the crew lost control and went flying out into deeper and deeper space!*'. A weakness which prevents standards being above average lies in handwriting and spelling for average and less able pupils particularly. The attention that is placed on these areas is not fully reflected in the quality of their written work. By Year 6 pupils read well. They discuss favourite authors sensibly, can use reference material well, but there is a misunderstanding amongst some about the difference between non-fiction and fiction.
5. Standards in mathematics are improving because teaching is demanding more of pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2. There is a greater emphasis on problem solving since the school identified a shortcoming in the way pupils use and employ their skills.
6. In art pupils use a wide range of materials and media to produce work of high quality. Teachers display pupils' work around the school well, which encourages a sense of pride and provides the incentive for pupils to try even harder.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

7. Pupils' attitudes to the school are **good**. Behaviour in and around the school is **good** overall, although the behaviour of a small group of boys is unsatisfactory. There was one temporary exclusion in the past year, which has recently become permanent. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are **good** and their cultural development is **very good**.
8. Pupils have **good** records of attendance and punctuality resulting from the **very good** procedures to promote these. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff know the pupils very well, celebrate their achievements and encourage them to respect and care for each other.
- The vast majority of pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in the above average attendance rates.

- Pupils are polite, welcoming and relate well both to adults and to each other.
- The recently formed School Council has quickly become embedded in the school's culture.
- Pupils' cultural development is very good as the school has placed emphasis on developing this aspect of the curriculum.
- The school's systems for ensuring attendance are very effective.
- A small minority of boys in Years 3 to 6 show a lack of consideration to others, both in class and in the way they move about the school.

Commentary

9. Overall pupils' attitudes to their school work are good and only deteriorate when teaching or the subject matter does not enthuse them sufficiently.
10. The school is a small community and consequently all pupils are known to all staff who support them well, both in class and during break times. Pupils appreciate the opportunities that they are afforded through the provision of extra-curricular activities, trips and the 'golden time' that they can earn at the end of the week if their behaviour and effort warrant it. A pupil in Year 3 was very proud of the 'medal' awarded for 'hard work' and other pupils clearly had their self-esteem boosted by the public recognition given to their efforts. A noticeboard near the entrance of the school also celebrated pupils' achievement in words and pictures.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	80	1	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

11. Pupils are polite, opening doors for adults and offering to help at every opportunity. They play well with each other on the playground and know how they are expected to behave and the sanctions that might apply if they do not. Although most pupils behave well, the behaviour of a small number of pupils slows the pace of lessons where teachers need to give them more than their fair share of attention. The school explores every opportunity to support these pupils and seeks the support of outside agencies if necessary. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is successful in this regard as incidents recorded over time diminish. Year 4 pupils offer to play with, or befriend, those who may feel lonely. They have recently requested funding from the headteacher for a 'friendship stop' plaque to sit above a specific bench where pupils can 'sit if they feel lonely or fed up!'
12. All pupils identify with the School Council because every class has its own council with officers and regularly-held meetings. In one, observed in a Year 5/6 class, pupils listened intently to feedback from the full council meeting and offered numerous suggestions as to how they could help to raise funds to replace two diseased trees recently cut down.
13. Attendance is better than it is in most other primary schools, as shown in the table below. Close attention is paid to ensuring entries in registers accurately reflect reasons for absence. Most authorised absence relates to illness and the usual childhood infections. A much smaller proportion is due to holidays taken in term-time. Stern warnings are issued that encourage parents to abide by the rules and not expect their holiday requests to be automatically agreed or authorised. Parents make good efforts to ensure that their children arrive at school in good time. As a result, pupils settle into school quickly and have few disruptions to their learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

14. Provision for spiritual, moral and social education is good and that for cultural development is very good. Pupils' work is valued and both displays and well-presented collections of photographs enable a wider audience to appreciate the many experiences and activities provided for and enjoyed by the pupils. These include moments of reflection in the local church, the gasps of amazement in the tropical house at Kew Gardens, the sense of wonder and achievement experienced in activities on the coast of Pembrokeshire and the teamwork portrayed in a range of activities. The multicultural weeks held every term and often organised with local schools do much to help the pupils appreciate other cultures. Pupils have the opportunity to wear costumes, handle artefacts and learn at first hand about other customs and traditions. A local teacher visits to lead dance sessions from other cultures and much artwork is planned to increase the pupils' appreciation and understanding.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and pupils make sound progress in their learning as a result.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high proportion of good teaching in Reception.
- The way in which teachers question pupils to take their understanding forward is generally good.
- The pace of learning in most lessons is good.
- Teachers make good use of support assistants to provide good quality assistance for less able pupils.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of pupils in terms of the standards they achieve and in the way they present their work.

Commentary

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with over one lesson out of two being good or better, as shown in the table below. However, it is not of sufficiently high quality in all classes to raise the achievement of all pupils sufficiently. Occasionally teaching was very good. The two, out of 25, unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching is the most important contributory factor to the effectiveness of pupils' learning and is of a similar standard to that at the time of the last inspection. The judgement on teaching not only takes account of lesson observations, but also other factors revealed in the way teachers respond to pupils' past work through marking.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	11	9	2	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.

16. Teaching was most consistently good in Reception and for Year 1 pupils, where there was a high proportion of effective practice. In Years 3 to 6 it was least successful.

