

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITTINGTON CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116856

Headteacher: Mr David Holt

Lead inspector: Dr John Collings

Dates of inspection: 1 – 3 March 2004

Inspection number: 260697

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	206
School address:	Whittington Worcester Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR5 2QZ
Telephone number:	01905 354844
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Jayne Rayer
Date of previous inspection:	5 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is about the same size as other primary schools with 206 pupils compared to a national average of 241. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and there are no pupils whose first language is not believed to be English. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and there is one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The school has no special status. It has been an expanding school and now has one class per year group. It draws from a wide area. Attainment on entry varies but is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20752	John Collings	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Whittington CE VA Primary School provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils with many good aspects. Pupils' standards and achievement are **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage. Standards and achievement are **satisfactory** throughout the school. The headteacher provides **satisfactory** leadership, and management in the school is **good** overall. Teaching is **good** overall. It is **good** in the Foundation Stage, **satisfactory** in Years 1 and 2 and **good** in Years 3 to 6. The school is broadly **effective** and gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards and achievement in English is good overall with reading well above average and standards of speaking and listening, handwriting above average across the school and writing is above average by Year 6.
- Teaching overall is good with good and very good teaching seen in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Standards and achievement have improved in mathematics and science since the national tests in 2003.
- Leadership of the school is satisfactory, management good and care guidance and support are very good.
- Planning in English and mathematics is not based rigorously enough on the assessment of pupils' prior ability to meet the full range of ability in classes and this results in insufficient focus of teaching assistants to consistently meet the needs of the pupils for whom they are responsible.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good, they behave very well and there are good relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils.
- Achievement in the using and applying aspect of mathematics and the investigative aspect of science are not as good as they could be.
- Pupils like school and have good records of attendance.
- Pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural community is limited.
- The school does not have a register of potentially gifted and talented pupils.
- Parents have very positive views of the school.

The effectiveness of the school has been maintained since the last inspection. Standards have fluctuated in English, mathematics and science since 1999. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English remain higher than average and standards in mathematics and science are broadly average.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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' attainment on entering the Foundation Stage is **average**. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall with pupils leaving at the end of Year 6 above expectations in English and meeting expectations in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows standards in the Foundation Stage are **average** and achievement is satisfactory overall. The Foundation Stage makes a significant contribution to developing pupils' social skills and their very positive attitudes to learning, which is reflected as pupils move through the school. By Year 2 standards are **average**

and achievement satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. By Year 6 standards and achievement are **good** in English, **satisfactory** in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in religious education are **satisfactory** in Year 2 and **good** by Year 6. However, pupils' use and application of mathematics and their ability to devise their own investigations are not as developed as they could be. Insufficient evidence was collected to make a judgement in other subjects.

The development of pupils' attitudes and personal qualities are **very good** and they behave **very well** and there are **good** relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils. Attendance and punctuality are **good**. Provision for spiritual and social development are **good**, their moral development **very good**, cultural development **satisfactory** and **good** overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. The overall quality of teaching is **good**. Teaching is **good** in the Foundation Stage and **satisfactory** with some **good** teaching in Years 1 to 2 and **good** in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall. The school have recently introduced improved procedures to monitor pupils' progress more accurately. However, teachers are not using assessment with sufficient rigor when planning to meet the needs of lower attaining and higher attaining pupils. This results in a lack of rigor in activities carried out by teaching assistants when supporting such pupils.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall with good provision to develop pupils' social skills. The school meets requirements of the National Curriculum but has not developed sufficient innovation in subjects other than English. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **satisfactory**. The school does not have a register for potentially gifted and talented pupils to ensure a curriculum is provided that could fully meet their needs.

The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are **satisfactory** and pupils are **well** cared for. Links with parents, the community and other schools are **good**. The school seeks the views of pupils through the school council **well**.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is **satisfactory** and management is **good**. The headteacher has democratic style which whilst having many advantages does not always create the necessary pace of change in relation to the school's priorities, particularly in respect of mathematics and science. Performance management, monitoring of teaching and tracking pupils' progress is **good** overall and are beginning to have some impact in raising standards, however, they are not informing teachers' planning sufficiently to meet the needs of all pupils based on their prior attainment. The leadership and management by key staff is **satisfactory** overall.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall parents are happy with the school and with the information they receive, particularly about the curriculum. Parents are rightly valued. However, their potential for supporting their children's progress is undeveloped. Pupils are happy in the school and appreciate the use of the school council to express their views and the opportunities it provide to initiate change.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Clearer and more innovative planning to meet the needs of the full range of abilities in classes that is firmly based on their prior attainment to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Improve the direction of teaching assistants to implement planned work meeting the needs of pupils based on their prior attainment.
- Give pupils increasing independence in developing their own science investigations, and make increased use of the application of mathematics, to enable pupils to apply and consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in these subjects.
- Create a register to identify and support pupils who are potentially gifted and talented.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall standards and achievement are **satisfactory**. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage broadly average, achieve satisfactorily and the current children in reception are on track to enter Year 1 with average attainment. In Year 2 standards are **average** in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. By the end of Year 6 standards in English are above **average** and achievement is **good**, in mathematics and science standards are **average** and achievement is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement in English are good overall with reading well above average and standards of speaking and listening and handwriting above average across the school.
- Writing, although generally above average by Year 6, is average by Year 2.
- Standards and achievement have improved in mathematics and science since the national tests in 2003.
- Achievement in the using and applying aspect of mathematics and the investigative aspect of science are not as good as they could be.

Commentary

1. The school is a little smaller than most primary schools, 206 pupils compared with the average 240, so the significance of changes from one year to the next need to be treated with care.
2. Children start school broadly average but above average in speaking and listening. The current reception children are on track to securely attain the goals children are expected to reach on entry into Year 1 in the six areas of learning for this age group.
3. Standards at Year 2 have varied over recent years in writing and mathematics but have remained consistently well above the national average in reading. Pupils' average point scores¹ for the 2003 national tests show that standards of pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. This was lower than previous years.
4. Standards and achievement in English are satisfactory in Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are well above average in reading, average in writing and above average in speaking and listening, and handwriting. Standards in mathematics and science are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school is aware of the variation in standards in science and mathematics over recent years and attributes this to variability in the cohorts not identified by procedures then in place. The school has now addressed this, however, the improved assessment procedures have not been in place long enough to have sufficient impact.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (17.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a point score. The expected average points at age seven are 15, and at age 11, 27. The national average score for all pupils taking the tests are then used as a comparison to grade reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 in individual schools each year. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national averages before grades are given. The grades are shown in the summary report.

