

INSPECTION REPORT

STUKELEY MEADOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110772

Headteacher: Phillip Leverett

Lead inspector: Dennis Maxwell

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th September 2003

Inspection number: 260683

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	387
School address:	Wertheim Way Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon Cambs.
Postcode:	PE29 6UH
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Tina Henson
Date of previous inspection:	5 th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stukeley Meadows Primary School was built ten years ago and provides education for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. It serves the local community and the socio-economic circumstances of the families are rather more favourable than usual. Few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds but the proportion is a bit higher than in most schools. The pupils' standard of attainment on entry is broadly average and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Fewer pupils than usual have special educational needs and there are more pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need than average. The turnover of pupils is also higher than average. The school gained a Healthy Schools award in 1998 and was awarded the Investors in People award in 2003. In addition it is recognised as a DfES Training School, is a Partnership promotion School and provides School Leadership in ICT.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is successful and effective in providing a good quality of education. Good teaching leads to above average standards by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. The head-teacher and deputy provide good leadership, expressed through their strong partnership. Teaching is good and all members of staff share a common purpose that includes providing a rich curriculum. The governing body provides very good strategic direction which has resulted in many long-term improvements. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good and standards are above average by Year 6, notably in English, science and ICT.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning that are encouraged by the very good relationships through the school. Most pupils have good self-discipline and enjoy taking responsibility.
- Teaching is good, notably in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 – 6, where pupils learn well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good so that they make good progress in lessons. Members of staff provide good care for all pupils.
- The leadership and management by the head teacher and senior staff are good, with several very good management features, such as the self-evaluation which promotes high standards.
- The school should build on its recent self-evaluation to implement planned improvements to the outside environment, make further helpful links between subjects, provide more creative and imaginative experiences and encourage pupils to explain and reason more.

The school has improved its effectiveness since the last inspection by gaining recognition as a Training School for ICT and forming a fruitful partnership with a local training institution. Governors have used funding wisely to enhance learning facilities. The school has addressed the issues raised during the last inspection appropriately. The whole staff works very well together and is committed to giving pupils worthwhile and challenging experiences so that standards have improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	C	C
mathematics	C	B	C	C
science	C	C	C	C

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall through the school from Year 1 to Year 6. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The great majority of children is likely to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils achieve as expected in Years 1 - 2 and standards are broadly average by Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 – 6 because pupils are challenged through effective teaching. Pupils have gained above average skills and understanding in English, science and ICT through the impact of good teaching. Standards in mathematics are average by Year 6. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate good understanding that exceeds the expectation. There is a higher than usual turnover of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual time, which restricts the pace of achievement. At times, pupils discussing their work in adjacent bays makes it difficult for some pupils to hear their own teacher.

Pupils' personal development is good. This reflects the happy and very good relationships in the school. In reception, children's interest in activities and their behaviour are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are good. Most pupils work hard and try to do their best, although several pupils were seen to be tired at the start of the school day. This affects their learning. Pupils have a very well developed moral and social understanding which is shown in how they work and play together. The school council provides a good way for pupils to accept responsibility. Pupils are very punctual in getting to school. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good overall, with strengths in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 – 6 where learning is good. The few pupils who find concentration and learning difficult at times are usually given good, focused support. Teachers usually plan lessons well and tasks are often adapted well for differing groups of pupils. Teachers' questioning style often prompts pupils to think about their answers but more attention could be given to encouraging pupils to reason and explain. The partnership with a training institution enhances teaching and learning. Support for children with learning difficulties is very good and the work of the teaching assistants and learning support assistants is particularly effective.

All subjects receive proper attention and teachers provide several good focused activities such as an Egyptian or Mexican Week. These enhance pupils' learning considerably although the school is still at an early stage generally of making productive links between subjects. The skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are applied well in other subjects. All members of staff help to create a positive ethos where all children are given good equal care and consideration. The good partnership with parents and the community is shown by the strength of agreement in the parents' questionnaire.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good, with several very good features. The head teacher and deputy give good leadership for the direction of the school by setting clear expectations. They have put many of the necessary conditions for effective learning in place, although these have yet to have a clear impact on improving standards. The headteacher has established several very good management procedures. A very thorough school self-evaluation has resulted in a perceptive understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The governors give very good strategic direction for school improvements and focus financial decisions towards raising standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The great majority of parents expressed support for the school and agreement with the points raised in the questionnaire. Many children spoke warmly to the inspectors about their teacher, friends and the school, often with a sense of pride and pleasure.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- build on the outcomes of recent school evaluation to improve the effectiveness of whole school curriculum planning, provide more productive links between subjects, and provide for more creative and imaginative experiences.
- Make better use of the outside environment, including ensuring that planned improvements to the outside environment for children in the Foundation Stage are seen through to completion.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in the work seen during the inspection are broadly average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 – 2. Achievement is good in Years 3 – 6 and there is evidence of better progress and achievement in English, science and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are above average in English, science and ICT.
- Pupils achieve well in English compared with pupils in similar schools.
- Pupils' writing skills are not as strong as other skills in English.
- The higher attaining pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills.
- Almost all pupils reach the expected levels in science.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (29.5)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (27.8)	26.7 (26.6)
science	28.6 (28.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Standards in English, mathematics and science in the national tests of 2002 were broadly in line with the national averages. The numbers of pupils gaining Level 5 in each subject was close to the national average. The unconfirmed results for 2003 indicate a good increase in the percentage of pupils gaining level 4 or above in English and science. The improving trend in standards over the past few years has been broadly in line with the national trend. At Year 2 pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics in 2003 was a little above the national average.
2. In the reception classes, the attainment of the 35 children on roll at the time of the inspection is average overall. Most are likely to reach the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Although a significant number of children have good speaking skills and a good knowledge and understanding of the world, there are also a few children who have learning difficulties and lack early communication skills.
3. Standards in the work seen by Year 2 during the inspection are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve as expected in relation to their abilities from when they enter Year 1. It was noted that the listening skills of the youngest children in Reception are under-developed as they enter school and teachers of pupils in Years 1 - 2 understand this and generally give a good emphasis to speaking and listening skills and to developing a good vocabulary. Class discussions, and question and answer sessions, are sometimes affected by the noise of discussion from adjacent class bays so that pupils' learning is reduced. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with good understanding of the text by Year 2. The very good support for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to make good progress against their targets. The focused work taking place in literacy support groups is effective in building pupils' reading and literacy skills so that their achievement is more secure and confident. Standards in the foundation subjects are average by Year 2 and pupils achieve in them as expected.

