

INSPECTION REPORT

DEANSHANGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Deanshanger, Milton Keynes

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121813

Headteacher: Mr. S. Churchill

Lead inspector: Mrs. L. Moore

Dates of inspection: 20th - 23rd October 2003

Inspection number: 260705

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

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:	366
School address:	The Green Deanshanger Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK19 6HJ
Telephone number:	01908 268920
Fax number:	01908 261023
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. C. Tyler
Date of previous inspection:	5 th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Deanshanger Primary School is a large community primary school, housed in attractive buildings and spacious grounds, serving Deanshanger and its surrounding area. It admits pupils from a wide range of home backgrounds, some of whom live outside the school's designated catchment area. The school is popular with parents, largely due to its reputation for having a caring ethos, and it is likely that pupil numbers will continue to rise as more houses are built nearby. The majority of pupils come from white British homes, with a small number of pupils having a mother tongue which is not English. There are no pupils who are travellers, refugees or asylum seekers. About one quarter of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above average, with an average number having a statement of special educational needs. The school does not have a nursery and pupils enter the reception class with a wide range of skills. However, the overall attainment on entry is about average. The school has been awarded the Activemark Gold and has just begun to teach French to pupils in Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21243	Mrs. L. Moore	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language
13828	Mr. R. Ibbitson	Lay inspector	
2229	Ms. D. Hansen	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Provision for pupils with special educational needs Science Art and design Design and technology
30144	Mr. J.E. Hastings	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education
22822	Miss C. Thompson	Team inspector	French

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections
51 High Street
Chasetown
Staffordshire
WS7 3XE

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Pupils behave well and their attainment is at least satisfactory, with standards in some subjects being good. There is good leadership from the headteacher and key staff and the quality of teaching and learning is high. The school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high in pupils' number skills, science in Year 6 and art and design.
- The strong provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education creates a positive ethos within the school.
- Curriculum provision is good, particularly in practical science, French and cross-curricular links and in the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment has improved and is now good in English, mathematics, science and the areas of learning in the Reception year although it is not yet effective in many of the other subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, as is the quality of the support staff team, although, in some lessons, teachers do not always provide appropriately matched work to all the pupils' attainment levels.
- Good leadership is provided by the headteacher and other key staff, who are supported by a dedicated staff team, committed to the education and care of the pupils.
- The roles and skills of all co-ordinators are in the early stages and in need of further development, particularly with regard to the monitoring of standards.
- A few statutory requirements have not been met by the governing body.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection in 1998. The provision for children in the reception class is now good, assessment is satisfactory overall and good in the core subjects, and the quality of teaching and learning is now much improved and is good overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' **achievement** is **satisfactory** throughout the school. Unvalidated data for 2003 shows average attainment in English, mathematics and science, when compared with all schools. The same data shows attainment, when compared to similar schools, is average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The English results may change when the validated data becomes available.

In the reception class, standards have improved and are now satisfactory, with the majority of children on target to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception.

By the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining standards which are in line with national expectations in writing and mathematics, with many reaching higher standards in reading. By the end of Year 6, standards in all subjects except music are at least in line with national expectations, with high standards in number skills, art and design, and the practical aspects of science.

Pupils' behaviour is **good** and they have **good** attitudes towards their work. Their personal development is also good. They are aware of the impact of their actions on others and often display a respect for and empathy towards the feelings of others. Pupils' views are often introduced into discussions and they show consideration for each other's opinions. Attendance is **satisfactory** although a number of families take holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Good levels of care and **good** quality teaching, particularly in the reception class and Year 6, ensure that pupils learn well. The improvement in assessment has resulted in a closer match of work to the needs of most pupils, especially in English, mathematics and science and for pupils with special educational needs.

The school takes **good** care of its pupils and gives them **good** support and guidance. Curriculum provision, including extra-curricular provision, is **good**. The school has developed **satisfactory** links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership** of the school is **good** and its **management** is **satisfactory**. The headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership, demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and the commitment to continued school improvement. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provides **satisfactory** governance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the work of the school and are pleased with their children's progress. Although a significant number of parents complain about the quality of information received from the school, inspection findings are that this is satisfactory. Some parents were unhappy with the format of last year's pupil reports and the school has already begun to address this issue.

Pupils are happy at school. They enjoy school life, understand that they have to do their best in lessons and feel safe in the school environment.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide work which is matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Provide effective assessment structures in the non-core subjects.
- Further develop the roles and skills of all co-ordinators.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents fully covers all statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** throughout the school. Standards of attainment in the reception class, Year 2 and Year 6 are **average** overall. The results of national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 show an improvement in English from the previous year. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, or pupils from different backgrounds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the reception class has improved and is now satisfactory.
- Reading is above average in Year 2.
- Standards are high in number skills, art and design, and the practical aspects of science, particularly in Year 6.

Commentary

1. In the reception class, standards have improved and are now broadly in line with the national average in each of the areas of learning. The majority of children are on target to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception.
2. In national tests and tasks, pupils in Year 2 usually attain standards which are higher than the national average. However, when compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading and writing is about average and in mathematics it is below average.
3. Standards observed during the inspection show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining standards which are in line with national expectations in writing and mathematics, with many reaching higher standards in reading.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (27.9)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.2 (28.1)	26.7 (26.6)
science	30.1 (29.5)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 72 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. In national tests for pupils in Year 6, attainment is average in English, high in science and very high in mathematics when compared with the national average. However, when compared with similar schools, attainment in English is below average, while that in mathematics and science is high. Unvalidated data for 2003 shows average attainment in English, mathematics and science, when compared with all schools. The same data shows attainment, when compared to similar schools, is average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The English results may change when the validated data becomes available.
5. By the end of Year 6, standards in all subjects are at least in line with national expectations, with high standards in number skills, art and design and the practical aspects of science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils in the school have **good** attitudes to their work, behave well and make **good** progress in their personal and social development. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The attendance rate is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in reception work and play well together because good purposeful opportunities are provided.
- The good relationships pupils have with each other, and with their teachers and support staff make an important contribution to their learning and development.
- Interesting activities and clear explanations enable pupils to listen and concentrate well in lessons.
- Adults in the school provide good, caring role models which help pupils to support each other's needs.
- When given shared tasks, pupils work well together in pairs or small groups.
- The pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute to their learning and achievement.
- Aggressive and other inappropriate behaviour is rare but when it does occur is well dealt with by the school.
- The attendance rate is adversely affected by some parents taking their children out of school for holidays.