5. Standards in Year 6 have also varied over past years. Overall standards in 2003 are the same as they were in 2000, that is, average. In 2001 overall standards were well below average and improved to be above average in 2002. Except for 2001, standards in English have been above average. In mathematics standards have been broadly average over the past four years but well above average in 2002. Science has been consistently below average, except in 2002, when it was above. These results indicate that standards vary year on year depending on the ability of different year groups of pupils but pupils have done well in English, satisfactorily in mathematics, but are not achieving a satisfactory level in science.
6. When compared with all schools the average point scores for national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 show standards were above average in English and just below average in mathematics and science, (see table below). When compared with their prior attainment at the end of Year 2 in 1999 they achieved well in English, but below expectations in mathematics and science. The overall value added scores show the school was well below average, albeit just.
7. Inspection evidence shows that in English the overall standards of the current cohort of pupils in Year 6 are well above average in reading and above average in writing, speaking and listening and their achievement is good. Standards are average in mathematics and science and achievement is satisfactory. This shows an improvement in mathematics and science over 2003. The improvement is largely due to a greater focus on teaching and learning in these subjects, and improved assessment procedures to plan work to meet the needs of the range of abilities in classes. These procedures have not been in place long enough to have sufficient impact to raise standards significantly. This is the main reason why pupils do less well in mathematics and science than they do in English, where expectations are higher and work is more closely matched to pupils prior attainment.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (28.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.3 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.3 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

8. English has a high priority in the school and, through good leadership and management of the subject, pupils achieve well overall. Expectations of pupils and staff are high. The school have adapted the National Literacy Strategy imaginatively to capture the interest of the pupils in the school and to create more time for writing. This is now reaping benefits with standards in writing improving. Assessment is also used constructively to create work that is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' independence is encouraged through discussion, which involves pupils in learning. The more innovative flexible approach, where pupils can demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills, allows teachers to assess more accurately what pupils know, understand and can do. This enables teachers to plan work to meet pupils' needs. It is an exemplar in the school other subjects could adopt.
9. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6 are at least satisfactory. However, tasks are highly structured and lower attaining pupils receive considerable support. When pupils are required to apply their knowledge independently, weaknesses in their understanding are apparent. Although there is good coverage of the National Numeracy Strategy, this has been at the expense of opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in a range of different situations. Higher attaining pupils in particular are not extended by tasks, which are qualitatively different in the amount of challenge they present.
10. Science standards are satisfactory overall. The school has recognised the need to create a more flexible approach to the curriculum to enable pupils to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to challenging situations. This is beginning to have an effect where

pupils are given more opportunities to explore, through well-structured practical work what they know, understand and can do. This gives teachers a much clearer idea of pupils' abilities and the opportunity to plan work to meet their needs. This approach is still new but is one of the main reasons why standards in science are beginning to rise.

11. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations across the school and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was a key issue for improvement.
12. Standards in religious education are satisfactory by Year 2 and good by Year 6. Insufficient evidence was seen to make a secure judgement on standards in the creative subjects of art and design, music, design and technology and physical education, or in humanities; geography and history.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** records of attendance and punctuality. Their personal development is **good**. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils acquire **very good** attitudes to school and demonstrate a **very good** standard of behaviour.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like school and have good records of attendance.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour is a strength of the school.
- They are keen to accept responsibility and to learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils' personal development is good; they value fair play and deal kindly with others.
- The religious education programme gives a strong sense of the spiritual.
- Pupils' awareness of life in a multi-cultural community is limited.

Commentary

13. Since the last inspection, the school's focus on raising pupils' confidence and taking account of their views has improved the pupils' attitudes towards school and learning. The older pupils especially, are keen to speak up for themselves and on behalf of others. They enjoy fundraising for worthy causes. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right from wrong. It is firmly promoted from an early age. Over time, pupils gain in maturity and become very well behaved, polite young people, with good social skills.
14. Pupils are made visibly aware of how well they are behaving. The younger ones are not too keen on seeing their name card removed from the 'golden box', so they try hard to improve their ways. The older pupils clearly feel they have a 'voice' in school and see the advantages of conducting themselves well. Those who find it more of a struggle to behave as well as they should are carefully integrated into school life. This is of benefit to the whole school community. Staff intervene swiftly at the first hint of aggressive behaviour between pupils. The system of monitoring and recording behaviour at playtimes is easily understood by all. It has proved to be very effective in helping pupils learn from their mistakes and manage their own behaviour. There have been no exclusions for the last eighteen months.
15. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore their feelings through research and discussion. For example, in a religious education lesson on the importance of Islamic art to worshippers, the Year 6 pupils used the knowledge they had gained from their visit to the local church to explore the significance of colour, pattern and mosaic. Where the teaching is good, as it was in this lesson, pupils are given good opportunities to reflect upon their experiences and become conscious of a deeper meaning. Activities such as assemblies, drama, prayer and singing add to the good provision made for the pupils' spiritual development.

16. Cultural development is satisfactorily promoted through elements of the curriculum that enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures. During the school year, pupils make visits to museums and churches, and visitors to the school include members of the clergy, musicians and writers. However, more could be done to heighten pupils' awareness of the benefits of living in a multi-cultural society.
17. The attendance and punctuality of pupils is good and better than it is in most primary schools. Parents support the school in its endeavours to promote good attendance. They understand that their children are at a disadvantage if they do not attend school regularly and on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/03

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** overall. It is **good** in the Foundation Stage, **satisfactory** with many good features in Year 1 and 2, and **good** in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (10%)	20 (67%)	7 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and children achieve well particularly in social aspects, which sets a good ethos for learning from which the rest of the school benefits.
- Good teaching and high expectations in English across the school ensure good progress.
- Although teaching of mathematics and science has good aspects, it is satisfactory overall, reflecting satisfactory achievement.
- There is insistence on high standards of behaviour.
- Assessment in English is good and work is well targeted to ensure the full range of ability is challenged appropriately.
- Assessment procedures in science, mathematics and information and communication technology are satisfactory but these are not used sufficiently to plan work to meet the needs of the full range of ability in classes based on their prior attainment.
- Teaching assistants are given insufficient direction to support higher attaining and lower attaining pupils.
- Overall, there are good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Good teaching methods and pace ensure pupils are fully engaged, encouraged to work hard and achieve, particularly in English.
- Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to enable teachers to plan work that is clearly based on pupils' prior attainment.
- Marking is generally supportive but does not systematically inform pupils how they could improve.