17. Children in Reception are well taught in a colourful and stimulating environment for learning. The teacher has high expectations of what children are able to achieve and they make good progress in most areas of learning as a result. She plans in intricate detail and marks children's work constructively in a manner which takes their learning forward. The adult to child ratio is higher than that found in many schools and the teacher makes sound use of her support assistants to help individuals and groups. However, joint planning prior to the working day does not feature regularly enough to enable full use to be made of the support assistants' skills, particularly in the development of the youngest children's learning through play.
18. In the best lessons teachers plan well and introduce the topic clearly to pupils. This ensures that the lesson proceeds at a good pace. Pace slows where teachers interrupt the flow of lessons to deal with misdemeanours from a small number of pupils. Where the objectives for the lesson are written up on the whiteboards at the front of the class in words that pupils understand, there is a greater sense of purpose to learning and pupils have a clear indication of where they are going. Whereas plenary sessions are used well in many lessons to assess the quality of learning and whether learning objectives have been met, in others teachers run out of time or give too little attention to this aspect. This is an area of teaching that the school has given time to developing and monitoring, with mixed success.
19. All teachers question pupils well to build on past knowledge and to take learning forward. The school has worked on this aspect of teaching to good effect. Questions are open-ended and often sufficiently incisive to get pupils to think hard about their responses. Very occasionally teachers do not include all pupils well enough in this respect. In one class, for example, where boys significantly outnumber girls, the teacher only asked one question of a girl in a 35 minute introductory part of a lesson. All other questions were directed to boys, despite the fact that all girls enthusiastically put up their hands, eager to be chosen. As the session went on they became increasingly disengaged and unresponsive.
20. Teachers make good use of learning support assistants to help pupils with Special educational needs in small groups. These pupils make good progress as the result of this high quality support and the very good teaching they receive from the headteacher as Special educational needs co-ordinator. When they are not supported sufficiently in whole-class lessons, these pupils often struggle with work set for other pupils. They find tasks too hard, become disillusioned and fail to produce work of an acceptable standard. This is in year groups 3 to 6 where numbers are larger, behaviour of a minority of pupils is difficult and there is too little support from assistants.
21. In most lessons teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils and match the learning to the different abilities. This ensures that pupils work at an appropriate level and make sound, and often good, progress in their learning. Where this is not the case, it is mostly because teachers do not have appropriate expectations and are inclined to set similar tasks for all abilities. These often perplex the least able and do not challenge the most able sufficiently. Consequently, pupils do not give of their best and make limited progress in their acquisition of new knowledge and skills. This was also an unsatisfactory element, but to a lesser extent, in otherwise successful lessons. Low expectations are also reflected in the marking of pupils' work which too often accepts sub-standard or incomplete tasks too readily and so indicates to pupils that this is acceptable. There were many examples of constructive marking, however, where teachers praised the efforts made and gave ideas for further improvement.
22. In a minority of lessons teaching is mundane and does too little to motivate and inspire pupils.

The curriculum

The curriculum, enriched through additional opportunities, is **good** overall. The school's accommodation and the range of resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is fully inclusive of all pupils and is well matched to their needs
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good and enables them to achieve well.
- Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities provide experiences that enrich the curriculum well.
- Although accommodation and resource provision is good overall, lack of space makes access to some computers difficult for larger groups.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is broad and well balanced. The school has continued to build on the strengths of the curriculum detailed in the last report and both the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now well embedded. It has adopted national schemes of work, adapted to meet the school's needs and also commercial schemes such as that supporting music. The curriculum map, regularly reviewed, reflects a broad and balanced curriculum organised in a two-year cycle to meet the needs of mixed aged classes. Both this and the schemes of work are reflected in teachers' medium- and short-term planning. Teachers exploit opportunities to make links between subjects but acknowledge that this could be explored further. Nevertheless, links, particularly with literacy, are frequently made. Poetry and descriptive writing often accompany artwork, some displays link art to science, such as that on '*Night and Day*', and writing for different audiences and purposes features in history workbooks.
24. The support given to pupils with SEN in very small groups includes them well in the core subjects of English and mathematics by ensuring that their work reflects that followed by the rest of the class. They have access to the same broad and balanced curriculum as other pupils. They are supported by teaching assistants, when available, achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Where they are not well supported, because there is no assistant available, these pupils often struggle with work that is too difficult for them and do not achieve as well as they might. Scrutiny of individual education plans shows that learning targets are appropriate and termly reviews also indicate that these pupils generally achieve well as their targets become more demanding over time.
25. The curriculum is enriched by a broad range of clubs run by teachers, parents and occasionally local sports clubs according to the season. They range from football, netball, cross-country and recorders to a French club for which a fee is charged. Clubs are generally well attended. Although there is no music specialist on the staff, the school does what it can to raise the profile of the subject through concerts and musical competitions with other schools in the immediate and wider area. The music curriculum was enhanced for some pupils when they took part in *Noyes Fludde* at the Royal Albert Hall and for all pupils when musicians from the local music service organised a music workshop in the school. There are opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments, with tuition provided by the West Berkshire Young Musicians Trust. The school organises many visits to places of interest and some of these, such as the annual field trip to Pembrokeshire or the sleep-over at school, are very popular. These events include activities that encourage both teamwork and opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility and new physical skills and talents. Strong links have been established with the local church and this is often visited to support learning in, for example, religious education. Pupils are included in other local events and celebrations, developing their sense of what it means to be part of a wider community. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum well. Puppeteers and storytellers visit the school. Strong links exist within the local federation of schools. Curriculum links have been forged, sports competitions are held and a display, to share pupils' work with a wider audience, is mounted at the annual agricultural show.
26. Accommodation is spacious with several spare rooms available for group work. Outdoor facilities are very good and are well exploited, for example when every class investigated aspects of the school grounds during a recent 'science week.' The ratio of computers to pupils is very good and far better than the national average, although currently it is not easy