Commentary

6. Through the school's provision of interesting and stimulating lessons pupils develop good attitudes towards their work. They concentrate well and take a pride in completing their work. Children are confident and polite and like talking to visitors about their life in school.

7. Outside of lessons children move around the school sensibly. Lunchtimes are enjoyed as social occasions when they eat with friends and afterwards play in the playgrounds. The good level of supervision in the playgrounds at breaks and lunchtimes encourages children to behave well.

8. There was no evidence of bullying or racism during the inspection. The school takes such incidents, which occur rarely, seriously and deals with them promptly, firmly and very effectively. In discussions and in their response to the questionnaire pupils are positive about school life and understand that they have to do their best in lessons. They enjoy school and feel safe in the school environment.

9. The majority of children attend school regularly and the overall attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average. The biggest single reason for absences is parents taking their children out of school in term time to go on family holidays. The majority of children arrive for school punctually and lessons begin on time.

10. Attendance in the latest complete reporting year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	369	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0

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

11. The staff's implementation of the school's behaviour policy ensures that inappropriate behaviour is minimised and in the year under consideration there were no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Good quality teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum provision help the pupils to learn well.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**, especially in the Foundation Stage and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The linking of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values in subject teaching reinforces pupils' self-esteem.
- There is precise and regular analysis of assessment data; however, assessment outcomes are not used consistently through the school to ensure that work is sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all groups of pupils in all subjects.
- Teachers encourage and engage pupils in their learning well, making good use of a range of teaching methods and resources.
- Teaching assistants are very dedicated and committed to the pupils and the school. They are used well, and provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Teachers have a good command of the subjects and age group they teach.
- School involvement in the community allotment scheme, the 'Green Fingers' Club promotes social responsibility and supports learning about the local natural environment.
- The withdrawal of pupils from lessons in order to provide them with additional support means that they miss important sections of some lessons.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes is good. In Years 1 to 6 it is good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching in Year 6. Most teachers assess work well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to

learning and most work hard in their lessons and show enthusiasm. Not all teachers use the information gained from assessments well enough to plan differentiated work for pupils at appropriate levels of challenge for the gifted and talented pupils, or those who take a little longer to learn.

13. There has been a significant change of teachers in the past two years, including new appointments and numerous changes in class and subject responsibilities. This inspection shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection when seven per cent of teaching in Years 1 to 6 and all of the teaching of under fives was deemed unsatisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (9%)	10 (22%)	20 (44%)	11 (24%)	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.

14. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of questioning skills to encourage and maintain pupil involvement. Most lessons are made interesting and this helps them to be involved in their learning. In a Year 6 English lesson the teacher encouraged the pupils to use checklists to write play scripts, which resulted in pupils being industrious and making good progress in their writing. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson good teaching methods and high teacher expectations led to pupils achieving well in mental mathematics.

15. Teachers praise their pupils well and this helps them to feel confident, building their self respect and esteem. This was evident in a Year 5 citizenship lesson where careful preparation and the use of good resources elicited a positive response from pupils. These pupils sustained a greater interest in their learning because they were being consistently encouraged and praised well.

16. Teachers introduce their lessons well and most clearly explain what is required of the pupils. Demonstrations and explanations often engage pupils as seen in a Year 1 mathematics lesson where the teacher provided suitably differentiated work and pupils' listening skills were developed well during the lesson. In a Year 4 additional literacy support session the match of work to pupils' levels of ability led to improved reading and recognition of words. In a Year 2 physical education lesson a well planned and taught session led to pupils' developing both their basic catching and throwing skills and good relationships with each other. Resources are well used to help pupils engage in their learning and concentrate effectively. In a Year 6 briskly taught French lesson pupils developed their understanding of a second language and greatly enjoyed the very good learning experience.

17. Teachers brief teaching assistants effectively, which means that they help pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as the other pupils in the class. Teaching assistants know the children very well; they take their work seriously and work with commitment and pride.

18. Teachers generally have a good command of the needs of the age group they teach. Reception class teachers have a good understanding of the varying needs of these young children and work well to provide a stimulating environment that is firmly rooted in the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when the Foundation Stage provision was judged unsatisfactory. The school has provided a designated safe play area for the Reception classes which, although not yet fully equipped, permits equal value to be given to both the indoor and outdoor learning areas. Teachers in Years 3 and 6 have good subject knowledge which they put to good use to help pupils develop secure knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Modelling on the whiteboard as seen at the start of a Year 5 information and communication technology (ICT) session in support of a series of science lessons indicates that

they understand well what they are teaching and this enables the pupils to acquire the skills identified.

Example of outstanding practice

Year 6 (lower set) literacy lesson based on reading of final part of 'War Game'.

LO: Can I share my thoughts and feelings about the ending of the 'War Game'.

The teacher leads a discussion about the emotional temperature of 'War Games', encouraging contributions from pupils about the emotional highs and lows of the soldiers and the incidents that contributed to them. The shared reading of the book takes place by candlelight. Through the reading and strategic use of questioning pupils are beginning to make connections of events and to understand some of the layers of meaning through the imagery and use of language. The end of the book is very emotional as the characters they have come to know and like meet an inevitable end in the trenches. The candles are extinguished. Pupils express their feelings very openly and honestly. The teacher tells them it's all right to experience these emotions. She helps them to say what they feel about the power of the book and its characters. For most this is their first experience of the power of language. The teacher gently helps them return back from the emotion of the book.