Commentary

18. Overall the strengths significantly outweigh any weaknesses. However, the lack of the good use of assessment to plan work to meet the needs of the full range of ability in mathematics and science, is the main reason why pupils achieve less well in these subjects than English where assessment is used well to meet the needs of all pupils.
19. The headteacher and subject leaders monitor teaching and the school have become aware of the need to be more rigorous in planning to meet the needs of all pupils in a class. The quality of pupils' individual education plans, for pupils with special educational needs is good. They contain precise and measurable targets. The extent to which class teachers address these targets is however limited. When pupils are withdrawn for additional help these targets are more effectively addressed.

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and children achieve well particularly in social aspects, which sets a good ethos for learning from which the rest of the school benefits.

20. All lessons seen in the Foundation Stage were good or better. There is a very strong emphasis on the development of social skills and children achieve well in this area because, while pupils individuality is emphasised, so is their development as members of a community. Teaching is seen as a facilitating process in which the teacher implies membership of the community of learners by asking for help from children and teaching assistants, making deliberate mistakes, demonstrating how to use learning aids around the room and initially accepting less than perfect standards. This results in children's learning skills developing well.

Good teaching and high expectations in English across the school ensuring good progress.

21. Teaching and learning in English are good throughout the school. Some lessons are very good. This is largely due to a more flexible approach and a more innovative interpretation of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding, and high expectations. This enables them to plan lessons that involve a significant amount of well paced challenging discussion which enables teachers to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and structure work appropriately. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on the writing of non-chronological reports, the teacher chose a quick fire focus on vocabulary development before the detailed analysis of a report on animal welfare, which led to well structured, amusing writing on an exotic imaginary animal. Marking informs pupils of what needs to be improved while recognising their efforts and achievement.

Although teaching of mathematics and science has good aspects, overall it is satisfactory reflecting satisfactory achievement.

22. In the best mathematics and science lessons pupils are challenged through more open-ended work where pupils could demonstrate what they could do well and where they found things more difficult. This enabled the teacher, not only to identify more clearly pupils' true attainment, but also to structure the work to meet their needs. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson the teacher enabled pupils, through well planned practical work, to explore the range of appliances that could be included in a circuit. This flexible approach enabled her to identify pupils who clearly had little idea how to complete a circuit and to challenge more able pupils to explore including combinations of lights, motors and buzzers. This approach was also seen in a challenging Year 4 mathematics lesson where pupils had the opportunity to explore consecutive numbers and try to devise a rule for finding the product of any two or three consecutive numbers. With good teaching assistant support all pupils were able to work at their own level, demonstrate what they knew be appropriately challenged and achieve well.

There is insistence on high standards of behaviour.

23. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and this makes a significant contribution to learning. Pupils listen to their teachers, work hard and want to please. This positive ethos to learning is laid down in the Foundation Stage and permeates the whole school.

Assessment in English is good and work is well targeted to ensure the full range of ability is challenged appropriately.

24. Good assessment is one of the main reasons why pupils succeed better in English than other subjects. English lessons show greater awareness and confidence by teachers of the need to allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding, or lack of it, through work that is structured, but still has sufficient flexibility. This allows pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and so work is then made appropriately challenging for pupils of all abilities. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, good open questioning demonstrated which pupils had clear recollections of the characters in the story before pupils tried to retell the story from a different point of view to the storytellers. In a Year 3 lesson where good repetition of the 'pattern of three' in fables combined with good class discussion enabled the teacher and the teaching assistant to support pupils appropriately to write their own fable confidently.

Assessment procedures in science, mathematics and information and communication technology are satisfactory but these are not used sufficiently to plan work to meet the needs of the full range of ability in classes based on their prior attainment.

25. The school have recently introduced new assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress more systematically to ensure they make the year on year progress they should. This is more firmly established in English than mathematics, science and information and communication technology where the procedures are relatively new. However, in much of the work seen in these subjects, particularly in the scrutiny of pupils' past work, there is evidence that the work set for each pupil is similar and the assessments made are not being used sufficiently to match work to the range of ability in classes. However, the school is aware of this and in a good Year 4 lesson all pupils were challenged through a flexible approach where rather than a long introduction, pupils were taught in ability groups by the class teacher and the teaching assistant. This greater flexibility was also seen in a good Year 6 lesson where pupils were given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of materials by devising ways of separating gravel, sand, salt and iron filings.

Teaching assistants are given insufficient direction to support higher attaining and lower attaining pupils.

26. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. However, because work is not always planned to meet the needs of the full range of ability they often support lower attaining pupils to do similar work to the majority of the class rather than work that is more closely matched to pupils' needs.

Overall, there are good relationships between teachers and pupils.

27. Good relationships throughout the school make a significant contribution to the good ethos in the school. For example, in a good Year 1 science lesson the positive atmosphere enabled the teacher to engage in supportive discussion with pupils to give them the flexibility, offer their own views, to make a car go faster or slower. Another good example was a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson where the teacher was able to support individuals through discussion and challenge through good knowledge and understanding.

Good teaching methods and pace ensure pupils are fully engaged, encouraged to work hard and achieve, particularly in English.

28. Teachers are more imaginative in their methods of teaching in English than other subjects. A good example was seen in a very good Year 6 English lesson where good pace and very good questioning ensured pupils were very clear about the focus for each paragraph they needed to complete in a report on a fantasy animal.

Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is not sufficiently in place to enable teachers to plan work based on pupils' prior attainment.

29. Work follows the nationally approved schemes of work and is matched to pupils' age and ability but planning is not firmly based on pupils' prior attainment to ensure they make the best possible progress.

Marking is generally supportive but does not systematically inform pupils how they could improve.

30. Marking is done systematically and, while it is generally supportive of pupils' efforts, overall there is insufficient information given to pupils about how they can improve their work. Targets for mathematics and English are clear, however, marking does not always identify how pupils are to proceed and they are often unclear what to do to improve to meet their targets.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** throughout the school with some good features. The Foundation Stage curriculum makes a significant contribution to the development of the **good** attitudes and values pupils have across the school. Opportunities for enrichment are **good** and the accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for English is good.
- There is lack of rigor in planning to meet the full range of ability in classes.
- There is good provision to enrich the curriculum and for learning outside the school day.
- There is insufficient emphasis in the use and application of mathematics.
- There is insufficient development of pupils' independent investigative skills in science.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good across the school.
- There is no systematic identification of gifted and talented pupils.
- Overall, the accommodation and resources are good.