for large groups to gain access for the teaching of skills. Resources are good in most subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Good care is taken of pupils and good account is taken of their views. **Satisfactory** procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for young children are good.
 - Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures.
 - The School Council plays an increasingly effective role in promoting pupils' ideas and opinions.
 - There is a particular concern about an aspect of health and safety.
 - The school does not make the best use of the information it has to support and guide pupils towards the next steps in their learning.
27. Children in the Reception class settle in quickly because of the good induction arrangements. The school makes good use of its formal and informal support networks to build a strong sense of community and security for all pupils. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school; they value the friendship of others and like doing *“work that is fun, playing football, netball, and going on the trips”*; which they judged as being *“really good”*. Parents are very happy with the quality of care their children receive.
28. Most arrangements to secure the safety and welfare of pupils work well, but there is an aspect of health and safety which requires the attention of the school governors. There are good procedures in place to assess risks attached to trips and visits out of school.
29. Pupils have a good insight into the principles of democracy. They elect school councillors, officers, set agendas, chair meetings and take minutes. Most importantly, they share in the sense of pride that comes from manipulating change for the better. Pupils develop a good sense of equality and justice in their dealings with the school and with each other, helping them to work and play together well.
30. Child protection procedures are good and well known amongst staff. They are likely to ensure that concerns are identified and brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities at an early stage. The school acts quickly in establishing facts and caring for those affected. The provision of first aid is good. Staff tend always to err on the side of caution by seeking specialist advice on any concern about a pupil's health and parents appreciate this.
31. Systematic assessment procedures help staff to track pupils' academic progress but the data is not used sufficiently well to set targets for improvement for all pupils. Pupils admit that *“sometimes the work we do is too easy, sometimes it is too hard, but mostly it matches what we can do”*. Not all pupils are not involved in setting their own targets and this limits their ability to know the next steps they should take in their learning. Those capable of higher attainment are sometimes given extra work of the same kind, rather than being guided into tasks aimed at helping them achieve the next level of knowledge, skills or understanding. However, the procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with Special educational needs are good and enable the school to identify at an early stage those pupils who need extra support.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Information to parents on general matters is **good**. The school makes **good** efforts to involve parents in its work. Links with other schools and the community are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information in general to parents has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- Teachers are approachable and accessible to parents.
- Very good links with the community enhance the curriculum and promote learning.
- Transfer arrangements to secondary school work well.
- Some parents are worried that the school does not do enough to promote itself.

Commentary

32. Parents are happier now, with what the school provides for their children, than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is because they are kept better informed and their views on school events and policies are more often sought and taken into account. Friendly staff pass on information, answer queries or deal with their concerns usually well before they escalate into problems. Effective liaison with parents, particularly those whose children who need extra help and guidance, is well established.
33. The website is establishing itself as a good vehicle for sharing key facts about the school and its methods. By showing examples of work from each year group, it enables parents to measure the progress pupils make as they move through the school. Newsletters are good because, along with the usual information about school events, they work to promote the value of lifelong learning. Good information is given on adult education courses held locally.
34. Parents react positively to the school's focus on sharing responsibility for children's education between home and school. Most give good support to the homework policy and consequently homework is used well to extend pupils' learning. Almost all take note of the regular warnings in newsletters on the importance of good attendance and punctuality. As a result, pupils seldom miss out on a day's schooling. A high percentage of parents attend consultation evenings to learn how their children are getting on. They are satisfied with the verbal feedback they receive. Written reports give parents a good indication of how well their children are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Their added comments show that parents appreciate this helpful style of reporting and are willing to work with the school.
35. Parents are highly skilled at fund raising. Through functions that foster family and community activities, they contributed a significant amount of money towards a garden room extension to the Reception class. Staff have successfully enlisted the support of local army personnel to help improve the grounds. A very attractive wildlife area is now taking shape. School trips add extra interest and enjoyment to lessons, some having come from parental links. Pupils spoke of their visits to the nearby Microsoft campus with great enthusiasm. Links with local schools are reciprocal and strong. They make a very effective contribution to the cultural development of pupils through the celebration of music and the arts. In addition, pupils are able to build good relationships with tutors, with pupils from other schools in the area and within the local authority, helping them transfer, with confidence, to the next stage of their education.
36. Despite its good work, some parents are a little concerned that the school does not do enough to promote its individual character. Inspectors agree as the school has much to celebrate. Their evidence supports the fact that, although the curriculum is good, the teaching of it is satisfactory and not always good enough to promote exciting learning and an exciting school. The school has put together a suitable plan of action to improve its image and to promote the good aspects of its work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall with **good** management of the school's finances. At the time of the last inspection, when the demands on schools were different, these areas were judged to be very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the further development of the school well expressed in a detailed and comprehensive improvement plan.
- The headteacher, who knows all the pupils very well, has established systems that monitor their personal development very effectively.
- The school thoroughly evaluates performance data from statutory and non-statutory tests.
- The headteacher has not made the rigorous and systematic monitoring of teaching, and its impact on learning, a sufficiently high priority.
- The day-to-day administration of the school and the school's budget, by the finance officer, is efficient.

Commentary

37. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the way the school is led and managed. Together with the rest of the school, it is slowly coming to terms with the untimely death of its Chair, two months ago. The new Chair has a strong sense of how he wishes the role of the governing body to develop to include a greater emphasis on its strategic role. He ensures that this is now a major item on the agenda for every full meeting. Governors believe that the school should do more to bring itself to the attention of its immediate and wider neighbourhood and are already considering how this might best be done. They talk knowledgeably about demographic changes in the population of the village and have made some projections on numbers over the next few years. Governors acknowledge that the headteacher devises the school development plan with the help of staff, but that they have an input through their committees. Governors are very supportive of the school and visit regularly under a '*governor of the month*' scheme. This enables them to ask the critical questions that help the school to improve its performance. Some help in school regularly and give generously a considerable amount of their own time to this, for example in helping with computers and in hearing pupils read.
38. The headteacher knows the pupils well and is actively involved in supporting their development, especially those who need extra support and guidance to improve their behaviour. She has a clear vision for the future development of the school, well expressed in the detailed improvement plan. It is a well-constructed agenda for improvement with a strong and appropriate focus on raising pupils' achievement. There are an ambitious number of objectives to be pursued in the short term.
39. There are established systems for the headteacher and co-ordinators to monitor teaching and these observations are linked to priorities identified, such as the introduction of guided reading throughout the school. The headteacher has relied mostly on observations linked to performance management, the feedback from co-ordinators and the outcomes of national tests to inform her of the quality of teaching overall. However, the rigorous and systematic monitoring of the effect that teaching has on learning does not receive enough attention from the headteacher and consequently there are still elements of unsatisfactory practice. Good and very good teaching does not occur consistently in all classes apart from the Foundation Stage and so the overall quality of teaching needs to improve further. Co-ordinators provide satisfactory support for staff and have received time out of the classroom to carry out their duties. Some have no clear idea on standards in their subject. Although co-ordinators occasionally monitor aspects of teaching, not all have received training in lesson observations that will enable them to offer advice that will help to improve teaching and learning in the longer term.
40. The school's work is soundly managed. It has looked carefully at performance data related to statutory and non-statutory tests and this has enabled senior staff to identify areas for improvement for whole groups and for individual pupils in the form of personal targets. There is a sound commitment to professional development. Staff attend courses to improve their performance, many of which are in their own time.