Assessment

19. The procedures for assessment throughout the school are now **good**, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers assess pupils' work in English, mathematics and science very thoroughly, on a day-to-day basis. Teachers' records contain details of pupils' progress across these subjects, enabling progress to be monitored, areas for development to be identified and targets set for different groups of pupils. Teachers assess pupils' understanding very effectively in lessons through the use of questioning, and through their marking of their work, informing pupils of what they need to do to improve. Test data is analysed by gender and by different groups, in order to identify trends and to set longer term targets. Assessments are administered each term to check and monitor progress and to identify weaknesses, so that planning may take account of the individual needs of different groups of pupils. The school has, through testing, identified a weakness in the performance of boys in writing, and has reflected upon strategies for improving their progress. There is not a common format for assessment in the non-core subjects of the curriculum, although there are plans to address this area.

The curriculum

The quality and range of curricular experiences are **good** and cater well for the interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong provision in art and design, French and personal, social, health and citizenship education helps pupils to achieve well in these subjects.
- Resources in ICT are much improved.
- The school provides a good programme of extra-curricular experiences; extra-curricular sporting activity supports the teaching of physical education well.
- There are good links between the different subjects of the curriculum.
- There are good opportunities for instrumental tuition in music through the use of the peripatetic service.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, but the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Part time enrolment for under-fives initially reduces their access to the full curriculum.

Commentary

20. All the subjects of the national curriculum are taught and all statutory requirements are met. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are taught effectively and underpin learning in all other areas of the curriculum. ICT supports learning well, especially in English and history. There is good provision for art and design. The good personal, social, health and citizenship education programme includes teaching about the use and misuse of drugs, and the teaching of sex education. French adds an interesting and challenging dimension to the Year 6 curriculum. Religious education is

taught appropriately in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Good attention is paid to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and to ensuring that there are good links within subjects across the curriculum.

21. There is satisfactory provision for equality of access and opportunity. Pupils feel they are treated well by thoughtful staff. Activities within school and extra-curricular activities are all open to both boys and girls. Pupils with disabilities or other special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life, including residential visits. However, there is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils in some subjects although most lessons include provision for the needs of different groups of pupils, and the additional strategies support the needs of the less able in the basic skills of English and mathematics.

22. Extra tuition in instrumental music provides good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a wide range of instruments, and provides enrichment to the curriculum. It is a similar picture with physical education where provision has been enhanced by the prestigious awarding of the Activemark Gold, and supported by a wide range of sporting activities outside the school day and throughout the year. Year 4 and Year 6 have the opportunity to participate on residential visits, where they develop skills in outdoor and adventurous activities. Additional experiences are provided for pupils to visit places of interest, including a Tudor manor house, and a mosque, as well as to receive visitors from history workshops and professional musicians.

23. The quality of accommodation and resources to meet the curricular needs of the school is good. The large hall provides good space for all aspects of physical education and drama, and there is a spacious playing field area for games and sports with capacity for environmental activity. The outdoor play area for under-fives is not suitable for all year round activities. All subjects have resources of at least satisfactory quality to meet their needs. Classrooms are adequate in size for current class numbers, with some surplus accommodation that has recently been renovated for an anticipated rise in admissions. Internal access for disabled persons between two parts of the building is currently difficult. The newly installed ICT suite is suitable for whole classes, and provides good quality computers and software for the development of pupils' knowledge and skills.

24. There is a sufficient number of teaching staff with the appropriate experience and good level of skills to meet the needs of the curriculum. The well-trained teaching assistants provide a good level of support to pupils. The specialist ICT technician contributes significantly to the support of pupils, and works closely with teachers to ensure the availability of appropriate provision.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good** care of its pupils and gives them **good** support and guidance. Satisfactory procedures ensure that children learn in a safe and healthy environment. Opportunities for involving children in the work and development of the school are presently limited.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction procedures for children first entering the school and for children being transferred from other schools help them to settle quickly.
- Good child protection arrangements.
- At present there is not a formal way of seeking pupils' views.
- The procedures for risk assessments need tightening.

Commentary

25. Staff give a high priority to the welfare and happiness of children. All staff understand their responsibilities regarding child protection issues. In discussions with children not all agreed that they could approach an adult in the school with any worries but would prefer to talk to friends or parents.

26. The school provides a safe environment for its pupils through its satisfactory health and safety arrangements. All statutory safety checks are observed and statutory tests carried out. Risk assessments on the school building and for educational visits are done but these are informal and not recorded.

27. Although pupils are able, through the school and class councils, to let their views be known the councils are newly formed and not yet effectively used for this purpose.

28. Very good induction procedures, including recently-established home visits, help new children to settle quickly and happily into reception. There are also very good arrangements for helping pupils transferred from other schools to feel welcome. Before Year 6 pupils transfer to secondary school visits are made to get to know their new teachers and to familiarise themselves with the new school to make sure a good start is made.

29. Teachers know their pupils well, understand their needs and give good support and advice. They make good use of assessment information in English, mathematics and science to identify areas in need of extra work and incorporate this effectively into their planning. Although the school council and class councils offer children the opportunity to air their views the councils are in a very early stage of development and are not effectively used for this purpose.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's **satisfactory** partnership with parents and the community, as well as its **good** links with other schools, plays an important role in pupils' learning. Parents are pleased with their children's progress in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents give good support to their children at home and make an important contribution to children's learning.
- An effective parents and teachers association supports children's learning.
- A significant number of parents complain about the quality of information received from the school.

Commentary

30. The effective partnership between school and parents is an important influence on pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents are interested in the life of the school and in their children's work.

31. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Well-attended consultations meetings where parents have the opportunity to talk to class teachers about their children's progress are held each term. Parents appreciate monthly newsletters from the headteacher on all aspects of school life. Other newsletters sent out by class teachers advise parents of future topics. The school has an open door policy for parents to meet staff but some parents lack knowledge of this. Opportunities of communication between school and parents are also afforded by home-school reading record books. Some parents were unhappy with the format of last year's annual pupils' reports. This view is supported by the inspection team, although the school has already begun working towards a more acceptable format for the coming year.

32. Good liaison with a local pre-school group and very good introduction procedures enable new children to settle into school quickly. The good relationships that the school has with the main receiving secondary school, which include visits and special classes for higher-attaining pupils, ensure that year 6 pupils leaving the school make a smooth transition to their next stage of education.

33. The school has satisfactory links in the community. For example the 'Green Fingers Club' where children and members of the local allotment association work together to grow vegetables, is a useful contribution to pupils' learning and development.