Commentary

31. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. However, the development of children's good social skills, attitudes and values in the Foundation Stage lays the foundation for the good attitudes to learning pupils have as they move through the rest of school.
32. Provision for English is developing particularly well as the subject coordinator and class teachers have cooperated in building on the National Literacy Strategy to provide a more flexible approach to lesson planning which caters for the particular needs of their pupils. Key features include short sessions for the development of basic skills, extension of the time available for writing at length, the re-introduction of drama and increased emphasis on the effective use of literacy across the curriculum. Pupils' results demonstrate how effective a re-think can be. However, the school has not yet been as innovative in developing science and mathematics and there are insufficient opportunities for the development of pupils' investigative skills and the application of mathematics.

33. The good personal, social and health education provision has a positive impact on pupils' development. Co-ordination of the provision is very good. The teacher ensures that all aspects are kept up to date by attending local network meetings about good practice. The good quality curriculum is well organised with well-chosen objectives. There is clear guidance as to the contexts in which the various aspects of this broad curriculum are to be delivered. All pupils participate in weekly 'circle time' discussions designed to enhance their personal and social development and, as future citizens, each class has a member on the school's council.
34. The school is strongly committed to a broad and balanced curriculum and has worked hard to protect its full range of subjects. It is beginning to consider a more integrated curriculum and already fosters development of cross-curricular links to enhance learning. The increasing use of ICT across the curriculum is one example. The curriculum is already enriched by a wide range of visitors, such as an Olympic gymnast, a dance company and visiting musicians. Teachers organise visits to sites of educational interest and the school offers a long list of extra-curricular activities, including a dance club, board games, a science club, netball, football and two recorder clubs.
35. Though the school is committed to an inclusive approach to its learning opportunities, it makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs and organises lessons in ways which support pupils at various stages of prior development. It is reluctant to take a systematic approach to provision for gifted and talented pupils, though it once linked with a secondary school to provide for an outstanding pupil. The school has yet to take up Summer school facilities offered by the local education authority or to develop its own solutions for the potentially gifted and talented pupils. The school does, however, have productive professional links with the local high school with whom they are working in partnership to produce a transitional curriculum to ease the move into secondary education. Overall, though updated, the quality of the curriculum is similar to the time of the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Good care is taken of pupils and **very good** account is taken of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes pupils' ideas and opinions very well.
- Provision for first aid in school is very good.
- Child protection procedures are very good and well embedded in school practice.
- Good attention has been given to promoting healthy exercise through play.

Commentary

36. 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 get to know pupils and their families and encourage their co-operation and support. Consequently, pupils feel secure and are positive about school. They particularly like "writing stories", work that is "not too easy", "getting house-points" and "the football, netball, dance and other clubs". Parents are very happy with the quality of care their children receive.
37. The arrangements to secure the health and welfare of pupils work very well. The school takes a meticulous approach in dealing with first aid and child protection issues. Four members of staff are fully qualified first-aiders. Ten others who update their 'appointed persons' training every year, support them. Their combined availability, efficiency and in-house expertise help minimise the amount of time pupils are absent from lessons. Staff awareness of health issues and their vigilance in identifying patterns of non-attendance show the school is alert to the likely indications of a child failing to thrive. Concerns, once noted, are brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities at an early stage. The school acts quickly in establishing facts and caring for those affected.

38. Good procedures are in place to meet the requirement placed on schools to assess their premises for potential health and safety risks and to improve access for pupils with disabilities. Well-organised risk assessments take place in advance of school trips. There has been a strong focus on developing the outside environment to make it conducive to a healthy lifestyle. The large climbing apparatus is attractive to pupils and encourages them to exercise freely. The school is taking appropriate steps to address one health and safety concern identified by the inspection team of which governors were already aware.
39. Pupils have a good insight into the principles of citizenship and democracy. They elect school councillors and are pleased to see teachers take on board their ideas on school improvement. 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 dealing with adults in authority and with each other. This helps them communicate, work and play together well. Pupils bond easily with the adults who care for them.
40. Systematic assessment procedures help staff track pupils' academic procedures but the data is not used sufficiently well enough to set targets for improvement for all pupils. 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. The procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are sound and enable the school to identify those pupils who need extra support at an early stage.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has maintained the **satisfactory** partnership it had with parents at the time of the previous inspection. Links with the community and other schools continue to be **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully promotes co-operation between home and school.
- Parents are keen to send their children to the school.
- Good links exist with pre-school settings and parents of the youngest children in school.
- The church plays an effective role in the school.
- Parents involvement in the decision making processes in school are underdeveloped.

Commentary

41. Most parents who offered their views to inspectors, either through the meeting or the pre-inspection survey, were happy with the school and thought that their children were doing well. Parents are satisfied with the information they receive, particularly about the curriculum. Some felt the school should take more account of their views and the inspection evidence supports the parents' feeling on this. Parents are rightly valued for their fundraising abilities but their potential in other directions has yet to be developed. Parents support the school but have no strong desire to find out more about how it operates and the progress their children make. Links with the wider community are not sufficiently exploited.
42. Co-operation between home and school is good. A good start is made with parents of the reception age pupils. Good links forged with local playgroups increase the number of ways parents have in getting to know the school, the staff and its procedures. The well-written prospectus and handbook guide parents through most aspects of school life they are likely to encounter. First experiences of school for parents and children are planned carefully and parents appreciate this. Children start school finding they can relate easily to their teachers and, as a result, parents have trust and confidence in what the school provides.

43. Regular consultation evenings take place but the annual reports on pupils' progress vary in their usefulness, particularly for those pupils who are capable of higher attainment. The best examples are written in a way that makes it clear to parents what children need to do to improve their work and how they, as parents, can assist them in doing so.
44. Good links are maintained with members of the local church community and charity officials who foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through talks in assemblies and visits to the church. The school works closely with further education colleges to provide curriculum training for students, who in turn give general assistance in a number of classes. A programme of visits to the local high school helps pupils transfer confidently to the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The management of the school is **good**. The leadership and governance of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring and supportive management of the headteacher.
- The headteacher's success in recruiting and retaining good teachers.
- Good communication and team work within the school.
- Insufficient evaluation and modification of the curriculum.
- Performance management arrangements are well developed and have been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- The governors are supportive but do not challenge the senior management team sufficiently.
- The school improvement plan is insufficiently focused on raising standards.