41. Although there is a good ratio of teaching staff to pupils, there has been insufficient thought given to the recruitment and deployment of support staff to meet the needs of the very youngest children, those in larger classes or where there are difficult pupils. Consequently, not all pupils in these classes get the degree of appropriate support that is necessary to ensure that they all make the progress of which they are capable.
42. The school budget is monitored well by the school's finance officer, working closely with the headteacher and governing body. The finance officer provides a very detailed quarterly report for governors which enables them to monitor spending effectively. As shown in the table below, the school is carrying forward a larger than average proportion of the school's budget to ensure that provision is maintained in the light of uncertainties about the numbers of pupils to be admitted in future years. Governors seek best value for the school in many areas. It compares the school with others to improve its performance, and pursues competitive quotes for major areas of work such as the extension to the Reception classroom. The school has worked hard to overcome such impediments to progress as the high number of pupils who join and leave at other than the normal times. Taking all appropriate factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	383,918
Total expenditure	302,042
Expenditure per pupil	3,432

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,812
Balance carried forward to the next	24,095

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Children make good progress in Reception and achieve well as the result of predominantly good teaching. Consequently, most are on target to achieve the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 and some will achieve beyond these.
44. There are nine children in the Foundation Stage, some of whom started school at the beginning of the current term whilst the remainder have been in school since September. There are also nine Year 1 pupils in the class. Many children enter school with below average levels of attainment; a number have speech problems and find it difficult to express themselves clearly. Two skilled classroom assistants work with children under a 'job share' arrangement, under the close direction of the class teacher, but are not deployed sufficiently well to develop children's understanding through play. There is too little time given to joint forward planning between members of staff, however, and instructions for activities tend to be given either just before, or during, sessions. The management of provision is good. The class teacher has managed to reconcile the needs of both year groups satisfactorily through thoughtful consideration of the demands of the Foundation Stage curriculum with that for pupils in Year 1. Very detailed records are kept of children's development and planning takes account of the children's widely varying learning needs. The staff in the Foundation Stage form good links with parents which significantly eases the important transition from home to school for these young children. An annexe for additional activities has been built recently and the outdoor area has been developed since the last inspection. There are plans for further improvement, but these have financial implications and have to be balanced against the needs of the school as a whole. The classroom is colourful, stimulating and provides many interesting displays to motivate children in their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures to introduce new children into school and these support their social and emotional development well.
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of their classroom and are trained to work co-operatively to maintain a tidy workspace.
- Occasionally learning for the youngest children is too closely directed and does not emanate sufficiently from their play, or give them opportunity to develop their initiative.

Commentary

45. Approximately half the children attend the village preschool prior to starting in the Reception class. Transition to the Reception class is very smooth and, as a result, children settle quickly and confidently into school. They enter school at the beginning of the day and are immediately involved in whatever activities are available to them. Relationships are good. Teaching is good and children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
46. The class teacher works closely with the classroom assistants to establish set routines for the children to follow. During discussion sessions the teacher encourages the children to 'pass on the smile' and introduce themselves and the person next to them to a fluffy dog named 'Pickle'. Puppets are occasionally used to engage pupils' interest and to help to overcome any shyness. Expectations of children's ability to develop independence are satisfactory but where learning is too closely directed they do not have enough opportunity to use their

initiative in making choices. However, great care is taken to ensure that children get used to sharing materials and taking turns with items of equipment such as the large-wheeled toys in the outside area. Warm relationships have been established and foster a comfortable environment that helps the children to work together happily. All are treated fairly and they are all treated with respect by adults.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Together with Year 1 pupils, the children are given good opportunity to match the sounds of letters to their names.
- Due to small numbers and a favourable adult to child ratio, children have chance to practise reading frequently.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and occasionally very good. Consequently pupils are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Some will achieve above these. The class teacher plans carefully and introduces new words and letters clearly.
48. There are opportunities for children to develop conversational language in the role-play area and as they co-operate together on activities. Adults engage the children in small groups to develop their language for learning, either formally, where they practise asking one another questions, or incidentally in connection with other activities such as painting or using constructional toys. Children enjoy listening to stories and joining in with recurring phrases such as that where Father Bear is trying to sleep. They also enjoy the important sounding technical language, for example in mathematics where they learn such terms as '*cuboid*' and '*cylinder*'. They quickly slip into the routine of following the teacher's lead as they learn letter sounds using a glove puppet named *Croaker*. This appeals to the children and there is much hilarity at his inability to pronounce certain letter combinations correctly. Children enjoy books. They talk about the pictures and some are beginning to read simple phrases and sentences correctly. Others, however, struggle with more simple words and find it difficult to apply their knowledge of sounds to their reading. Due to the number of adults available, children have regular and frequent opportunities to develop their understanding of books and to practise their early reading skills. There are good incidental opportunities for pupils to develop writing through, for example, the chance to create shopping lists in the greengrocer's shop. Most children are beginning to form identifiable letters and more able pupils create simple sentences, for example when they write a letter of apology from the *Big Bad Wolf* to the *Three Little Pigs*.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are examples of lively teaching that extend children's understanding of number well.
- Adults do not routinely challenge children's thinking through their questioning.

Commentary

49. Teaching is generally good and most children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. They match shapes when working with constructional toys and recognise similarities and differences between them. However, there are too few interventions

by staff to develop children's understanding widely in such activities with questions like 'Can you build a solid tower that is taller than the table/chair?' Consequently, the mathematical potential in aspects of children's play is not fully exploited. Children learn to recognise simple two- and three-dimensional shapes with help and some remember the names. Children can count to and from ten with help and enjoy the lively and imaginative approach of the classroom assistant working with them in the school hall. She introduces a variety of activities which sustain children's interest well and this has a positive effect on their motivation and learning. They are able to recognise numbers one to ten and can say which number follows, or comes before, a given number. Children can assemble a simple sequence of three numbers and can count an irregular arrangement of numbers between one and ten, in response to the number of times a support assistant bounces a large ball.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Displays around the classroom reflect a wide range of experiences in this area of learning.
- Good use is made of computers to extend children's knowledge and understanding of technology.