34. The very active parents and teachers association raises substantial funds, which benefit children's learning. These fund raising events are very well supported by parents and the community.

35. Some parents come into school to help on a regular basis and play an active part in children's learning but there are few opportunities for parents to attend assemblies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **good** and its management is **satisfactory**. Satisfactory governance is provided by the school's governing body.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has worked hard with the staff to build up a very effective team which makes very good use of the skills of each member of staff.
- All staff have access to a very good system of continuing professional development and the school's effective performance management strategies have had a good impact upon the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are committed to the school, and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, including their own shortcomings.
- Subject managers work hard to support their colleagues, but many are new to their position and are only just beginning to develop their roles.
- The deputy headteacher provides good leadership in the areas of assessment and the support of pupils with special educational needs.
- Currently, the governing body does not include a governor with specific responsibility for overseeing financial issues.
- All issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed satisfactorily.

Commentary

36. In the relatively short time since he was appointed, the headteacher has had a strong influence upon relationships across the school. He has worked hard with all staff to understand their individual strengths and weaknesses and has made several changes, resulting in a clear structure of responsibility. All subject areas have a designated co-ordinator and the school improvement plan incorporates their individual action plans. This demonstrates a mutual respect and professional approach and has had a very beneficial effect upon staff morale.

37. The school is working towards achieving its Investors in People status by providing a clear performance management structure and very good programmes for the continuing professional development of all staff. This is having a very positive effect upon the quality of teaching and learning. Good induction arrangements help new staff to settle in quickly. In addition, the support provided by teaching assistants is of a high quality and they are an asset to the overall teaching provision.

38. The school improvement plan is made up from numerous different strands, based on subject co-ordinators' action plans and other priorities identified by the headteacher. As the school budget has been able to cover all the perceived needs within the current school improvement plan, very little attention has been given to obtaining the best value for money or tracking the impact of various purchases, other than in the broadest sense. In addition, although the reception children are only admitted part-time for at least the first half term, the school employs all reception class staff on a full-time basis for the whole year, having "ad-hoc" arrangements for their deployment in the afternoons. Overall, however, the governing body makes good use of a very clearly-defined structure for the

recruitment and deployment of new staff. This is the responsibility of the personnel committee, ably led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic chair.

39. Although the school expects a certain “claw back” of funds due to the reduction in pupils on roll in the current year, the budget shows significant surplus at present, partly as a result of external influences. Consequently, the school is in a favourable financial situation at the moment. The school is also fortunate to benefit from considerable additional funding raised by the parents’ and teachers’ association. However, the arrangements for the allocation of parts of the school budget lack rigour. For example, governors are unclear about how funding for pupils with special educational needs is allocated; nor have they set in place any structure for ascertaining the value for money gained from the use of these funds. In addition, due to a recent resignation, the governing body does not include a governor with specific responsibility for overseeing financial issues.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	988 021	Balance from previous year	65 480
Total expenditure	877 284	Balance carried forward to the next year	110 736
Expenditure per pupil	2 155		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. In the reception year, standards in all areas of learning show most children are on target to meet, and some to exceed the expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. These children had attended school for only seven half-time weeks prior to the inspection. The present arrangements for reception year children to attend school on a part-time basis for the first half term limits their access to the full curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children are guided sensitively to consider the impact of their actions on others.
- The relationships between adults and children is good; adults provide good role models.
- There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed lessons and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves.

Commentary

41. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of social skills. Overall these are broadly in line with those that might be expected for children of their age. Most pupils have maturing personal and social skills and have attended playgroup or nursery provision in the locality. Most children are sociable and confident and interact well with other children and adults. A few are more confident and are ready to voice their ideas and opinions. This is often achieved with feeling, or awareness of others around them and the ethos of the reception classes supports this.

42. Reception class staff provide good role models. The teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a team to provide a calm, well ordered and secure learning environment. This helps children to settle into the reception classes quickly, and helps build their confidence and ability to adapt to others around them. The teachers and teaching assistants provide a variety of interesting lessons and follow-on activities to engage children's concentration and imagination. They are successfully gaining children's confidence to respond to them and other children. The reception teachers and their assistants intervene well with groups of children at play, talking to them and posing thoughtful questions designed to make children think and consider. When they introduce new ideas this often sparks off more talking between the children themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good quality teaching and classroom support for the children including those with special educational needs.
- Children enjoy looking at books and handle them with care; they show a love of books and enjoy listening to stories.

Commentary

43. Children start school with speaking skills and attainment in listening, reading and writing as expected for this age group. Teachers and teaching assistants provide interesting opportunities for the children to develop their communication skills.

44. Many children arrive at school able to communicate in some way using pencil and paper. They are encouraged to make marks and write from the first day in the reception class. Initial letter sounds are taught methodically and letter recognition games played. Letter formation is being taught consistently in preparation for entry to Year 1. However, a number of children confuse capital and lower case letters and reverse letters; this is corrected as it happens. Children are able to copy words created by the teacher and teaching assistant for accuracy, but their independent writing skills are also encouraged and the resulting 'writing' praised.

45. Some children are making a start with reading skills and teachers are making plans to use the available time with different groups of children more effectively.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and skilfully engages children's curiosity about numbers, teachers capitalise on opportunities for counting.
- Most children start school with an interest in numbers, shapes and sizes.
- Children are prepared for mathematics when they transfer to Year 1.

Commentary

46. Most children enter school with mathematical skills that are in line with those expected. After a few weeks of school most children can count objects accurately up to 8 and some can count beyond. Most children can accurately identify basic shapes such as squares and triangles. Average children count confidently to 10 and carry out simple 'add one on' sums. More capable children count up to fifteen: one child was able to subtract 3 from 20 accurately, using a number line for reference, when set a mental mathematics problem based on the number of pupils absent to be 'taken away' from the number usually present. Some children can write the numbers 0 to 10.

47. Good teaching ensures children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Teachers plan interesting activities that encourage children to achieve well and develop their mathematical skills by using appealing child-centred themes. Children reinforce their recognition of numbers and size relationships by modelling play dough, making peg patterns and printing repeat patterns. The adults use questions well to encourage, extend and reinforce learning.