4. Standards in the work seen by Year 6 in English, science and in ICT are above average, indicating good achievement from Year 2 through the impact of good teaching. The subject leaders of these subjects provide good leadership which, combined with the whole school focus on English and ICT, is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the consultations and planning related to the status of School Leadership in ICT is having a marked effect across the school on teachers' confidence and skills in using ICT within their teaching. Standards in mathematics and the foundation subjects are average overall by Year 6 and pupils achieve in them as expected. Pupils' previous work, from the last school year, indicates at least satisfactory progress year by year through the school. There are several examples of good quality work by the higher attaining pupils, for example in history, geography and design and technology, which are often related to specific focused activities where a few days were given to concentrating on a theme.

5. There is no significant difference in the achievements of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. All pupils are given the same opportunity to succeed. The small number of pupils new to the school who have very little English, receive appropriate support whilst their needs are assessed. Where possible the pupils are taught initially in their home language, and in some cases with parental support.

6. A good proportion of the pupils identified as having special educational needs are having difficulties with speech and learning, with several others having some behavioural and other related difficulties. However, as a result of the very good provision made for them within the school, they achieve as well as they are able.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is very good so that school and lessons begin promptly. Overall, provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of behaviour and fosters very good relationships. All pupils are valued equally, regardless of their race, gender, background or ability.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to work together; they are very co-operative when working in groups or pairs.
- Pupils show respect to staff and each other, are willing to take on responsibilities and use their initiative.
- Attendance is recorded as lower than at the time of the previous inspection, but the school follows up absences meticulously.
- Pupils' moral and social development are very good, supported by high expectations.

Commentary

7. Pupils are eager to learn and most are attentive in lessons, although some find it hard to concentrate, for example when they are distracted by discussion from the adjacent class or they do not yet have the necessary listening skills. Pupils know their class behaviour codes which they help to draw up and most behave well. Most pupils are happy and want to come to school. More teaching assistants have been employed since the last inspection to support pupils with behaviour problems, highlighted as an issue in the last report, and they are effective in improving behaviour. Teachers and their assistants work very closely together to minimise any disruption and consequently pupils' learning is no longer adversely affected. There were no exclusions during the last year.

8. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teachers and other children. The school fosters a spirit of co-operation when working together amongst all groups of pupils and many opportunities were seen during the inspection. In a Year 3 physical education lesson the teacher

encouraged good partnership by giving rewards. Pupils know they are expected to show initiative and take on responsibility and readily do so. Although pupils and parents admit there are a few incidents of teasing and hitting, nearly all are very confident that any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. Bullying and its consequences are discussed regularly in circle time and in assemblies so that pupils are aware that this is not tolerated. Kindness and thoughtfulness to others is a regular theme and during the inspection an excellent assembly for Years 1 - 2 was held on the importance of considering the feelings of those pupils new to the school. The teacher gave a lively and charismatic performance of mind reading with volunteer pupils. He held them all spellbound as he comically misread their minds and rewarded each participant with an orange. His final flourish was to reward the last pupil with a potato when he ran out of oranges, but proceeded to cut this in half to reveal a jewel inside. This magic was used to emphasise the important message that people often have hidden depths and it takes time and effort to get to know people as they really are.

9. Pupils with special educational needs have a very positive attitude to learning. They appreciate the skilled support they receive during lessons and respond positively to it. They are enabled to participate fully in all lessons and activities and this has a positive effect upon their personal development.

10. Attendance is satisfactory and is in line with the national average. There are two main reasons for the decline in recorded attendance since the last inspection. The school now applies much stricter adherence to register codes so that the figures are a truer reflection of actual attendance. Also holidays in term time and holiday absence beyond two weeks is recorded as unauthorised absence. The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer and the families of a few pupils with poor attendance. This approach has been very successful in substantially raising individual attendance and achievement for the pupils involved.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Overall, provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** and is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

11. Provision for **spiritual development** is **satisfactory**. Assemblies provide an act of collective worship although on occasions they do not include a prayer. During an assembly the teacher demonstrated well through role play that people are not always what they may seem on the outside, - they can have hidden treasures on the inside so it is worth getting to know them. This was linked to a prayer based on considering the feelings of others.

12. Provision for **moral development** is **very good**. The school contributes well to the moral development of pupils. Adults set high expectations and provide very good role models against which to judge values and attitudes. Pupils are well behaved and have a very good understanding of the school's 'Golden Rules', which are fairly and consistently applied. Pupils gain an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves through support of charities.

13. Provision for **social development** is **very good**. The school promotes pupils' social development well through providing many opportunities for pupils to work independently and in groups, to contribute to the School Council and to be members of the lunchtime leaders. Annual residential visits to the Kingswood Centre add greatly to pupils' social development as well as their geographical and scientific knowledge and understanding.

14. Provision for **cultural development** is **satisfactory**. The pupils' work in geography, history and religious education enhances their knowledge of their own culture and backgrounds effectively by such visits as that to the Fitzwilliam museum. Pupils in Year 6 take a river walk to Godmanchester to gain first-hand experience related to their project. The school welcomes visitors of other faiths as well as members of the Christian churches, which together give satisfactory attention to developing the pupils' multi-cultural understanding.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.3
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.3
National data:	0.5

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

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 – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
184
9
5
3
4
2
5
3
1
1
166

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	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 quality of education overall. Teaching is good, notably in Reception and Years 3 – 6. The school provides good opportunities for enrichment through visits and special events such as a Mexican week. Members of staff provide a good level of care and welfare that has a positive impact on pupils' readiness to learn. In addition there are several very good features involving partnerships with other schools and colleges which help to enrich pupils' learning and this is beginning to show in improved standards.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good across the school as a whole and promotes good learning. Teachers generally give good attention to a range of basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, across subjects. They also make a good choice of tasks to provide good quality learning experiences for the pupils. Teaching is good in Reception, satisfactory in Years 1 – 2 and good overall in Years 3 – 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in reception is good because children are provided with an abundance of opportunities to work and play and they achieve well as a result.
- There are excellent relationships in the Foundation Stage between the adults and children.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 - 6 because teachers often challenge the pupils well.