Commentary

50. Teaching is good and provides a stimulating range of experiences in this area. Wall displays are colourful and stimulating which encourage children to engage well with the environment in which they learn. Children work closely with those in Year 1 to appreciate a sense of the passing of time. They contribute portraits which they have drawn of themselves at school, to a large wall picture and compare this to photographs of the school and classes throughout the years. There is a 'feely box' through which children use their sense of touch to explore hidden materials; this elicits descriptive words such as 'smooth', 'rough' and 'slippery'. Children investigate *how to keep Teddy dry*, most effectively, by using different materials to cover a small shelter. They take part in this activity enthusiastically with the help of a support assistant who, through careful testing and questioning, encourages them to observe which of the materials let in water and which are resistant. They record their findings simply in pictorial form, again with the help of the support assistant. There is considerable excitement and amusement when they discuss what they have done; one child's comment, when considering a small pool of water beneath a paper towel covering, was 'I wouldn't like a house made of that!' Children use computers regularly, either independently or with the help of a support assistant, for more complex programs. They carry out simple functions on their own, such as selecting initial letters to complete words, using the 'mouse' or the keyboard, as appropriate.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are shown how to use tools through clear demonstrations.
- The outdoor area has been developed since the last inspection, but still does not provide facilities for children to explore activities freely, such as climbing and jumping.

Commentary

51. Teaching is sound and pupils are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Staff are careful to ensure that children hold pencils properly, use tools, such as scissors, efficiently and how to paint effectively. Children use these items with reasonable

control as a result. Good attention is paid to staying healthy, and hygiene is emphasised, when making jam tarts, for example.

52. The outside area has been improved since the last inspection and the Reception teacher has good plans to develop the area further, when this can be reconciled with the needs of the school as a whole. Children visit the school hall regularly for music, movement and physical education lessons. They also use a designated climbing frame during break and lunchtimes, but have no facilities to develop freely skills such as climbing, jumping or rolling. This inhibits the development of these aspects of their physical growth and denies them opportunities to make choices about the activities in which they engage. Children play on large wheeled toys outside, riding at speed but with good co-ordination thereby successfully meeting the needs of all children, but particularly those of the more energetic boys, who are in the majority. Vigilance of an adult, combined with sensitive intervention, ensures that all children are included well and that they learn to share and take turns.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to paint, stick, draw and to work with different materials.
- Occasionally children's work is too closely controlled.

Commentary

53. Teaching is satisfactory and children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Some will achieve beyond these. Children thoroughly enjoyed painting in the style of L S Lowry to create a pale background with small figures. They make figures out of pipe cleaners, with the help of an adult, and add these to a scenario of buildings created from cardboard boxes. There was good evidence of children using a variety of media to make collages of a scarecrow, for example, and various pictures. Where learning is too closely controlled, children do not have sufficient opportunity to explore freely the effects of mixing colours or to experiment in creating different textures. They also enjoy the sounds of musical instruments in the school hall, where they simulate a walk through a strange wood, telling the story by using untuned instruments such as triangles, drums and castanets. They are beginning to build up a repertoire of songs and from memory sing such counting rhymes as *'Alice the camel has three humps'*, with gusto. The role-play corner offers an opportunity for children to play out real and imaginary situations. It is currently a greengrocer's shop which also provides well for children's awareness of numbers with weighing and pricing of produce.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are above average by Year 6.
- Pupils have good opportunities to read and write in connection with other subjects.
- Some pupils use expressive language to good effect in their writing.
- There are examples of high expectations and challenging work in Years 1 and 2.
- Some teaching in Years 3 to 6 does not stimulate, motivate or challenge pupils sufficiently.
- Standards of handwriting and spelling are lower than they should be for a significant minority of pupils.
- Teachers' marking occasionally accepts poorly presented or incomplete work too readily.

- The subject co-ordinator has successfully introduced and monitored guided reading and plenary sessions, across the school but has no clear view on standards in all classes.

Commentary

54. Standards in English are average by Year 2 and Year 6, with reading slightly above average for the older of the two groups. At the time of the last inspection standards were well above average. Standards fluctuate considerably from one year to the next according to the differing abilities of the small numbers of pupils in each age group, the above average proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal times - with an increasing number leaving for the independent sector - and the numbers of children in each year group with Special educational needs. This variation is reflected in national test results over the past few years. The trends in test results for seven- and 11-year-olds since 1999 have been broadly in line with all schools nationally. National comparative data for 2003 shows that seven-year-olds achieved average results in reading and above average in writing. This represents good progress from the time they entered school, when attainment was below that normally found. Test results for 11-year-olds were very high in English and in the top five per cent of all schools.
55. In all year groups and classes there is a wide span of ability. A more able Year 5 pupil, for instance, wrote very expressively, in a joined, fluent hand incorporating many elements of punctuation and organising the work confidently into paragraphs. This superseded the efforts of most pupils in Year 6. The inspection found that pupils with Special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils generally achieve well. This is particularly so for pupils with Special educational needs where they are supported or taught in small groups within or outside the classroom. Occasionally, in full class lessons where they are not supported, they struggle with exercises set for the rest of the class, lose interest and do not appear to value their own efforts. They produce work carelessly or leave it unfinished and do not achieve as well as they should. For example, there is little value in teaching suffixes and prefixes to pupils who are unsure where to place a full stop or a capital letter. Similarly, more able pupils do not always receive work that challenges them sufficiently. They complain that it is too easy and finish the main part of the task quickly, occupying the remainder of the lesson with work that demands too little of them. This has a negative effect on their achievement. There seems no great difference between the achievement of boys and girls. The school has considered this carefully over time, as boys have significantly outnumbered girls in most classes. Appropriate steps have been taken to reconcile any differences.
56. Overall standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. The majority of pupils speak confidently and make themselves understood, but a small number of younger pupils are constrained by a limited vocabulary. Consequently, both their understanding and their ability to communicate effectively are hampered. Staff work hard to help pupils to extend their vocabulary by encouraging pupils to talk to one another and by going over difficult words or explaining specialist terms in subjects such as science and mathematics.
57. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in reading and a minority achieve well. Pupils' enjoyment of books develops commensurately with their skills in reading. Standards are average by Year 2 and slightly above average by Year 6. Pupils begin by working their way through a published scheme and graduate to selecting from a wide range of reading books as they become more fluent. Older pupils begin to evaluate works and authors critically. For example, when asked what she liked about her favourite author – Jacqueline Wilson – one pupil responded '*...she deals with many of the problems that I am likely to meet as a teenager...she inspires me!*' There are good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group and silent reading. Guided reading sessions have been introduced and are having a positive impact on pupils' concentration. All younger pupils are encouraged to read with parents and carers at home and this helps them to move forward well. Older pupils use reference books in connection with subjects such as history, geography and religious education.