Commentary

45. The headteacher has a distinctively democratic and consultative leadership style. At a time of teacher shortage, this has been very successful in building, attracting and retaining a committed staff who share his vision of a caring school in which all individuals, both teachers and pupils, are valued. Parents also appreciate the distinctive ethos of the school and the school has slowly evolved from a small village school to its current maximum capacity as an average sized primary school attracting pupils from a wide area.
46. The headteacher has a clear vision of the kind of school he wants to lead. Relationships are very good, pupils are well behaved, their personal development is good and the school is well regarded in the community. This vision has certainly become a reality. He sets a good personal example both through his management style and through his commitment to a teaching role. He maintains good and open communications with all staff. His delegation of responsibilities to key stage managers who share his vision and management style is successful and instrumental in welding the staff into a mutually supportive team.
47. Performance management arrangements have been effective in improving teaching. However, the headteacher's concern for his staff, characterised by a reluctance to impose uniform systems across the school, particularly if it would increase their workload, has slowed the pace of innovation in teaching and curriculum development. As a result pupils do not all achieve as well as they could.
48. From the Foundation Stage onwards, teachers create a good climate for learning, but there is insufficient emphasis on achievement. Pupils are not all sufficiently challenged and teachers' expectations are not always high enough. The very supportive atmosphere in all classes inhibits the rigorous use of assessment to ensure that the needs of pupils of different abilities are met. There are revised procedures in place for monitoring performance data and reviewing pupil

progress but at the moment these are not being used sufficiently to plan work ensuring all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

49. All governors are linked to both specific curriculum areas and individual classes and they visit regularly. They are very supportive and closely involved in monitoring the school budget and health and safety issues. They are less involved in school development planning and, although aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, do not have a clear idea of how to raise levels of achievement. Spending decisions are agreed but there are no procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness. This limits the extent to which the governors can hold the headteacher to account for improvements. For example, a decision was made to employ more teaching assistants but too little attention has been paid to how to use them most effectively.
50. The school development plan is descriptive and there is too much emphasis on procedures at the expense of a rigorous analysis of what will have a major impact on standards. Its terminology reflects the very democratic nature of the school. However, while it demonstrates a measured pace of change it lacks rigorous criteria for success. The school has been slow to take the initiative in adapting and modifying National Curriculum guidelines and schemes of work. The headteacher and senior staff are aware of the need to create a curriculum which, reflects the particular context of the school and the needs of the pupils.
51. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has good diagnostic skills and provides good support for colleagues. She maintains an appropriate emphasis on the early diagnosis of learning difficulties. Her role is largely administrative and she maintains good links with outside agencies. Records are meticulously maintained and teaching assistants provide an ongoing record of progress, which feeds into the regular review process.
52. The management of the school's finances is good. All the necessary controls are in place. The governors and the efficient work of the school secretary ensure that the school makes very good use of its resources. Special educational needs funding is spent appropriately and principles of best value are applied well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	459 789
Total expenditure	416 188
Expenditure per pupil	2 024

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	34 475
Balance carried forward to the next	43 609

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

AREAS OF LEARNING AT THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good procedures for the induction of new children also contribute to the good links with parents.
- Leadership and management at the Foundation Stage is good.
- Teaching and learning are good, sometimes very good.
- There is good quality coverage of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Commentary

53. Induction of the children into their new learning environment is well managed. Around half of them enter reception with prior learning experiences in a pre-school environment with which the school has close contact. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average and their social development shows the benefits of their pre-school experiences. The induction process includes a tour of the main school by parents and children as well as visits to the reception class. A special event is the summer, Teddy Bears' Picnic, which is attended by new children and their parents. Existing reception children look after the newcomers and Year 6 pupils run exciting activities. All the four year old children start in September, though initially half the class attend on every other day, parents staying if they wish. The September start for summer born children, who are barely four years old, is designed to give them a full year's preparation into the main school and is successful particularly in preparing socially into the main school.
54. The leadership and management of the department are good. The key aims of the reception class experience is to emphasise the individuality of each child and the priority of their development as lovers of learning, a gift which will enhance their achievements at later stages in their education and go on to enrich their lives. While children's individuality is emphasised so is their development as members of a community. Teaching is seen as being a means to these ends as much as it is a process of developing knowledge, skills and understanding. The role is seen as a facilitating process in which the teacher implies membership of the community of learners by asking for help from children and teaching assistants, making deliberate mistakes, demonstrating how to use learning aids around the room and initially accepting less than perfect standards. Children are invited to make suggestions for improvement. The result is that children's learning skills develop well as they move towards achievement of the Early Learning Goals for the age group. All aspects of provision for this are well managed. Planning ensures coverage of the Foundation Stage curriculum; the good provision of learning resources are well exploited and no time is wasted. Assessment arrangements are based on the Foundation Stage profile and informed by ongoing assessments of the children's progress. Though the school has responded appropriately to the required curriculum changes, the overall quality of provision is largely in line with the findings at the time of the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

55. Children achieve well in this area of learning, most reaching the Early Learning Goals. Children's development is promoted through interaction with teachers and helpers who model how human beings should treat each other. Children are given opportunities to widen their range of friendship through occasional reorganisation of the class. Informal, incidental prompts from staff help the children to develop awareness of the needs of others. They learn to show consideration for others as they play together on the very well resourced playground. Children learn to share and cooperate and to take on small responsibilities such as clearing up and other small tasks. They develop independence in their learning, gradually selecting their own resources.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

56. The good provision in this area of learning contributes to mainly good achievement by the end of the reception year. Many of the skills involved are promoted within the context of 'circle time' discussions. As children's confidence increases they begin to initiate conversations with one another and with trusted adults. Well-planned learning experiences foster this trend. For instance, small groups led by adults engage the children in discussions about their weekend experiences. The emphasis was on the importance of listening as well as on speaking and on the great importance of maintaining eye contact as part of non-verbal communication skills. Follow up of these conversations included a guided writing experience in which the teacher attempted to write a sentence about her own weekend. The children and support staff were asked to provide guidance as the teacher stumbled through the spelling of simple words and some children offered reminders about using capital letters and full stops at the end of sentences. The writing was not perfect but the production of written messages as a form of communication was made clear as children settled to their own emergent writing. Less advanced children communicated through lively paintings which they discussed with adults. Reading skill development is integrated into daily classroom activities such as guided reading as well as own choice reading from the good range of books in the classroom and effective home – school reading arrangements.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