- Whole school assessment is effective in tracking pupils' progress and setting clear targets.
- Work as a Training School in ICT has a marked effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is good through the school.
- The quality of assessment comment varies and is not always focused on areas to improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2(4%)	6 (11 %)	24 (45 %)	20 (38 %)	1 (2 %)	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.

15. All teachers create a good working atmosphere and generally hold pupils' attention and interest well. They plan carefully, benefiting from shared planning arrangements, to provide well-chosen activities that generally address the learning needs of all groups of pupils. The teaching of English and mathematics is good through the school, having been a whole school focus for development. The skills of literacy are taught well. The teaching of numeracy receives careful attention although at times there is insufficient emphasis on encouraging pupils' confident fluency with number. The skills of literacy and numeracy are generally applied well in other subjects and pupils apply their ICT skills well in several well-planned lessons.

16. The teaching in nearly two thirds of lessons observed was good or better. Lessons in science, for example, involve a good balance of discussion, teacher explanation and pupil investigation. The pattern of teaching is not as strong as at the time of the last inspection and is explained partly by the need for staff to establish the curriculum and classroom routines at this early stage of the school term. The overall pattern indicates a good strength to teaching, endorsed by the parents' opinions expressed in the questionnaire, although a few parents mentioned reservations. Pupils generally produce a good amount of written work and contribute well to discussions, although a few pupils are reluctant to take part. Daily assessments in class are usually good since teachers are observant of the pupils and respond well to their learning needs. Several teachers follow the good practice of writing helpful comments on pupils' work as they mark it, but the quality of comments varies. At times teachers give unqualified praise without confirming what pupils have learnt or achieved.

17. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well in their learning. They receive intensive oral language skills development and are taught the vocabulary specific to other areas of the curriculum to enable them to participate in all lessons. They make rapid progress in English skills and are soon able to access the full curriculum, where their achievement is satisfactory.

18. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are taught as part of a class and are taught well. Often they will be taught in the class by well trained support assistants who are highly skilled at meeting their wide range of needs, and ensuring that they achieve as well as they are able, which is satisfactory overall. Well-chosen activities are provided that match the specific targets on their individual education plans. Their progress is carefully assessed and recorded to contribute towards their termly review.

Assessment

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has established effective procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and setting targets.
- Work sampling in literacy and numeracy ensures consistency of attainment.
- Electronic tracking of assessment data efficiently produces analysis to inform planning.

19. The analysis of test data is being improved through the introduction of the new target tracker program. Data analysis of test results for pupils of all ages can now be carried out more speedily, and areas for development quickly identified and individual and group targets can be set. These targets ensure that pupils know how well they are doing, and what they need to work on for the next steps of their learning.

20. In lessons teachers use questions effectively to assess how well pupils are learning, and what they still need to know. Teachers are able to form a view about how well pupils are learning through the marking of their work, and discussing how it may be improved. In the best practice teachers make comments related to pupils' targets and state clearly what they need to do next in order to make further progress.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage. It is satisfactory in Years 1 – 2 and Years 3 – 6. The quality and range of learning resources is satisfactory overall and good for ICT. The accommodation is good in general throughout the school with new library and ICT suite.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong subject leaders ensure subjects are followed and meet requirements
- School trips are designed to be educational and support personal development
- Good new accommodation and learning resource provision.
- Classroom assistants are appointed for their good skills.
- Integration of all pupils is fully in place.
- The range and quality of on-going learning experiences provided in some subjects is limited through the arrangements for concentrated activities at specific times during the year.
- The present arrangements for physical development in the Reception class are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

21. The curriculum through the school meets statutory requirements. Standards in English have been improving as a result of the implementation of National Literacy Strategy. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully although standards are slower to show improvement. Nationally produced schemes of work have been adopted for other subjects, and are adapted for the needs of the pupils. The Cambridge Religious Education syllabus is used appropriately through the school.

22. The school has prepared a curriculum web, which allows a selection of links between subjects to be planned systematically. There are some very good features, for example that in order to make the curriculum more cohesive the year groups plan themed weeks. These have been successfully used in the past, such as the Caribbean week. The school intends to keep the present good approach in the core subjects while extending work across other subjects and enlarging cultural understanding. The planned initiative links well with the work already begun as a Health Promoting School, where the high level of commitment and action by the co-ordinator is raising understanding of this area considerably. The links with Homerton College for ICT and teacher training are also having significant benefits to the planning and delivery of the curriculum. The open

plan nature of the classroom accommodation poses some difficulties for the delivery of the curriculum.

23. The school has discussed and understands the need to review the structure of the whole timetable, the use of time and the facilities of the school to meet this enlarged vision. In support of this vision, the school now has the use of the new ICT suite and the library resource area to enhance pupils' learning. The school has firm plans to remodel the outside environment, including for the Reception class, and understands the shortcomings. Pupils generally enjoy the extra-curricular provision which enriches the curriculum. It is satisfactory overall but rather limited in range.

24. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are able to have full access to the whole curriculum and to participate in all activities. The school has been particularly successful in the integration of a small number of disaffected pupils who have transferred from other local schools, and because of the high quality of the provision made for them they are making good progress.

25. The weakness noted for outdoor provision for Reception children is being addressed actively, with firm plans for redevelopment. There are also problems with the grassed field which is liable to flood during the winter months, which restricts pupils' experiences for outdoor games.

Care, guidance and support

Overall the school looks after its pupils well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher generates a good atmosphere of caring and sensitivity to pupils' needs.
- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with the staff.
- Pupils' views are sought through the school council and their contributions are valued.
- The school is a member of the Health Promoting Schools Initiative and part of the Well Being Project which support personal development very well.
- Health and safety procedures are satisfactory but need more rigorous monitoring.

Commentary

26. Teachers know their pupils well. The pupils are happy to consult a member of staff if they have a problem. Parents' responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting show that nearly all are confident in the school's care for their children. Clear guidelines through the policies and information in the excellent staff handbook ensure consistency across the school concerning matters such as child protection, discipline and first aid procedures. Guidelines are also included for parents and visitors helping in school. The new handbook was devised as part of the school's commitment to the Health Promoting Schools Initiative. The senior management team carefully monitors matters relating to welfare and attendance through regular meetings and class teachers' records. Academic achievement is supported well through personal targets and very good annual reports.