58. Achievement in writing is satisfactory and in Year 1 it is good, as the result of consistently good teaching. From an early stage there is an appropriate balance of writing exercises and opportunities to write for a range of purposes and in connection with different subjects. However, the attention that is given to handwriting and spelling exercises has not had a sufficient impact on pupils' general writing and for a significant minority these areas remain problematic. The school attributes this to pupils who have joined from other schools, but it also applies to a minority who have only attended this school. The use that pupils make of adventurous and colourful language to enliven writing is a good feature of the work produced; for example, to consolidate work on adjectives a Year 3 pupil wrote a story - *The Spooky Wood* – which incorporated such phrases as '*...she ran to her right and bumped into a witch – a tall, ugly witch with green, beady eyes!*' Again in Year 5 descriptions such as '*...they looked up at the tunnel exit. It was the blackest, barest night anyone ever saw*' grips the attention of the reader.
59. Teaching ranged in quality from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory overall. In the Year 1 and Reception class teaching was good but there was unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is at its best, as in Years 1 and 2, teachers introduce a good, brisk pace to lessons; learning proceeds with a sense of urgency as a result, with tasks organised to challenge appropriately pupils of all abilities. Teachers in all classes question pupils well with good open-ended questions, which make pupils think hard about their responses. This reflects well the work the school has done to improve this element of teaching. Teachers use a variety of methods and strategies to secure and maintain the attention of pupils. For example, the use of a hand puppet in Year 1 captivated the interest of pupils and motivated them well to practise letter sounds. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, work is not matched clearly to different ability groups, which means that more able pupils finish the tasks too quickly and pupils of lower ability work with too little understanding, when they are not supported, and do not achieve as well as they should. This was also apparent in examples of pupils' work in books over recent months. In a very small minority of lessons teaching is dull and does not motivate pupils sufficiently. Pupils are lethargic in their responses and do not make the progress of which they are capable. It is evident from pupils' past work that teachers mark books regularly and often provide useful feedback to pupils about how they might improve their work. For example, the class teacher encourages a Year 6 pupil with: '*...well done... make use of simile and metaphor to bring your story alive*'. In another class the teacher has evidently assessed a Year 4 pupil's understanding and includes the comment '*...I think we need to look at adjectives again*'. Too frequently, however, teachers in Years 2 to 6 do not comment on untidy or unfinished work. This reflects low expectations and gives pupils a false idea of what is acceptable.
60. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory support. She has successfully introduced and monitored guided reading throughout the school and plans to address writing as her next priority. She has not examined samples of pupils' work closely enough and so has no clear view on standards in all classes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. A strong feature is the use that pupils make of their literacy skills in subjects such as geography, history and religious education. At the moment these opportunities to link subjects together are incidental and are not structured into the medium-term planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Year 2.
- All teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy and the associated planning.

- The quality of teaching is good in most classes.
- Good assessment procedures are in place throughout the school.
- Individual targets are set that ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve,
- Planning does not always match the needs of the more able pupils.
- Expectations of presentation are too low for the oldest pupils in the school particularly.
- ICT is not fully used to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

62. Inspection evidence indicates that standards currently in Year 2 are above average and that pupils have achieved well. Standards in Year 6 are average. This is because similar work is set for the average and above pupils, there has been a larger than average turnover of pupils and because of the large percentage of pupils with Special educational needs. Since this group entered the junior classes they have also experienced several changes of teacher, especially when they were in Years 3 and 4. Standards were well above average at the time of the last inspection. The results of national tests in 2003 indicated that pupils achieved standards above the national average in Year 2 and similar to those expected in similar schools. In Year 6 standards were well above average and above those expected in similar schools.
63. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded in the school and since September the school has also started to use the unit plans associated with the strategy. These support the teachers very well, especially when they adapt them to take account of the large range of both age and ability in each class. This is more challenging for teachers in Years 3 to 6 where classes are larger, the behaviour of a small minority places demands on the teacher's time and less teaching assistant support is available.
64. Teaching observed was good in all classes, although scrutiny of work indicates that work is not always planned to take account of the different ages and abilities of the pupils. However, pupils with Special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. In a successful lesson in Years 3 and 4 the teacher explained the task clearly, examples were modelled well and work was clearly differentiated. The lesson concluded with a question and answer session that informed the teacher that most pupils had made good progress and achieved well. This pattern was repeated in most lessons observed, although teachers sometimes leave insufficient time to fully exploit pupils' understanding at the end of the lesson. Regular written assessments are built into the planning and outcomes are reflected in individual targets set in discussions between teachers and pupils. These targets would be more effective if teachers referred to them when books are marked. Also expectations with regard to presentation are sometimes too low, especially in Years 5 and 6. Although pupils are encouraged to *'jot down their thinking,'* which is good, too often work is poorly set out and teachers accept scribbling without comment.
65. Recently the school has identified that pupils need to improve their ability to solve problems. Consequently, teachers have given pupils more opportunities to apply the skills they are taught, which is good. The school now needs to improve resource provision for ICT so that computers can be used more effectively to not only consolidate pupils' understanding, as observed in a Year 1 lesson on shape, but also to present problems for pupils to solve in a variety of situations and contexts. The school plans to improve the use of ICT to support learning in mathematics.