48. Knowledge of mathematical terms is increasing. Children know that a square has four sides and a triangle three. Singing number action rhymes reinforces number work. More capable children in reception know the day and the month of their birthday.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A designated outside play area has been provided since the last inspection and this is well used for structured and free play.

- Opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding are planned for.
- Children are enthusiastic and enjoy the activities provided for them.
- The school grounds provide an excellent teaching and learning resource.

Commentary

49. Children enter the reception class with varying levels of general knowledge. The school's attractive learning environment, and the good support and care of the teachers and teaching assistants help them to build successfully on this. The children share their ideas about their senses, and 'going to the moon' when role playing after listening to the story, 'Whatever Next?' They develop their ideas and vocabulary of what a sense is, and which senses are used in a story they have recently heard. This helps them increase their knowledge of literature, and also acts as an introduction to how different parts of their body work. They enjoy learning about senses and respond with excitement when using a magnifying glass to look at the markings on plastic insects and a spider. Children are also developing a sound knowledge of basic computer skills and can use a mouse efficiently to work their way through a number of programmes including 'Dress Teddy' and a graphics programme. They use the arrow keys to increase their keyboard skills and response times when trying to catch Pingu the penguin as he crosses ice flows on their computer screen. They can put on their own headphones when listening to pre-recorded story and sound tapes. Teachers provide stimulating activities and topics for investigation by the children.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities for children to develop their movement skills indoors and outdoors.
- The use of the new outdoor area and the plans for improving this further.

Commentary

50. Children enter reception with physical skills as expected for their age. Some hold pencils and crayons with confidence and appropriate grip but others find adopting a suitable pencil grip difficult. The children are encouraged to develop their physical skills because teachers plan a good range of activities. Children are able to select and place shapes and jigsaw pieces in the correct space and they develop their hand strength and control by squeezing, rolling, pressing and shaping 'perfumed' play dough which links to their learning about the sense of smell.

51. The equipment for use outside provides opportunities for children to develop their confidence in pedalling and running. There is little scope at present for them to climb, swing, clamber or slide in the designated safe outdoor area. There are appropriate opportunities for children to develop their ability to develop their co-ordination and control. Children develop running, skipping, balancing, and turning skills well. Achievement in this area of learning is good overall.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities to experience a range of good quality resources and materials.
- Teaching and teaching support are good.
- All creative work is highly valued within the Foundation Stage and the school.

Commentary

52. Children demonstrate developing skills in the quality of their artwork and paint pictures carefully using a range of pre-mixed paint colours. Inspection and photographic evidence shows good opportunities for children to develop their design and creativity skills using bricks and boxes to build rockets and make models.

53. Children greatly enjoy singing and most already know the words of several simple songs and nursery rhymes. Teaching is good and children rapidly learn a range of songs. The teachers and the teaching assistants use every opportunity to reinforce learning with simple songs and actions linked to the focus of the activities. Children enjoy taking part and achieve well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard and make good progress in lessons.
- All teaching is now good across the school and in Year 6 it is of very high quality.
- The well-trained teaching assistants provide very good levels of support to different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, which helps them to make good progress, although the more able pupils are not always sufficiently well challenged.
- Literacy skills are well developed across the curriculum.
- Assessment procedures in English have now improved.
- Subject leaders are skilled in their subject and provide good leadership and management in English, but their monitoring role needs further development.

Commentary

54. Standards in speaking and listening for most pupils are at an average level. They listen carefully in lessons, and give confident replies to questions. Teachers provide them with frequent opportunities to speak in lessons, especially at the beginning and end, when they are offering their ideas or reporting their findings. Pupils read their written work expressively to their class, and share with them their experiences in creating their work. Opportunities through drama enable pupils to take on the roles of the main characters and to create their own dialogue. Pupils are confident to express their views and feelings. The good quality of relationships is manifested in the respect and politeness pupils and adults show when addressing one another.

55. Reading standards by Year 2 are in line with the national average. Pupils generally read well and obviously find reading an enjoyable experience. Reading skills are developing well as the result of some effective teaching. Pupils have developed regular reading habits and are well supported at home by their parents. There is a similar picture by the end of Year 6. Although there is a small proportion of above average readers, the overall position is one of average attainment in reading. All pupils have the opportunity to read at different times of the day, as well as at home as part of their homework requirement. They read widely and talk knowledgeably about the books they have read. Generally they read confidently, with expression and interest, and show good understanding of the text. The school library offers good quality facilities for both fiction and non-fiction, and these are available to all pupils on a regular basis each week. Library skills are taught, and by Year 6 pupils are able to access non-fiction works for research purposes.

56. The school is working hard on developing pupils' writing skills. Currently, standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A good range of writing experiences is provided for all pupils through the use of the national literacy strategy, although fewer opportunities are provided for poetry writing. Pupils work hard at the presentation of their work, and by the end of Year 2 their handwriting is mostly joined, and sentences are accurately punctuated. Writing is becoming more fluent, showing some structure using adverbs and adjectives effectively. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress in the quality of their writing. Many write at length and are creative in their use of language. Regular learning of spelling lists is ensuring that pupils' spelling is becoming much more accurate.

57. The quality of English teaching is consistently good throughout the school, enabling pupils to enjoy learning, to make good progress and to achieve well. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was criticised, and is one possible factor for the attainment not being higher than average at present. The teaching in Year 6 is of very high quality enabling pupils to

achieve very well. Teachers possess a high level of personal expertise, and use very effective teaching methods. They have high expectations of pupils' response to their teaching, and have established very good relationships with pupils. The well trained teaching assistants have a wide range of expertise, provide a very good level and quality of support to different groups of pupils, and in particular those with special educational needs. This ensures that they make good progress.

58. Good leadership and management are ensuring that English is on the move. Staff training is having a positive impact and is complementing the good teaching. Regular meetings to monitor progress and to identify how to improve standards in English are instrumental in the development of teaching and learning. However, more opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning first hand by the subject leaders could contribute to higher standards. The assessment procedures for monitoring the progress that pupils make are now much improved. The decision to organise English teaching into sets for Years 4, 5 and 6 has ensured that the needs of the different ability groups are being met, although on occasions the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

Example of outstanding practice

Literacy lesson: To prepare a short story as a play script. Theme is racism and is based on book by Floella Benjamin.