27. Support for personal development is very good. Several initiatives, for example the health promotion week held each year as part of the personal, social and health education curriculum, make important contributions. Pupils are consulted and vote to decide which activities are included. Families are encouraged to become involved too, for example in the Ready Steady Lunch Box Scheme. The residential visits for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils help them to increase their independence and social skills. Pupils know that their views are valued and they are able to raise concerns or make suggestions through the school council, which meets every fortnight. At the first meeting of the new term, which took place during the inspection, several pupils made valuable contributions to discussions and one pupil had produced a detailed plan of suggestions for the play area. This was submitted to the meeting via his class representative showing that pupils are aware of the opportunities to put their views and encouraged to use their initiative. Arrangements were

made to put the plans on show so that all pupils would have a chance to see them and submit comments.

28. Induction arrangements for new pupils are determined with the pupils' welfare in mind and to ease the settling in process. All parents at the meeting praised the home visits prior to starting and appreciated the focus wholly on the children's needs. However, parents have very different views on the 2.00 p.m. end to the school day for Reception children in their first term. Some parents are very happy and feel it significantly helps their children to settle in quickly. Others are very critical especially those who have older children at the school or younger ones at the nursery, which means they have a short break at home before setting off for the school again. The school is aware of this discontent and is looking at ways to minimise any problems.

29. The school has a very good health and safety policy and regular checks and risk assessment are carried out. There is no formal procedure for noting concerns and their outcomes though and this needs to be done to ensure there is an accurate record.

30. The school reviews pupils' individual educational plans regularly for those with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator, in collaboration with all teaching and support staff, sets revised targets, in most cases for literacy, numeracy or behaviour. Guidance and help is sought from a variety of agencies to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they are able.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, links with parents and the local community are good with some very good features.

Links with other schools and colleges are very good, as is the extended support through its accreditation as a DfES training school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided to parents about the school and their children's standards and progress is very good.
- Links with parents contribute very well to pupils' learning at home and at school.
- Extended services with other institutions are very good.
- Parental involvement through the Friends' Association and help in school is very good.

Commentary

31. The school places much importance on the partnership between home and school and welcomes any contributions parents can make. As a result parental support is very strong. Around thirty parents help regularly in school and many more volunteer to accompany trips. The Friends of Stukeley Meadows is run by a large committee and enjoys huge support from the parent body as a whole, raising substantial sums to provide enhancement for pupils' learning, and organising family social functions which are well attended. The school does not yet have a formal framework for sampling parents' views but has canvassed views on specific issues such as reports and paid great attention to these views. The success of this consultation is seen through the high level of satisfaction with the current report system and the success of a homework policy developed in response to an issue raised at the last inspection. Parents at the pre inspection meeting were well informed about the homework that their children are expected to do. A successful homework policy has been developed in response to an issue raised at the last inspection.

32. Information for parents is very good. They are given a wide range of information about the school, starting with the Parents' Pack before children start in Reception, the school brochure, which is very comprehensive and newsletters every fortnight keeping them up to date with events in school. They are encouraged to meet class teachers if they have a concern and parents find teachers very approachable. They are well informed about their children's progress through the very informative school reports and consultation meetings each term. Parents praised these highly for their personal comments and details of how pupils can improve. Several said that they show that teachers really

know their children well. For example, almost all parents think the teaching is good and that the children are expected to work hard. There is less overall agreement that behaviour is always good or that the right amount of homework is given, and several do not feel well informed about their child's progress.

33. Community links are strong through the use of the school buildings by several groups each week. These range from those with pupil involvement such as Brownies and Cubs and activities through Hunts Regional College to regular church services held each Sunday. Links with local schools are very well established. Transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils are very good with visits and planned curriculum meetings. The school is an active member of the HuntsNet" group, which meets to refine and develop transition arrangements. They also enjoy partnerships with two schools, which are also linked to Homerton College. The most recent consultation has involved behaviour support. The school also has links with other schools through the Healthy Schools initiative.

34. Extended services are very good. As a training school students visit and take part, particularly in ICT work. This provides good stimulation for the school to evaluate its practice and keep abreast with new initiatives. This benefits the pupils, as well as providing effective experience for the students.

35. The school involves parents of pupils with special educational needs in the formulation of their individual education plans, and actively encourages their contribution at the time of the review. Pupils also have the opportunity to contribute and their views are included.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall, with several very good features. The head teacher and senior staff give clear direction for the development of the school. They have established a positive climate for learning although the impact of this has yet to show in much improved standards. The headteacher has established several very effective management procedures, including delegation of responsibilities and accountability upon staff. The school is well placed to develop further a broader approach to the curriculum and to teaching and learning styles.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and deputy have a strong partnership and provide good leadership for the development of the school.
- There are several very effective management procedures to support staff and promote improvement.
- The governors have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has recently completed a very thorough self-analysis which is directing action towards identified weaknesses.
- The school is involved successfully in several initiatives although the full effects of these across the whole school have yet to be worked out.

Commentary

36. The headteacher and deputy provide good leadership for school developments and have taken well-considered initiatives to help improve the quality of learning and standards. The school's involvement with a training institution and the role as a Training School are having a positive impact on teaching methods, pupils' achievement and in making the school attractive for recruitment of new staff.

37. The headteacher has created a very effective management structure to separate the roles of support and guidance for daily teaching and routines; and the roles of longer term planning by a senior management team. There is clear accountability. The senior staff has a good understanding of their roles and fulfils them well. The current school development plan, following on from the very

thorough self-evaluation, provides a good tool and basis for action, with clearly defined targets and responsibilities. There are good procedures to monitor aspects of the school's work such as through lesson observations, assessment analysis and scrutiny of pupils' work. Senior staff observes lessons, and there are plans to extend the arrangements this year but financial constraints have previously limited opportunities for classroom release time for all subject leaders. The leadership and management by subject leaders is good overall. The majority monitor provision in their subjects carefully and provide much good informal support.

38. The members of the governing body provide very good strategic direction for the development of the school which is informed by good procedures for visits and discussions with staff. They have a very good understanding of their role and evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions in terms of standards and benefits to the pupils. The identified priorities are carefully costed and the school's financial planning is very good, with very thorough oversight on the effects of their spending decisions. The financial control is very good. The school finance secretary keeps a very sharp eye on spending and governors take very good account of the principles of obtaining best value. The school has used capital funding to very good effect recently to meet priorities for a computer suite and to build an attractive library. There are now firm plans to improve the outside environment, including extending the safe area for children in the Foundation Stage.