Numeracy across the curriculum

66. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities for using their mathematical skills. For example, they measure and weigh in connection with science experiments and design and technology and create pictograms and bar charts to show the incidence of different vehicles using the village in a local geographical study.

SCIENCE

Provision is **satisfactory**. Achievement is **satisfactory** overall and currently pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards that are **average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Commercial and national schemes support teachers in their planning well.
- Marking in Years 3/4 supports learning very well.
- The school has used the school environment very well to support learning in science.
- Insufficient account is taken of the age and ability of the pupils when work is set.
- As they get older pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply the skills they have been taught.

Commentary

67. In the national tests in 2003 standards at the end of Year 2 were above the national average and well above at the end of Year 6 when compared to schools both nationally and to similar schools. These standards are not reflected in current work, although a significant minority of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are achieving standards above average. In Year 6 a large percentage of pupils have joined the school since Year 2. Also there are several pupils who require additional support with their learning and others who find it difficult to concentrate for long periods.
68. Teachers are well supported in their planning by the national scheme and a commercial scheme, both introduced by the co-ordinator to help ensure continuity and progression. Consequently, both the range and content of the work are appropriate. However, both lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall but good in Years 3/4. Where it is successful, coverage is very good and marking informs learning very well with comments such as *'good – do you think that at the end they will be the same temperature – why?'* It is less successful where the pace of the lesson is too slow, pupils are over directed with little opportunity to apply the skills they have learned and expectations with regard to presentation are too low. In all classes, work is occasionally not matched to the ability of the pupils and this means that some are not challenged sufficiently and others need additional support. This support is not always available to the larger classes where the behavioural needs of some pupils, are most challenging, because the classroom assistants are deployed elsewhere.
69. The school has extensive grounds that offer rich opportunities for investigations recently exploited well by all classes with questions asked such as *'do daisies prefer short grass and which pair of tights would be best to plant pondweed in?'* The range of very good open-ended investigations set up as a result did give pupils plenty of opportunities to question and attempt to find the answers by applying well the skills they had been taught.
70. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall and the co-ordinator has been instrumental in introducing the new schemes and in using ICT to support learning. For example, she planned to use a sound sensor linked to a computer as the pupils investigated the properties of insulation materials. However, although books are scrutinised periodically, lessons are not observed systematically and consequently the impact on the overall quality of teaching is limited.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very well resourced with computers that are placed mostly in classes and in a corridor.
- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and leads the subject well.
- The school has a very good website that promotes all that goes on in the school well.
- ICT is not used well enough to support learning across the curriculum.
- The teaching of skills to large groups is restricted because of limited access to computers.

Commentary

71. Two lesson observations, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards overall are **satisfactory** and that all statutory requirements are met. However, inspection evidence indicates that the school's current focus on using ICT to support learning across the curriculum and the enthusiasm, expertise and vision of the co-ordinator are beginning to have a positive impact on standards attained. The school is in a strong position to raise standards further.
72. Teaching observed was satisfactory. One lesson in Years 3/4 was made more difficult because it was not possible for all pupils to gain access to the bank of computers in the neighbouring corridor and half the class were given a related activity whilst they were waiting to undertake the ICT task set. This proved frustrating for some and time restrictions meant that others would have to wait until later in the week to complete the task. There are currently no plans to review the location and availability to larger groups of the generous resources available (including laptops) in the school as a whole. In the other satisfactory lesson observed in Year 2, pupils were taught to input data into a database. This small class was very well supported by both the teacher and a very well-informed teaching assistant. However, the opportunity to challenge and further extend the more able pupils was not exploited.
73. A very good website promotes and informs a wider audience of all that goes on in the school. It is regularly updated and gives audience and acknowledgement to pupils' work, thereby impacting positively on their attitudes. One pupil in Year 2 was keen to place work recently completed on the site for others to see.
74. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed to raising the profile of ICT throughout the school by the further training of teachers, obtaining an interactive whiteboard for every class and improving the reliability of existing systems. There is a very good ratio of pupils to computers, but many of the machines are old. The school is nevertheless very well placed to raise standards further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. The current school improvement plan places the use of ICT to promote learning across the curriculum as a high priority and this is already having a positive impact on learning. In Year 1, pupils used a program to consolidate their learning on shape; in Year 2 cross-curricular links with geography were explored as pupils were asked to look at graphs created to suggest how the information gained might help the environment and in Years 5/6 pupils used a sensor to support a science investigation into the use of insulators.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history.

76. There were too few lessons observed for a judgement to be made on provision in either subject. Only one geography lesson was seen and none were seen in history. From

examination of pupils' past work standards are **average** by Year 2 and Year 6 as they were at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of literacy skills in connection with both subjects.
 - Links to other subjects provide greater relevance to learning as a whole.
 - Effective use of roleplay, practical activities and visits to stimulate the interest of pupils in certain topics.
 - Careless work is accepted too readily in some classes.
77. Pupils make simple maps of the local area in **geography** at Year 2 using a grid on which they identify main streets and buildings in the village. There are good links made with mathematics here as pupils plot the location of main features using two-figure co-ordinates as grid references. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' thinking on the environment is engaged well. For example, they are required to list the advantages and disadvantages of living close to a motorway which they do thoughtfully. Also, they investigate the incidence of litter around the school by weighing the litter they collect over a week. This practical activity links well with mathematics and adds a more meaningful dimension to the topic. Pupils, in their writing, observe that most litter accumulates in the bushes around the school field. They are imaginative in their solutions; for example, one pupil suggests '*...putting an adult in the bushes*' to which the class teacher responds '*an interesting thought...do you think there are enough teachers for this?*' Although the work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6, in the one lesson observed during inspection, was not of a satisfactory standard, evidence of past work indicates that this is not typical. The work on the main rivers of Britain, for example, and that on the water cycle were completed to an average standard.
78. In **history**, pupils in Year 1 use photographs with help to compare aspects of the school as it was in the past to how it is today. The idea of making comparisons is extended as they progress to Year 2 where pupils sort articles which we have today from those in the past, as shown on a photocopied sheet. Pupils also draw pictures of Tudor, Victorian and modern houses, although the distinctions are not particularly clear. Pupils enjoy studying the Ancient Egyptians in Years 3 and 4 and remember enthusiastically salient points on mummification when it arises in a literacy lesson. Pupils know that the body is wrapped in cloth and some relate with morbid fascination that the brain is removed through the nose using a brass hook. They link this work to science by attempting to *mummify* an apple, experimenting to find which conditions and materials preserve the apple best. A digital camera is used to record the process on a computer. The whole topic has evidently captured the interest of many pupils and in discussion they demonstrate that they have remembered much of what has been taught. In Years 5 and 6, role-play in Victorian costume is used well to generate interest in aspects of Victorian schooling and to bring a realistic dimension to the topic. Pupils use their writing skills well to support their learning in the topic based on Victorians. For example, several wrote sensitively and with empathy from the point of view of a child working down a coal mine. Pupils make effective use of ICT when they research the topic using the Internet. Here again, there were good links with another subject where pupils moved expressively to Irish music in a physical education lesson, when the theme was the potato famine in Ireland.
79. Although insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on teaching overall or the quality of pupils' learning, examination of pupils' past work shows that some pupils present their work carelessly but teachers do not comment in their marking. The message that this gives to pupils is that sub-standard work is acceptable. Consequently, they are not motivated to improve. On other occasions teachers mark effectively, praising that which is done well and suggesting further improvements.