Pupils discuss the characteristics of effective script writing. They give examples, and are able to explain the punctuation changes needed when writing complex sentences. The more able pupils are encouraged to use 'sophisticated' connectives in their work. Teacher produces very useful checklist for pupils to use as a guide to their writing. She assesses pupils understanding of how incidents of racism are portrayed. They show appreciation of peoples' feelings and offer suitable words like 'enraged'. The teacher talks about the use of snappy language to represent confrontational scenes, and complex sentences when characters are talking through issues. Teacher has high expectations of their ability to complete work within time scale. Pupils work industriously and follow the conventions of the play script format, including redrafting. This is an effective exercise and they make very good progress in making the necessary adjustments, and their writing improves as a result. The teacher's organisation and management, her skill in developing pupils' writing, use of planning and resources, expectation and challenge contribute to high quality experiences for all pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. The use of literacy skills in other subjects, particularly history, ICT and personal and social education, is good. Pupils are helped to appreciate how their language and literacy skills can be used to broaden their experience of learning, and identify important links in learning in different subject areas. Drama is used very effectively to enrich their use of spoken English and to develop their creativity in thinking.

French

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching helps pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils' very good attitudes.
- Learning French has a very good impact on pupils' self-confidence.

60. Both Year 6 classes started to learn French at the start of the academic year and are taught by their class teachers. Each class was observed, plans examined and discussions held with pupils and both Year 6 teachers.

61. Very well planned lessons are taught in a lively, brisk and enjoyable manner. Teachers speak French fluently and confidently, always checking their pupils are listening and understanding, and altering their approach accordingly. Very good preparation of interesting resources ensures the most competent are challenged and those less sure have more opportunities to practise what they know before moving on. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning and say that 'It's great fun'. They

listen in silence and try extremely hard to make sense of what they hear and then have a good attempt at replying in short phrases or sentences. The great majority are growing in confidence as they hold simple everyday conversations with their friends to ask their names, age, where they live and how they are feeling today.

62. It is clear the teachers thoroughly enjoy their teaching; they reflect on their successes and note where they need to take a different approach. For example, they found it more profitable to have two shorter sessions per week at the start of term to help pupils remember vocabulary. They have very good ideas for developing the subject further and have identified areas such as inviting native French speakers to converse with classes and learning about French culture and life style.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages have good number skills.
- Setting arrangements help to meet the wide range of pupils' needs, although teachers do not always provide work matched to the different needs of the pupils within each set.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good quality support.
- Curriculum provision and assessment arrangements are good.
- The subject is well-led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator.

Commentary

63. Standards of attainment are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Progress varies from good to unsatisfactory, but is satisfactory overall. In relation to their capabilities, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, or pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when taught in small groups. Test results are higher than at the time of the previous inspection and are now slightly above the national average. When compared with similar schools, tests results are about average.

64. In Year 2, pupils count backwards and forwards in steps of 2, 5, 10, 20 and 100, using a variety of starting points. They recognise number patterns and relationships between groups of numbers. Higher-attaining pupils can find the missing number in complex addition problems and explain their method of calculation. Pupils in Year 6 make good use of calculators to check their application of inverse operations. They understand the need to check calculations and are aware of the importance of accuracy. Pupils of all ages try their best and concentrate well.

65. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well and understand their needs. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are grouped according to their attainment and taught in sets for all mathematics lessons. In some lessons, teachers provide different work for three or four levels of attainment within their set, which ensures that all pupils are working at a suitable level and being appropriately challenged. In these lessons, pupils' achievement is good as they are motivated to try their best and attempt new work. However, other lessons consist of work at the same level for all pupils, resulting in achievement being lower.

66. Assessment systems are used well by the staff to check and record what pupils know. Teachers also make good use of these assessments to identify what needs to be taught and in how much depth. During the inspection, Year 2 teachers made very good use of the analysis of the previous week's assessment to identify and revisit work which had not been completely understood by the pupils.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator works hard to support her colleagues and is developing a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in mathematics, although opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are limited. She has drawn up an ambitious action plan, which has been incorporated into the school improvement plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum. In particular, graphs and charts are used to show findings of data analysis in science and geography.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 2 class of 25 pupils (upper set); addressing the issues arising from the previous week's assessment. Learning Objective: "To understand the operation of addition using a number line". From the first moment, the teacher's expectations are clear and her positive attitude is infectious. This is a chance for the class to have another "go" at some of the work which they had found difficult last week. The mental/aural introduction goes at a brisk pace, with all pupils eager to give an answer, although carefully targeted questions indicate that the teacher has also identified the needs of individual pupils within her group. This session moves seamlessly into individual work, with the pace maintained by a combination of challenging questions, positive feedback, excellent relationships and a very good use of humour. Music by Mozart is playing in the background. Pupils say this helps them to concentrate and also to relax. The plenary reinforces what has been learned using different apparatus, including number fans, with both teacher and pupils maintaining their enthusiasm and focus to the very end of the lesson!

This type of lesson can easily become dreary, as the class is revisiting work already covered which has also proved difficult for them to understand. However, the teacher was able to combine her excellent knowledge of the subject with the needs and interests of her pupils, resulting in a lesson which was both very enjoyable and very productive.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good attainment in Year 6.
- Good attainment in the statutory tests at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Good management of the subject and a new, enthusiastic co-ordinator.
- There is a good focus on practical science, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to work independently and develop their own investigations.
- Good use of ICT to support the subject.
- Those pupils withdrawn from science lessons at the same time each week miss important opportunities for learning and never complete the work they start.
- Use of the library for independent research in science is underdeveloped.

Commentary

69. Overall, standards attained by Year 2 pupils are in line with national expectations. Many pupils in Year 6 achieve above the expected levels for their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sometimes achieve well, as seen in a lesson recalling their half-term's work for an assessment. They recalled enthusiastically in discussion with their teacher a wide range of facts relating to the scientific subjects studied such as 'when we planted pansies in the playground tubs' and the facts learned when studying a wide range of habitats. They can explain why a polar bear is not suited to living in a hot desert and use subject specific vocabulary such as 'germinate', 'roots' and 'shoots'. Most pupils achieve well in Year 6, where the pace of challenge increases, resulting in high standards. Across

the school, boys and girls attain equally, and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

70. Pupils have good factual knowledge, especially of their school environment, living things, the earth and beyond and most pupils in Years 3-6 know how to devise a fair test.

71. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good work seen in the previous year's work samples. As a result of good teaching and good support by the teaching assistants all pupils make at least satisfactory progress and in Year 5 and 6 they achieve good standards. Lessons are well planned. Teachers enable all pupils to be fully included in the learning, often through the organisation of the ways in which pupils work together, or by adapting the ways that work is recorded by different groups of pupils. A Year 5 class watched with great interest as their teacher used an Internet link to consolidate their learning about the spatial relationship between the earth, sun and moon. Pupils have good factual knowledge of topics. However, in some classes the too frequent use of worksheets limits pupils' experience of different ways of recording and presenting their work. Good quality marking helps pupils to understand their errors in spelling and to correct any misunderstanding.

72. Opportunities for pupils to develop their own investigations, suggest ways to approach a problem or set up a fair test have been improved since the last inspection and are good. Often, pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well when recording their work. There are some opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to undertake independent research within a lesson but these opportunities need further development. The use and application of ICT to the subject is good.

73. The recently appointed co-ordinator manages the subject well and gives positive support to teachers. She is conscientious about her responsibilities and has undertaken further professional training to guide her role. As yet, teachers do not consistently match the tasks they set to the ability of all pupils in the group. The school has extensive grounds which provide an excellent resource for pupils to study natural science Unfortunately the school pond has fallen into disuse and at the time of the inspection was overgrown.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new computer suite ensures that pupils have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills, and achieve standards in line with expectations by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Staff are well trained and teach ICT effectively, which helps pupils to achieve well.
- The trained technician is an asset to teachers and pupils.
- Use of data logging, control technology and use of e-mail are currently under developed.
- Systems to record and monitor skills development and progress are not yet in place.

Commentary

74. Provision is much improved since the last inspection.

75. The improvements in provision now ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to use the new facilities on a regular basis, for specifically planned activities. The suite can accommodate whole classes, with pupils working in collaboration with one another during lessons. Lessons are well organised for pupils with the class teachers and technician working together in effective partnership. Teachers provide appropriate work for most of the class and show a good level of understanding by sometimes linking this work with other subjects. Good use is made of praise and encouragement in order to help the pupils to become more confident.

76. By Year 2 pupils are confident in their use of the keyboard and mouse to use word processing packages, and are able to input text and then edit and save it. They create pictures using a number of tools. By Year 6 pupils are able to use word processing and the Internet to carry out their own research. They can import text, pictures and symbols, as well as creating graphs to support their work in different subject areas of the curriculum.

77. The previous subject co-ordinator has been effective in ensuring that the big investment in high quality resources provides good opportunities for all pupils. The new co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time, during which she has made significant strides in continuing to improve the provision. All teachers and teaching assistants have now been fully trained and this is having a very positive impact upon the quality of teaching, and upon the achievement that pupils make. There are plans to address the under developed areas and to ensure they are fully integrated into the curriculum. The present lack of a system to record and monitor pupils' progress hinders teachers when planning appropriate work for pupils of all abilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. It supports the development of a wide range of pupils' literacy skills when they carry out research. In history, research is carried out using the Internet, into the origins of the Olympic Games. Pupils word process their findings about life in Tudor times, and are able to insert pictures from disks using digital images. They access websites in science to support their learning about the planets and the solar system.

HUMANITIES

79. **Geography** was not a focus of the inspection, and it was not possible to observe any lessons or to sample pupils' work. According to teachers' planning it is clear that the subject is planned for throughout the school, and is taught in topics and in blocks of time during the year.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- A good programme of visits and visitors supports the curriculum well.
- There are good links made with other subject areas, and English skills are used well.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to monitor progress and plan next steps in learning for the different groups of pupils.

Commentary

80. Only three lessons were observed, all were in Years 3 to 6. No judgement can be made for standards by Year 2.

81. The subject has been planned according to the national guidelines, and topics allocated to year groups. The subject is taught well. Visits to places of interest are also planned including the Northampton museum and a Tudor manor house. Specialist visitors include Tudor workshops, a toy expert, and an archaeologist. Pupils learn through first hand experiences and role-play, and their knowledge and understanding develops appropriately. By the end of Year 6 pupils are achieving the level expected for their age.

82. Teachers are skilled at teaching history and use a variety of interesting and effective methods to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. In a Year 5 lesson on Victorian achievements, the teacher involved pupils in discussions and skilfully turned their responses into

questions to challenge their thinking. In group discussions pupils very maturely organise themselves and elect a spokesperson to represent their strongest view. They articulate their knowledge and views well. They make good use of appropriate vocabulary, and use their reading skills to skim read for information. The present lack of a system to record and monitor pupils' progress hinders teachers when planning appropriate work for pupils of all abilities.

83. Research skills are well used in other classes. Year 6 pupils collect facts to explain through words and pictures the beliefs and importance of the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece. They use a variety of sources including research packs, reference books, and the Internet. Pupils take notes whilst viewing a video on the Olympic Games. Good quality artefacts bring history to life for pupils. Time lines are used well to help pupils develop a sense of chronology. Year 4 pupils write a job description for a king as part of their study of Henry VIII, and write letters in the person of one of his wives. Art skills are used effectively to produce portraits of the monarch.

84. The good teaching ensures that pupils are motivated, build well on their prior learning and achieve well in their knowledge and understanding. Links with other subjects is a positive strength, especially in the extensive use of literacy skills. The subject is well led and the curriculum planned provides appropriate experiences for all pupils.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching encourages pupils to empathise with children and adults of different faiths.
- The curriculum does not ensure a logical progression of knowledge from class to class.
- Assessment is inconsistent and rarely helps teachers in their planning.