39. The school is re-organising its management and support for pupils whose first language is not English following the withdrawal of funding which was used to employ an experienced language teacher and the departure of the multi-cultural co-ordinator. A new language assistant was appointed at the start of this autumn term and is currently assessing the needs of the few pupils with English as an additional language. Support systems are in place in classes for oral language development to ensure adequate provision for this small group of pupils.

40. There is very good management of the provision for special educational needs. The special educational needs coordinator manages the work of the support assistants, and ensures they are placed where they may be most effective in the provision of support. The school has established extremely good relationships with many outside agencies who provide effective support services to their children.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	870 741	Balance from previous year	(16 487)
Total expenditure	847 076	Balance carried forward to the next	17 736
Expenditure per pupil	2 133	<i>Figures in parentheses indicate negative values</i>	

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Provision for children in the reception class is **good**, except for outdoor provision.
42. Overall, the standard of attainment on entry of the 35 children seen is average; although a significant number have good speaking skills and a good knowledge and understanding of the world, there are also a few children who have learning difficulties. Relationships between teachers and teaching assistants are excellent: they work very well as a team and provide very good role models for the children. All the adults are involved in the induction process, and visit children and their parents in their homes, where they have good opportunities to make initial assessments of children's needs. All adults who carry out regular assessment of children's knowledge and understanding are rigorous in their evaluations so that children have appropriate activities.
43. Because the first group of children to enter reception have only been in school for a maximum of eight school days and the second group three days there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the children's achievement. Judgements made refer to the two groups admitted who are the oldest ones for the year.
44. Children enter the reception classes in the September, after their fourth birthday. It will be December before all of the 60 children due to take up a place in reception experience coming to school for a full day. Until then their day finishes at two o'clock and parents have mixed views about this arrangement: some are very supportive and say their children benefit from the shorter day; other parents feel strongly that they would like to see the method of induction changed.
45. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning. Careful planning based on good observations of the pupils ensures children are provided with a stimulating environment and a rich array of activities, matched well to their needs, to develop their skills.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships between all adults and children.
- Good planning for and assessment of all children.
- Outdoor accommodation is inadequate.

46. Evidence gained from initial assessments of the children indicates that at the end of the reception year it is likely that the majority of children are on course to achieve the expected levels in all areas of learning. A significant number may well exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and be working towards within the National Curriculum. However, it is also likely that a small number of children will fall below the expected levels in all areas.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide very good role models.
- Children have very positive attitudes.
- Good opportunities are given for developing children's independence.

Commentary

47. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are good, although there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on achievement. Early assessments indicate that the children's attainment is broadly average. Children are provided with an abundance of opportunities to work and play together, with the result that most quickly learn to share and take turns. The adults provide very good role models for the children and treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. Children concentrate well in teacher directed parts of lessons and are given good opportunity to work for sustained periods on tasks they have chosen for themselves. There is a strong emphasis in all activities on all children developing independent skills and achieving success. Teachers are quick to praise children.

48. Children in the Foundation Stage feel safe and secure in the Reception class, which is attractive and inviting. They are confident to explore their new surroundings and most children are keen to share resources and engage sensibly with others in activities that encourage social interactions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff promote speaking and listening skills well.
- Children are encouraged to learn from one another.

Commentary

49. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are good, although there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on achievement. Early assessments indicate that the children's attainment is broadly average. Staff give a very high priority to communication and language skills and ensure that all activities have a strong language focus. Children enjoy listening to stories and taking an active part in joining in with rhymes. When walking round the school grounds, teachers encourage children to describe what they see. A child of above average ability correctly names a weeping willow tree and comments that 'it has wispy leaves like tears falling'. Others keenly observed a spider's web and aptly linked it to spider nursery rhymes. A few children are at the early stages of recognising initial sounds and writing isolated letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make mathematics very meaningful for children.
- Children are confident to participate in activities.

Commentary

50. Good links are made to the nursery rhyme and garden centre theme, as children are encouraged to discuss the height and number of flowers in a collection. Less able children need support to count objects accurately but staff ensure that every opportunity is taken to develop this skill. More able children can identify and name two-dimensional shapes and can count confidently to 20. Singing of number songs and many practical activities reinforce their understanding of number. Measuring and pouring activities using sand and water promote children's understanding of capacity. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are good, although there is insufficient

evidence to form a judgement on achievement. Early assessments indicate that the children's attainment is broadly average

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults' awareness of how children learn.
- Opportunities for children to learn new vocabulary.
- Opportunities to become familiar with and show appreciation of new surroundings.

Commentary

51. The teaching in this area of learning is very good, especially the contribution by the Nursery Nurses. They understand the needs of the children very well and encourage them to demonstrate their growing independence as they enjoy the facilities of the computer suite. Most children independently put on the headphones, listen carefully to instructions, and skillfully operate the mouse to make appropriate selections. The quality of learning in this area is good, although there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on achievement. Early assessments indicate that the children's attainment is broadly average.

52. Children identified similarities and differences of leaves, describing them as shiny, dull, flat or crinkly on a walk around the school grounds. Teachers ensured all children became familiar with the new vocabulary of 'viewfinder, lens and shutter' as they took turns to handle a camera and made their own choices of what to take photographs of and how far away to stand. All children are confident to contribute their views and listen carefully to the ideas of others as they become familiar with their new surroundings.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planned curriculum is good.
- The outdoor area is inadequate for the number of pupils in the class.

Commentary

53. Children moved freely with enjoyment and confidence in a movement lesson in the hall. They showed good listening and control skills as they moved imaginatively with long, slow strides and then stopped quickly when the teacher sounded the tambour. Children have good opportunities to learn how to handle small objects appropriately and use pencils, scissors, paint brushes and glue spreaders accurately and safely.

54. The enclosed area for the reception class is attractive and well used, but it is too small for the numbers of children entitled to use it. Storage space for the large toys is also inadequate. The indoor accommodation is only just large enough to accommodate 60 children especially on wet days when the children are unable to take part in outdoor activities. This is because there is no covered area where young children can develop their physical skills or use large equipment. This is an essential requirement for children of foundation stage at all times of the year. Access to the outdoor area is good, but the space available is inadequate for the number of children who need to have the use of it. This was a concern highlighted at the time of the previous inspection and remains unsatisfactory because other priorities required capital funding.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many interesting activities available for children to develop creatively.