Religious education

There was only one lesson observed which is insufficient on which to judge provision in the subject

or the quality of teaching and learning across the school. On examination of pupils' past work, including that displayed around the school, from the one lesson observed and incidental discussion with pupils, standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with targets identified in the Locally-Agreed Syllabus as they were previously.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good range of artefacts and visits to the local church to enliven teaching.
 - Good use of literacy skills.
 - Older pupils lack motivation and enthusiasm for the subject.
 - Incomplete work is occasionally accepted without comment.
80. The curriculum is based broadly on the Locally Agreed Syllabus for the subject. There is a sound link with literacy as pupils recount stories from the Bible – such as *The Parable of the Lost Sheep* – in Year 2. They write about celebrations with a religious connection such as harvest festival and Thanksgiving Day in the United States, relating this effectively to things for which they should be grateful in their own lives, such as their families and friends. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils consider other religions such as Judaism. The fact that aspects of this particular topic are covered twice within the four years that pupils are in Key Stage 2 may partly account for the apparent indifference in Years 5 and 6 that was apparent in the one lesson seen; this, despite the teacher's attempt to generate interest by introducing one of the good artefacts available - a Seder plate - in connection with the Jewish Passover.
81. Analysis of past work shows the quality of teachers' marking to be variable. There are many examples of helpful and encouraging comments, but also occasions where pupils are not challenged to complete their work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were observed in **music, art and design** or **design and technology** so no judgement can be made on provision throughout the school or on the quality of teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use a wide variety of materials, media and techniques in art and design to produce work of high quality.
 - Pupils enjoy a good range of extra-curricular experiences in music.
82. Scrutiny of pupils' past work, displays, photographic evidence of art and design work recently completed, planning and discussion with pupils indicate that standards in art and design are above those expected nationally and standards in design and technology and music are average. This is similar to the position at the time of the previous inspection.
83. Singing in assembly was satisfactory but lacked vitality and in the short hymn practice observed the pupils were not encouraged to improve the quality of their singing, giving little purpose to the exercise. However, there is a good range of additional musical experiences to engage and motivate pupils. For example, pupils regularly take part in concerts and festivals, occasionally with other schools. Some have also have been selected to perform in particular productions such as *Noye's Fludde*. Teachers' planning in design and technology is supported by national schemes of work. Items on display reflected satisfactory work overall although good standards were attained in the Year 3/4 class where pupils had designed and made pop-up toys. Pupils interviewed understood the process of designing, making, reviewing and improving an item which they were making.
84. Work in art and design gives pupils the opportunity to explore a full range of techniques and media. Teachers value their work, and display it to good effect. *Van Gogh, L S Lowry, Morris and Matisse* are just four of the artists studied, with pupils producing work in a related style.

Teachers explore cross-curricular links very well, often accompanying pictures, prints and models with poetry or other writing that complements the artwork and gives added value to the pupils' efforts.

85. Resources for art and design are good; they are satisfactory in music and design technology.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are enthusiastic.
- Teaching does not always encourage pupils to make the maximum use of time and the facilities available.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities including after-school clubs and residential visits for older pupils.
- Parents make a significant contribution to extra-curricular activities.
- Good range of resources.

Commentary

86. Although not all year groups and aspects of the subject were seen, standards in dance by Year 6 and gymnastics by Year 2 are average and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

87. Pupils are clearly keen on the subject and most take part enthusiastically. Those in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory use of the good large apparatus available to develop their climbing, balancing, jumping and rolling skills. These they perform with sound control and satisfactory co-ordination. In the one full lesson observed for these age groups the teacher provided opportunity for pupils to develop their movements and to demonstrate to others in order to refine their performance. However, time was wasted as pupils lined up to take their turns on pieces of equipment. In a class of this small size and with a more thoughtful deployment of resources, all pupils could have been more active throughout. In the Years 5 and 6 dance lesson pupils moved expressively to taped music as they simulated starving peasants in the time of the Irish potato famine and later moved with greater alacrity, practising steps for an Irish dance which they had learnt previously.

88. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size including a residential educational visit to South Wales for the older pupils, where they take part in activities such as climbing and abseiling. Parents make a valuable contribution to extra-curricular clubs, such as netball and cross country running. They arrange and supervise inter-school competitions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Too few sessions of sufficient length were observed to enable a judgement on provision to be made. However, standards are similar to those found in most schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is planned into the curriculum.
- The school uses specialists when appropriate.

Commentary

89. The arrangements for personal, social and health education (PSHE) including drugs

education, are good. The programme of work is taught partly through other subjects, and specialists are brought in to assist class teachers when appropriate. The arrangements for pupils to discuss areas of mutual concern or topical matters such as stereotyping have been developed well since the last inspection and *'circle time'* now takes place regularly in all classes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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