57. Most children achieve satisfactorily in this area. The majority are above average in counting skills when they enter reception, though they do not always know what numbers mean. They gradually learn to apply their growing understanding of number to the counting of items on a one to one basis. Number songs reinforce and give extra pleasure to their learning. Most pick up the idea of adding and subtracting one or two items from a set of toy frogs, for example, with some eventually recording the process in a standard format. They learn to recognise basic shapes and to make simple patterns using small equipment. This skill is reinforced by the wrong will little angel one in 19 one change in all wanting 11 making of printed patterns and by looking for patterns in the classroom and wider environment. Other motivating learning experiences promote awareness of measurement differences such as more/less, longer/shorter and heavier/lighter. There is good emphasis on the development of basic mathematical vocabulary.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

58. Children's achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory. Most enter reception with broadly average awareness of aspects of their environment. They are helped to become aware of the natural environment, its changes over the seasons and of the need to preserve its wild life. All have opportunities to use the computer and a few show above average information and communication technology skills for their age. Religious education is provided, in line with legal requirements, though direct contacts with people from other cultures is limited. Good use is made of construction toys but there was little evidence of other construction activities at the time of the inspection.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

59. Achievement in this area is good. Most children show awareness of space and can move with confidence and control. These skills are very evident as children play together on their very well resourced playground area. They show coordination and balance as they travel under and over climbing equipment of various sorts and move around on large wheeled toys. They achieved well in a lesson focussed on turning skills in which a few pupils excelled. They recognised the importance of safety and are very responsive to the teacher's instructions. This particular lesson involved the use of imagination as children responded well to a poem, which required a sequence of movement. Lessons include warm up and cool down activities and are accompanied by simple explanations of the cardio-vascular changes which exercise generates. Children become well aware of the positive changes to the changes to their own bodies. Their

finer motor skills also develop well as they learn to manipulate small equipment such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

60. The majority of children show average skills in this area of learning, with a few above in the context of imaginative play in their self-chosen activities. The children are responsive to musical stimuli, taking pleasure in singing and in the exploration of musical instruments. Artistic skills and awareness are well developed through the painting and pattern making opportunities. Some of their work produces three-dimensional results achieved by cutting, folding and sticking paper and card, though no large-scale junk-based products were evident at the time of the inspection. The children enjoy creative opportunities. A small group of lower achieving children were delighted to point out key features in their bold and colourful paintings. A sound range of media is available to them and their work is celebrated by exhibition in the classroom.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

English

The provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average.
- The curriculum for English is good.

Commentary

61. English is led by a coordinator who has high expectations of the pupils, who sees literacy as being at the heart of the curriculum, empowering pupils in all other areas of learning. Its support for thinking skills generally is recognised. English is also seen as contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through stories, performance opportunities, character studies and collaborative working. The effectiveness of provision overall is audited annually. The quality and appropriateness of lesson planning is regularly monitored. Currently, the emphasis is on the improvement of writing. English in the school is based on an innovative approach to the application of the National Literacy Strategy. The learning objectives and increasing challenge which this approach provides are used as the framework for lesson planning, adapted to suit the ongoing needs of the pupils, as indicated by constant monitoring of the effectiveness of learning opportunities. The school is committed to a discursive, interactive approach which empowers the pupils as learners. Pupils find this enhanced involvement highly motivating. A recent development is the increasing use of drama as a learning strategy.
62. The success of English in the school, as compared with that of other core subjects, also owes much to good leadership of the coordinator. The co-ordinator is given time for subject management duties and has strong backing from governors and the headteacher. The good quality cooperation and commitment of colleagues is also a powerful influence as they modify the National Literacy Strategy to allow more time for guided writing and sustained quality writing by the pupils.
63. Standards of achievement are good in speaking and listening. Pupils' very good reading skills are an established strength of the school. By Year 2 they have developed a good sight vocabulary and are skilled at decoding unknown words. They are fluent and read with expression. Nearly half of the pupils achieved above national expectations for reading in Year 2 in 2003. The school's results were well above those achieved by similar schools. By Year 6, the highest achievers are tackling sizable, challenging books, one pupil relishing the use of old

fashioned words, for example. All can give coherent accounts of the story line, analyse characters and make comments on the authors' techniques. In discussion, they emphasised that they are certain to continue reading on their own initiative.

64. Overall strengths in writing are not so well established, though the majority of Year 2 pupils are meeting national expectations for their age and an increasing number are exceeding them. Writing is improving significantly as the school uses a more flexible approach to the teaching of the various aspects of the English curriculum. They let pupil's creative writing flow, emphasising more technical aspects in other literacy contexts. The enjoyment of writing enhances on-going achievements. By Year 6, the majority of pupils are achieving well in writing, with a very significant minority exceeding expected standards for their age. Girls have performed better than boys over recent years but differences are rapidly diminishing. Speaking and listening are good, as is handwriting. Demanding targets are in place for national test results in 2004. Pupils' attainment in English is ahead of that for both mathematics and science.
65. Teaching and learning in English are good throughout the school. Some lessons are very good. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson on a modern fable, pupils showed a good understanding of the story line and underlying meanings, prompted by the excellent questioning of the teacher. Motivation was increased by the presence of a large soft toy owl representing the key character in the story. In a Year 6 lesson on the writing of non-chronological reports, the teacher chose a quick fire focus on vocabulary development before the detailed analysis of a report on animal welfare, which led to well structured, amusing writing on an exotic imaginary animal. "The Hobbit" was well used in a Year 4 class to show how a fantasy story setting can be created, alerting the pupils to striking descriptive elements detailing sights and sounds. There is good provision in English lessons for pupils in all stages of prior development. Short lessons in spelling and handwriting are also provided. Marking of pupils' work includes constructive comments, appreciation of pupils' achievements and well judged tolerance of some spelling and other mistakes in the interests of higher level achievement. Currently, the standards are broadly similar to those achieved at the time of the previous inspection.

Literacy across the curriculum

66. There is wide use of literacy across the curriculum in subjects such as geography and history, but also for recording purposes in more technical subjects such as science. Information and communication technology is used at the early stages of learning in the subject and for different forms of recording in the later years.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident in using a range of computational strategies.
- Teachers do not plan for the range of abilities in their class.
- There are too few opportunities for investigative and applied mathematics.
- There is an over reliance on worksheets in Years 1 and 2.
- There has been too little evaluation and modification of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Good relationships and attitudes to work in all classes underpin learning.

Commentary

67. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that standards in mathematics are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, tasks are highly structured and lower attaining pupils receive considerable support. When pupils are required to apply their knowledge in a test situation, weaknesses in their understanding are apparent. Although there is good coverage of the National Numeracy Strategy, this has been at the expense of opportunities for pupils to apply

their knowledge in a range of different situations. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on encouraging pupils to explain and use a variety of strategies to solve computational problems. However, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate and solve mathematical problems or to consolidate their understanding through practical activities. Pupils do not have regular opportunities to make connections between different aspects of mathematical learning, or to work collaboratively to test hypotheses through practical explorations. Higher attaining pupils in particular are not extended by tasks, which are qualitatively different in the amount of challenge they present.

68. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there were examples of good teaching in the junior classes. The scrutiny of work revealed a limited range of teaching strategies and an over reliance on worksheets to record pupils' work in Years 1 and 2. Mental/oral sessions usually have the same focus as the rest of the lesson which gives lessons an overall cohesion. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to do well and good relationships underpin learning throughout the school. Lesson routines are well established and pupils work conscientiously for long periods.
69. Throughout the school, teachers do not plan sufficiently for the range of abilities within their class. Although modifications were made, for example, through the size of numbers in calculations, nearly all pupils of whatever ability completed the same tasks. Lower attaining pupils were helped through additional adult support to complete the same tasks as the rest of the class but this masked a lack of understanding which only revealed itself in a test situation. Although teaching assistants are committed and have very good relationships with pupils, they are not always used as effectively as they might be.
70. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 use a 'virtual protractor' to check their estimation of angles.
71. Teachers plan lessons in detail and mark pupils' work conscientiously. However, they do not use information from tests or ongoing assessment to inform their planning sufficiently. For example, they do not evaluate pupils' work in terms of how easily or with what difficulty or help pupils completed a task. As a result, their marking does not give an accurate picture of what pupils really can do, and they have little information on which to base the next stages of learning. Pupils' work is presented beautifully but there is insufficient evidence of working out. The use of worksheets from published schemes results in occasional mismatch between the teaching and the follow up activities.
72. The management of the subject has recently been taken over by a knowledgeable and committed co-ordinator who has already undertaken an audit of provision within the school. This is focused on pupils' learning and indicated some significant areas for development. Although the National Numeracy Strategy is firmly in place, its implementation has not been fully evaluated and the school has not developed a mathematics curriculum, which fully matches the needs of its pupils. As a result, all pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Monitoring of teaching has identified specific areas for development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Mathematics is used effectively to support learning in other curriculum areas, although these opportunities are largely incidental rather than planned. The school is aware of the importance of building regular opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge across the curriculum in order to develop an appreciation of the practical uses of pupils' computational skills.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are average for Year 6 and Year 2.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 have improved since the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2003.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with a significant proportion of good teaching.
- Assessment procedures have improved but are not used sufficiently to inform planning to match work to the full range of pupils' ability.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

74. As a result of lower than average results in national tests for Year 6, and an awareness that the teacher assessment at the end of Year 2 has not always given an accurate picture of pupils abilities, the school have put greater emphasis on science through improved assessment procedures and teaching and learning. This has resulted in gradually improving standards and a more accurate picture of pupils' progress. However, the new assessment procedures and the setting of targets for pupils has not yet impacted sufficiently on teachers' planning to ensure all pupils have work that challenges the full range of ability in classes. This is particularly evident in science investigations where opportunities for older pupils to devise, carry out and evaluate questions they have raised for themselves, is limited.
75. Overall the standards in science have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils achieve appropriately.
76. Teaching overall is satisfactory with a significant proportion of good teaching. For example, in a good well-planned Year 6 lesson, pupils applied their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials to separate a mixture of gravel, sand, salt and iron filings. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils were given good opportunities to explore and demonstrate their understanding by using an increasing number of devices in a circuit and to explore its effect. Through good teacher intervention challenging groups and individuals, enabled the vast majority to learn well. However, better than average achievement is limited by some over-structured work limiting opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Consequently, pupils' true ability is not clear and appropriately challenging work to challenge higher attaining pupils, or work more suited for lower attaining pupils is not planned sufficiently. Marking, although often supportive, does not consistently inform pupils how they could improve their work.
77. Information and communication technology is used in science to record practical work and to research information from the Internet, for example, work on the planets in Year 6. However, there is as yet limited use of information and communication technology in science through the use of spreadsheets to record data and plot graphs or use of digital cameras to record and present findings from an investigation.
78. The leadership of science is satisfactory. At the time of the inspection the subject leader had been in the role since the start of the year. In this time she has made a good start in identifying the issues for the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has addressed the issues from the last inspection well and made good progress in provision since the installation of the suite last summer.

- Standards and achievement meet national expectations for Year 6 and Year 2.
- Assessment procedures have been recently put in place but are not yet impacting sufficiently on planning for the full range of abilities in classes.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

79. There has been good improvement in information and communication technology since the last inspection and the key issues identified have been addressed fully. The school has recently had two small computer suites installed and provision is satisfactory. The school have had a number of technical difficulties since their installation but these have now been resolved and good progress is being made in delivering a full curriculum.
80. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. No teaching of information and communication technology was seen in Years 1 or 2 and two lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. The following judgements are made through discussions with pupils and staff, scrutiny of pupils' work and other observations of pupils' working.
81. By Year 2, pupils program a 'Roamer' to move across the floor in a predetermined way. They edit text and create pictures using a graphics program. By Year 6, pupils use spreadsheets to calculate the profit from fundraising, plot the results of recording pulse rate at different activities and use the Internet to research information for art on Lowry.
82. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, for example, in a Year 5 lesson, good teacher knowledge and understanding ensured that the lesson was well-planned, made good use of resources and, when combined with good pace, ensured pupils were interested, involved, learnt well and worked at a high standard. Good links were made in this lesson to other parts of the curriculum as pupils worked on a database of census information from 1891 from a local street, this supported history, mathematics and information and communication technology.
83. Information and communication technology is also used to support English and science through the use of word processing and the use of the Internet to research information on the planets. However, although these cross-curricular links are developing as yet there are limited links to mathematics or the use of presentation programs to present, for example, investigation findings, visits or to create 'newspaper' type layout to present information.
84. Currently, leadership of information and communication technology is carried out by the headteacher until a new appointment is made. There is a clear action plan to develop the subject through the development of staff expertise and more software. New assessment procedures have recently been put into place to monitor pupils' progress. However, these are not yet having an impact on planning to ensure pupils are given appropriately challenging based on their prior attainment.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Long-term planning is good for both key stages. It takes good account of the locally agreed syllabus and interpreted through the nationally approved scheme of work.
- Teaching is good.
- Standards at Year 6 are above average and standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection.
- Limited range of visits to place of worship of other faiths.