Commentary

55. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through role play, art and design and music. They enjoy using paint and busily engage in making packets for their seeds. In an area which is very well resourced, as a 'garden centre', language skills are well promoted as children confidently choose from an array of seeds, use garden tools and act out the roles of customers and sales people. The quality of teaching and learning in this area are good, although there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on achievement. Early assessments indicate that the children's attainment is broadly average.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above the national average.
- Pupils achieve well compared with pupils in similar schools.
- Whole school assessment is effective.
- Teaching is good overall in English.
- The management is good and support given to teachers gives them freedom to be creative.
- Writing is the weakest aspect of the subject and younger children have under-developed listening skills.

Commentary

56. Standards in the work seen during the inspection show that standards in English are average by Year 2. Standards are above average by Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good through the impact of good teaching. The national test results broadly support this position. At the time of the last inspection standards in English were judged to be above average by Year 2 and well above by Year 6 so the present standards represent a decline. This is explained by the variations in attainment of the year groups since the trend in standards is in line with the national trend. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in English lessons. Classroom assistants work closely with class teachers and effectively provide the support needed to learn. They make steady progress. The listening skills of the youngest children in Reception are under-developed as they enter school. Teachers work hard at all stages to increase these skills but the older pupils are given insufficient opportunity to speak clearly and express their ideas for example in debate. Year 1's hedgehog puppet mispronounced items they chose from a bag and with great enjoyment, the children corrected his pronunciation. In a Year 4 dramatisation of a bully, pupils talked about what the bully might be feeling and what he might do to change and the pupils' observations in a Year 5 project on the Caribbean were beautifully expressed in poetry.

57. Pupils make good progress in reading. Pupils are encouraged to tackle challenging literature requiring extended vocabulary, inference and deduction in the text. The school is rich in the use made of books.

58. Writing skills require development. Handwriting standards improve towards the upper years where most write in neat, cursive style, but younger pupils make less progress. The good emphasis on learning spelling for homework means that standards are improving. Teachers work hard to enable children to use their imagination to incorporate powerful verbs and carefully selected adjectives in their writing.

59. Teaching in English includes excellent examples in which very good effort and enthusiasm enabled pupils to enjoy and benefit from the concepts being taught. Teachers plan well and are aware of the needs of each individual. The use of setting enables appropriate challenge to be given. Most pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves well. Marking is supportive but could be improved by teachers working alongside the pupils to explain what is good about their work or how it could be improved.

60. The management of English is good. Strengths and areas of further development of the subject are known to the subject manager and she works hard to improve the standards, including analysing test results. On occasions teaching and learning are hindered by normal classroom activity from the adjacent bay, which makes hearing what is said and concentrating on the lesson difficult. The school makes sensible arrangements, for example by arranging for one class to be out

while the other remains in the class, where possible. Target Tracker, an assessment software package is intended to provide detailed information on pupils' progress. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning but has not yet been able to observe lessons, though she works closely with the teachers. The current priority is to establish the new library as an area for research and independent learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well, although the subject receives a disproportionately large amount of time. The school is considering a thematic approach to enable the cross-curricular emphasis to be developed whilst maintaining the good standard achieved. Literacy skills are applied well on many occasions, for example in an extract from Anne Fine's character Barry Hunter the bully. Little use of ICT was seen in lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the lessons observed with a few areas for development.
- Good exposition by teachers promotes understanding by pupils.
- The high attaining pupils are keen to learn and work well, enjoying the challenge.
- Low attaining pupils are supported very well so that they make steady progress.
- Pupils do not have an easy fluency with mental calculation and confidence with methods to find answers.
- On occasions pupils do not have sufficient access to resources to support their learning.

Commentary

62. Standards in mathematics in the work seen are average by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This matches pupils' performance in the national tests. At the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics were judged to be above average by Year 2 and well above by Year 6 so the present standards represent a decline. This is explained by the variations in attainment of the year groups since the trend in standards is in line with the national trend. By Year 6, previous work shows that the core group reach the expected standard and have appropriate numeracy skills. The higher attaining pupils are confident with mixed operation problems and apply mathematical techniques well to show above average standards. The lower attaining pupils demonstrate clear signs of improvement over time. Overall achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average by Year 6. The good teaching of a wide range of basic skills in mathematics is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, although many pupils demonstrate a lack of confidence in numeracy when expected to work independently.

63. High attaining pupils in Year 1 enjoyed the challenge of finding sums with an answer of 4, several using large numbers such as $100 - 96 = 4$. By Year 2 pupils are beginning to build multiples of 2, 4 and 5, recognising some of the patterns. Resources are used well to reinforce understanding in some lessons but this is inconsistent and on some occasions pupils require more direct access to materials. Pupils' previous work indicates that standards are broadly average across the mathematics curriculum by Year 2 and that pupils achieve appropriately. The higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of numeracy and calculation methods as well as early ideas on shape, producing graphs and solving everyday problems.

64. A well-planned and managed lesson in Year 3 in the ICT suite made good use of a money program so that learning was enjoyable and good. Teachers are extending the use of ICT in mathematics successfully. In Year 4, the teacher's good focus on helping pupils to set out simple

models on paper of their methods for solving word problems encouraged good learning. In a well-prepared lesson in Year 5, the teacher used her lap-top computer to project questions onto a screen, thereby holding pupils' attention well. A challenging investigation, to find differing ways to make £1 using five coins, brought out many pupils' ideas and methods well. A few pupils were organised in their approach although many relied more on trial and error. All pupils were fully included in the task, which was adapted well for the prior attainments of the differing groups of pupils.

65. The school gives good attention to the ideas within the Numeracy Strategy and the subject coverage meets statutory requirements. Teachers use good methods overall to promote pupils' learning. However, insufficient attention is given at times to opening pupils' minds to the patterns or relationships and encouraging pupils to write about their findings. Further work is also required to ensure that the good examples of practical and investigational work are found consistently through the school. The subject leader provides good management to support the development of mathematics and has had some opportunities to observe lessons by colleagues, using her observations well to identify where to give support. There are good assessment procedures. The pupils with learning difficulties receive very good support and acquire a basic understanding of number through counting. The teachers place a good emphasis on correct mathematical language.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The skills of mathematics and numeracy are applied appropriately in other subjects overall. There are several good applications in science. Early ideas of space and position are emphasised well in physical education.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Almost all pupils reach the nationally expected levels and standards and achievement are above average.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Inadequate time is given for monitoring of teaching.
- Parts of the school grounds are undeveloped.

Commentary

67. The previous inspection found the number of pupils reaching the expected levels in science to be above average. This remains the case. In 2003 the number of pupils reaching the higher levels is in line with the national proportion and is an improvement on the previous year. For all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achievement is at least satisfactory and for many pupils at the end of their time in school achievement in science is good.

68. Teaching and learning is good. Lessons involve a good balance of discussion, teacher explanation and pupil investigation. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and willingness to take an active part in their own learning contribute much to the good progress they make. In a Year 2 lesson pupils enjoy exploring and describing forces as they establish that 'pushes' and 'pulls' can change the shape of objects. In a Year 6 lesson pupils solve the problem of providing suitable conditions for plant growth. Good links are made to their history project of wartime England and the campaign 'Dig for Victory' when there was a shortage of food.

69. The subject leader has a very good understanding of the subject and monitors planning meticulously. The information gained from detailed analyses of test results is used well to address planning to meet weak areas of pupils' learning. This has led to better results being attained. No time

is allocated on a regular and systematic basis for her to observe teachers teaching and thus help them to make the satisfactory and good teaching even better.

70. Parts of the school grounds are well cared for and provide a useful resource for science activities. There is a significant area that is unattractive and undeveloped. The school has drawn up plans to incorporate a nature trail, and a habitat for wildlife.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve above average standards by Year 6.
- Pupils develop good ICT skills from an early age.
- The school has provided good quality resources to support learning.
- The subject has a high profile in school through the good impact of the status as a training school and links with training institutions.
- There is good quality teaching from well-trained teachers.
- ICT supports the teaching of other subjects well.
- The subject is very well led by a highly skilled subject leader and is a strength of the school.
- Insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of the recently introduced assessment procedures on pupil' progress and the lack of formality in the procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

71. Standards in ICT are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. All pupils have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills systematically through the well-organised curriculum, so that as they move through the school they are able to make choices about the most suitable aspects to employ in their work. By Year 6 pupils are very confident in the use of the Internet, spreadsheets and data handling, and use word processing and power point presentations very creatively. They use e-mail and communicate with other schools in their area through the local education authority's super highway. All groups of pupils show very positive attitudes, work hard and enjoy the challenges the subject presents. As a result their skills, knowledge and understanding develop well. The ability to work independently as well as collaboratively is effectively promoted.

72. The high standards achieved are as a result of the good quality of teaching by well- trained teaching and support staff that know their subject well. Basic skills are taught effectively and form the basis on which their further development is built. Lessons are well planned and provide interesting and challenging opportunities that move pupils' learning on at a good rate. Teachers use ICT to support learning very effectively in other areas of the curriculum including mathematics, history, science and art and design. Their use of the interactive whiteboard for demonstration purposes and the involvement of children in this process is both motivating and instructive to them. Overall, the school has maintained the high standards reported on at the time of the last inspection through the provision of a well-planned curriculum, well-organised resources, and the overall good quality of the teaching to enable pupils to achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.

73. The subject leader provides good leadership and has established a well-balanced curriculum over time, and has involved the staff in the planning processes. The scheme of work is run alongside the national guidelines to ensure they meet the national expectations. He uses his considerable knowledge and skills to ensure all staff are confident in the use of the computer suite, and that their training requirements are met. The recognition of the school's training school status has helped to develop the confidence of staff, as well as having a beneficial effect upon pupils' learning, and the provision of additional resources for the school. Although some shared teaching activities are carried out, and some lesson observations are made, as yet there are no formal procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school that would help to raise standards further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Good. All pupils have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills systematically through the well-organised curriculum, so that as they move through the school they are able to make choices about the most suitable aspects to employ in their work.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are developing skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate rate, as well as a sense of chronology, due to the effective teaching.
- The use of visits, role-play and good quality artefacts by teachers enhance the experiences for young learners.
- As pupils progress through the school they learn to carry out their own research and to use their literacy skills more to record their findings.
- To avoid the over use of published worksheets to the detriment of children learning to carry out their own written recording.

75. Standards in history are at the expected level by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are offered a well-planned curriculum based on the national guidelines that are supported by some imaginative teaching, appropriate visits to places of interest, and the use of a good range of artefacts and resources. Although the geography curriculum is in place, due to the way the curriculum is organised it was not possible to see sufficient lessons being taught to form an overall judgement on standards. Inspectors did, however, look at a sample of pupils' work. Three history lessons were seen.

76. The school organises the teaching of history so that children are able to develop a sense of time and relate this to the sequence of events that have become the major landmarks in history. Topics are well organised for each year group, and learning is made interesting and at times exciting by the inclusion of visits and role play activities that bring the subject alive and give it links with reality. Children examine genuine artefacts and suggest what their use might have been. Good quality books and resources enhance their experiences. Useful links are made with other curriculum areas. In art and design children produce mosaic patterns in the style of the Romans, and considerable work is done representing aspects of Greek culture. ICT is used well by children carrying out their own research into these early civilisations. They work hard and enjoy the subject.

77. Teachers have good personal knowledge of the subject and this allows them to teach confidently, and to ensure that they are able to make lessons interesting. They manage classes well and make good use of support staff, who ensure that different groups of pupils including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make similar progress to their peers. In some classes there is an over reliance on the use of worksheets that minimises the opportunities for children to develop their own writing skills.

78. The new subject leader has ensured that the curriculum has been established, and that it meets the requirements of the national curriculum. She has been successful in ensuring that there are appropriate links with other areas of the curriculum, including ICT. The standards previously reported on at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Medium term plans have been monitored to check for progression in the subject.
- No monitoring of teaching.

Commentary

79. Standards in religious education meet the expectation of the locally Agree Syllabus by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

80. The five year olds were taught how Sikhs celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak. They were told about Sikh holy places and were able to say what a Christian equivalent holy place is. The children understood little as the words were so new to them.