Commentary

85. Three lessons were seen; two at Key Stage 1 and one at Key Stage 2. Standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus for pupils at the end of Year 2 and above average for 11 year olds. The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2.
86. In a good Year 2 lesson about the lead up to Easter, pupils were sensitively introduced to the purpose of the last supper. Pupils recognised that this is a 'special event' for Christians. This was achieved through the use of good resources, for example, the use of 'Ribena' for wine and unleavened bread. The use of appropriate language for seven year olds, whilst adhering closely to the biblical story, also engaged pupils in learning. Pupils were motivated by the activities and developed a sound understanding of the significance of Easter.
87. Good teaching was also seen in a Year 6 lesson where western symbolism of the heart for feeling good and a black hole for feeling fearful were used to bridge the concept to Islamic symbolism. Pupils were introduced to examples of highly patterned Islamic art and its symbolism and to the significance of the prayer mat and praying towards Mecca. They were also introduced to the imagery in the Qu'ran. From this good introduction, that captured pupils' imagination and interest, they created Islamic designs of their own that included the five pillars, archways, minarets and Arabic writing. Pupils are able to make meaningful comparisons with Islamic decoration and its meaning with their previous work on the local church.
88. All areas of the locally agreed syllabus are covered. Work on other faiths and cultures supports pupils' cultural development. Leadership is good overall. There is good interpretation of the locally agreed syllabus and lesson observations ensure the subject is fully implemented. The school have identified that visits to other places of worship, such as Mosques and synagogues, would further support pupils' understanding of World religions and their understanding of the multicultural nature of Britain today. Assessment meets statutory requirements.

HUMANITIES

There was not enough evidence to report on geography or history. Insufficient teaching and pupils' work was seen to make firm judgements on provision. However, work was sampled and discussions were held with staff.

Geography

89. No lessons were available for observation during the inspection so secure judgements about levels of attainment; pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching are not possible. However, displays around the school provided some insight into the quality of the curriculum. They gave little evidence on pupils' mapping skills other than identification of the location of large cities in Britain and the position of their own village. They did, however, throw light on the depth of pupils' work. For example, Year 2 pupils have made a comprehensive study of daily life in Mexico, researching themes such as work, housing, crops and food. Finally, pupils made their own tortillas in the interests of both learning and pleasure. Pupils in Year 4 have carried out an equally comprehensive study of Liverpool using plans and aerial maps. They investigated transport, landscapes, buildings, leisure and industry. Each theme was studied by a small group of pupils who subsequently gave a presentation to the rest of the class, incidentally strengthening their speaking and listening skills. Environmental studies are undertaken, including a visit to the Bishop's Wood Ecological Centre.

History

90. Relatively few history lessons were available for inspection, but judgements on history are strengthened by a survey of pupils' previous work. All point to good teaching based on a secure knowledge of history as a product of investigations using different types of evidence of the past. This indicates that teachers have a good understanding of the nature of the subject. They treat their pupils as young historians, providing them with motivating investigative learning

opportunities. For instance, their study of Ancient Greek and Egyptian civilisations draw on details from archaeological evidence. Internet researches of census returns are used to inform Year 5 pupils of the features of Victorian life in their own villages. These documents clearly brought the period to life. Such learning activities motivate the pupils to work hard and to concentrate well, as does the use of art to help Year 2 pupils appreciate the reality of the Great Fire of London. Understanding is increased as teachers' questioning helps pupils to see links between one social or technological development and another. Time lines help them to place events in chronological order and visits, such as an outing to Hartlebury museum, enrich knowledge and understanding of Victorian times. Assessment arrangements for tracking pupils' achievements in history and evaluating curriculum quality are underdeveloped.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was not enough evidence to report on design and technology, art, music or physical education. Insufficient teaching and pupils' work was seen to make firm judgements on provision. However, work was sampled and discussions were held with staff.

Art and design

91. Discussion with co-ordinators indicates that the school has maintained an appropriate emphasis on creative subjects. Cross-curricular links are used well to ensure that art and design are used effectively to support other curriculum areas. Links are built into the medium term planning. A resident artist and an Arts Week have reinforced the importance of art within the curriculum. A new co-ordinator has been appointed after a two year leaderless phase and she is aware of the need to ensure the development of subject specific skills and simple assessment procedures.
92. No lessons were observed in art and design or in design and technology. Evidence from displays indicates that standards in art and design are at least average and probably better than this in Year 6 because of the teacher's good subject knowledge. For example, pupils looking at the work of Clarice Cliff reproduced photographic images from the local countryside in paint and then transferred their designs to clay tiles. The teacher successfully steered them away from copying Clarice Cliff's standard images and encouraged pupils to use their own ideas while conveying the original style. Paper collages entitled 'Objects and Meaning' also demonstrated good awareness of composition and design.

Music

93. Music has maintained a high profile in the school under the leadership of an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is also a good degree of teacher expertise, which ensures that the subject is taught well. A significant number of pupils learn instruments with peripatetic teachers and this makes a considerable contribution to the musical life of the school. Regular musical assemblies and whole-school productions provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their talents.
94. Planning indicates that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in lessons including composition and performance. Singing in assembly is enthusiastic and tuneful.

Physical education

95. No lessons were seen in physical education. The school's scheme of work shows all areas of the curriculum are appropriately covered and school records show that the vast majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres before leaving the school. The subject leader has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and is currently reviewing assessment procedures to ensure progression of knowledge, understanding and skills from year to year. However, good use is made of the nationally approved scheme of work and support material, such as 'top Sport' and 'Top Play' activity cards. The subject leader has recently returned to her role and has made a good start in raising the profile of the subject in the school.

96. The school offers a well-supported range of extra-curricular activities, which include football, netball, tag rugby, cricket, grass roots football, rounders and athletics. There are good links with the local secondary school through the Sports School Coordinator programme. The school is supported through tag rugby coaching, keep fit and the local education authority sports services.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

There was not enough evidence to report fully on personal, social and health education. Insufficient teaching and pupils' work was seen to make firm judgements on provision. However, work was sampled and discussions were held with staff.

97. Personal, social and health education is a priority in the school. It is regularly timetabled through specific personal, social and health education lessons or 'circle time' and this has a positive impact on pupils personal and social development. Aspects of health education such as healthy eating are well covered through the science curriculum. There are regular class council meetings which pupils organise where they can put forward their views. For example, in a Year 6 class council meeting pupils discussed the problems of recycling waste paper in the school and decided to take the issue of whether they could bring their own toys into school to the headteacher for further discussion. Leadership of the personal, social and health education is very good and clear support given to staff in order to ensure all aspects of the subject are fully addressed.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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