81. In Year 4, pupils looked at newspaper photographs of events, which made them sad or happy. The activity related to pupils learning to respect others and their needs. The pupils discussed issues about the uneven distribution of the world's wealth with developing understanding.

82. Ten year olds were thinking of the Jewish race connected with their history of World War 2. They read stories of the plagues of Egypt and the origin of the Passover. They treated the subject with respect and had researched well the background of the Jews. Teaching in this lesson had high expectations and learning was satisfactory. The subject leaders role is undeveloped at present because there have not been opportunities to observe lessons.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject knowledge of an art and design specialist provides good support
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate well.

Commentary

83. At the time of the last inspection standards were deemed satisfactory. This remains the case. Overall teaching is satisfactory and very good in the lesson taught by the subject specialist. All pupils achieve satisfactorily including those who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.

84. In a Year 2 class art and design is very carefully linked to the class topic of Victorians. Pupils have good opportunities to detect the light and dark shaded areas of artefacts such as a carpet beater and a washboard. They concentrate on their task as they sketch, adding shade and tone and experimenting with ideas. At the end of the lesson pupils' efforts are evaluated sympathetically and they are shown how this work leads into 'silhouettes' the following week.

85. Good links are made to mathematics and Ancient Egypt in Year 3 where pupils learn how to enlarge pictures by means of transferring small pictures onto a grid just as the Egyptians used to do on the tomb walls. The activity is very challenging and demands close observational skills. The

teacher quickly recognises the task is too demanding for the less able and breaks the activity down into simpler stages which results in greater understanding. In a Year 6 lesson where the teacher has very good subject knowledge, a brisk start to the lesson is ensured, as pupils contribute findings from their homework research into the life and work of Pablo Picasso. Pupils are provided with good practical experiences to illustrate how, all forms of objects are reduced to their simplest shapes in Cubism. Pupils work well in pairs and are intrigued to discover how arrangements of 3 dimensional shapes, such as a cone, a sphere and a cube may appear flat. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported by the assistants who prompt them to consider various ways of improving their presentation.

86. There are very good relationships between pupils and teachers, which ensure all pupils, feel valued and motivate them to produce their best efforts.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school plans for concentrated periods of work through special events to help all the processes to come together in a finished product.
- Pupils produce attractive examples of their work and appear keen to make a good finish.

Commentary

87. The time-tabling arrangements during the inspection meant that art and design was the focus for the half term so no lessons in design and technology were observed. Scrutiny of a wide range of supporting evidence of pupils' previous work, such as photographs and teachers' planning, as well as discussion with the subject leader, indicate that standards meet the national expectation by Year 6 and that pupils achieve satisfactorily. This indicates an improvement in quality of provision since the last inspection. Examples of pupils' work include bedroom plans and examples of furniture in reception, attractive weaving and fabric work in Years 1 and 2. Within the junior years, pupils make wood frames cut neatly and in good shape. A display of woven mats was supported by pupils' design of 'My design for summer'. By Year 5 pupils have designed a public shelter, choosing materials to protect people. Pupils in Year 6 produced lively designs and several attractive finished carrier bags, suitable for holding gifts. These examples indicate that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. Teachers assess pupils' work at suitable stages to take account of the developing processes. The satisfactory provision overall is enhanced by examples of good quality work from special events.

88. The subject leader has a good understanding of the role and finds many informal ways to support colleagues. She monitors planning to ensure the subject meets statutory requirements. She has not been able to observe lessons but has a monitoring schedule to be aware of key aspects of teaching and learning. The school takes good advantage of special occasions to focus on opportunities for the subject. For example a Mexican Week provided a focus for making related artefacts and preparing Mexican food. The school ensures that all pupils are fully included in the activities. The school has mobile ovens to help with food technology but does not yet have a purpose designed space for pupils to use. The school is fully aware of health and safety issues.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Each year group has a performance involving music each year.
- Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies.
- Assessment procedures are under-developed.
- Teachers use their preferred scheme to teach from but the subject leader does not monitor their lessons.

Commentary

89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Achievement and standards in music are satisfactory overall, although the achievement by pupils in the Year 5 lesson was not high enough. In a lesson for younger pupils, they created sounds to describe the movement of different animals. They used tuned and untuned percussion instruments in pairs sensibly and to good effect. The teaching was lively and resulted in satisfactory learning. In a lesson in Year 5, being unsure of maintaining control in the lesson, the teacher only allowed the class to clap rhythms and sort instruments into sets. Pupils were not able to use the instruments themselves since the timing for the lesson was misjudged and the teaching lacked high enough expectation for pupils' learning at the age. Pupils tended to lose concentration and become frustrated.

90. Leadership is not strong enough in music and teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations in the subject. Some teachers are unsure of their capacity to control the class and the challenge they give is undemanding.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school plans for and provides a good range of activities and is successful in regional sports.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The provision for children's physical experiences is restricted in reception through the limited outdoor space. There are firm plans to make improvements.

91. Teachers plan interesting and worthwhile tasks that give pupils good opportunities to experience a wide range of physical activity. Reception children were seen taking giant steps and enjoying learning how to control their bodies. Within Year 2 pupils worked in pairs to prepare and perform a dance sequence – prompted by some powerful music to get a response. Several pupils performed expressive moves, using turns, spins and stretches to illustrate the movements of Victorian dolls. Overall, pupils reach satisfactory standards and achieve as expected, while a few higher attaining pupils have good control and expression.

92. Within Years 3 – 6, the class teachers provide a good structure and focus for the lessons. They manage pupils well and set clear expectations for behaviour – most pupils responding positively to them. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 3 have the early skills to perform curl and stretch movements, and move over or through apparatus sensibly. By Year 5, pupils show clear progress in their skills. Their balance, control and fluency are evidence in travelling over apparatus. Most pupils behave well and work to produce good actions, although a few are not sufficiently aware of other pupils also using the apparatus. The teachers are alert to any health and safety issues and deal with these well. They also ensure that all pupils are included well in the tasks. Overall pupils are on course to reach the expected standard by Year 6 overall. The lower attaining pupils do not move

easily with a natural control of their bodies, while the higher attaining pupils have good balance and coordination.

93. The subject leader provides good support for colleagues and understands the role. The school has a good sized hall and suitable outside hard surfaces for games, although during winter activities are often restricted due to flooding on the grassed field. The outdoor play for the Reception class is restricted for space so that the children's physical education is impaired.

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