Commentary

85. One lesson was observed and the teaching and learning were good. In addition, pupils' previous work was scrutinised and informal discussions were held with a selection of pupils. This evidence indicates that standards throughout the school are satisfactory. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different faiths, including Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism and speak with understanding about areas which interest them in particular. For example, Year 6 pupils are able to empathise with perceived difficulties for a Sikh boy who has to spend time putting on a turban each morning. They are interested in all faiths and traditions and have a mature and well-balanced way of discussing similarities and differences.

86. The curriculum follows the local authority's agreed syllabus and includes opportunities for teachers to add school-based units. However, it has not yet been set down as a logical progression throughout the school and in its present format would not support teachers of mixed-age classes. In addition, there is no whole-school system of assessing pupils' progress.

87. The co-ordinator is conscientious and hard-working. She has compiled a useful bank of resources to support her colleagues, but has not yet had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning or influence standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards achieved throughout the school are above average.
- Pupils benefit from a rich arts curriculum and good resources.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Occasional clubs and art displays throughout the school promote interest in the subject.
- The use of information and communication technology skills is developed.
- Art and design has a high profile within the school.
- There is a weakness when the art materials used are not suitable for the task outcome expected from pupils.

Commentary

88. The high standards found in art and design at the previous inspection have been maintained and the curriculum broadened and improved by the introduction of a scheme of work. Pupils' artwork is appreciated by their peers and by the adults in the school; this helps to build their self esteem. Work is attractively displayed and contributes to the good quality of the school environment. Pupils benefit from the many art projects organised within the school and the local community; they have very positive attitudes about art and design and enjoy their work. In the evidence base made available it was not clear whether all pupils have, or are encouraged to use their own sketchbook regularly. This, together with a re-evaluation of the use of particular resources, for example when painting skin tones, are areas for further development.

89. Based on the limited number of lessons seen together with the evidence available the quality of teaching is judged to be good. Pupils are developing awareness of individual artistic styles. Teachers adopt a sensitive approach and their enthusiasm for the subject contributes to pupils' growing ability to observe and appreciate natural objects and to learn more challenging techniques such as placement of facial features using a grid system. There are very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work. They identify what they like and dislike about their own, and other pupils' work and some teachers use this closing part of the lesson to guide pupils how to show respect for the effort and endeavour of others, thus developing their personal, social and citizenship education. As a result of good teaching pupils achieve well in art and design, especially in multi-media and clay modelling aspects. The use of ICT is used to extend pupils' knowledge of the possibilities and application of graphics software.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Design and technology has a strong focus and opportunities to link with other subjects are used well to develop pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Design and technology is taught as a specific subject within the curriculum.
- The school acknowledges the unique contribution the subject can make to the curriculum.
- Design and technology resources are good and used well.
- The use of ICT to support the subject is an area for development.

Commentary

90. No lessons were observed during the inspection but from the evidence available pupils achieve at least the standards expected for their age and some exceed them.

91. Discussion with teachers and pupils together with a scrutiny of work indicates that projects with a design and technology focus are often linked to studies in other subject areas. This supports a cross curricular approach which reinforces pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed and is committed to maintaining the standards achieved. She is well supported by the headteacher and senior management team.

92. Since no lesson was observed no judgement for teaching is determined. Work from different year groups shows that pupils made at least good progress in the last school year. There are good examples of pupils writing their own evaluations, collaborating and co-operating with each other. Resources are good.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff and pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
- Singing in assembly is good.
- Class performances demonstrate a variety of skills.
- The acting co-ordinators have had a positive impact upon standards.
- The curriculum does not support the building up of musical skills.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

93. Provision has shown an improvement since the previous inspection.

94. One lesson in each key stage, one whole-school singing assembly and two end-of-unit performances were seen during the inspection. Standards of attainment are variable throughout the school, but have improved since the previous inspection. All pupils enjoy lessons and assemblies and participate with enthusiasm. In assemblies, pupils sing in tune and with a musical sound, often adding actions to the songs.

95. In the performances, pupils in Year 3 perform previously-composed music accurately, following a score and carefully watching their conductor. They display good listening skills and show by their comments that they are able to appreciate each others' performances. However, because the curriculum does not support the building up of musical skills from year to year, some older pupils do not have the basic skills and knowledge needed to compose and perform relatively simple music. There is no whole-school system of using assessment to help provide appropriate work for the pupils' needs.

96. Pupils have access to a variety of instrumental classes and those who attend have high levels of attainment. In addition, music is played at the beginning and end of assemblies, although the opportunity to use this to develop skills in musical appreciation and broaden pupils' knowledge is often missed. Music is occasionally played as an accompaniment to other subjects, for example, to aid concentration in mathematics lessons, but this good practice is not widely followed.

97. Teaching is good, even though some teachers lack confidence in the subject. All teachers work hard to ensure that their own knowledge can support the pupils' learning and the enthusiastic response of their pupils shows that this approach is successful.

98. Two teachers share the role of acting co-ordinator. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and are very anxious to improve provision and standards. They support colleagues well and their influence has helped to improve standards, particularly in singing. They have drawn up some appropriate ideas for improvement, ready to move the school forward once a permanent co-ordinator is in place.

99. Resources are generally satisfactory for most class use, although there is an insufficient selection of beaters for the percussion instruments and an audit of instruments has not yet taken place, to ensure that the full curriculum can be supported.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for physical education.
- Extra-curricular sport supports the subject well.
- Pupils achieve well in lessons because of the good quality of the teaching.

Commentary

100. The school has been awarded the Active mark Gold indicating the high quality of provision. A good range of extra-curricular sporting activities supports the curriculum well. Physical education was not a main focus for the inspection and only three lessons were observed. Standards are at least in line with expectations by Year 2 and by Year 6

101. The curriculum is based upon a well-known publication and covers all the areas of dance, gymnastics, games, and swimming. It is organised to ensure appropriate coverage is given to these areas in each year group. Many pupils participate in the after school sporting clubs and coaching sessions to broaden their experience of physical education, and there are opportunities for participation in friendly competition in inter-school activities in football, cricket, rounders and cross country running. Residential experiences are provided for Year 4 and Year 6 pupils to participate in a variety of outdoor adventurous activities. Most pupils achieve the required standard in swimming by Year 6.

102. Pupils make good progress in lessons, and achieve well, as the result of the good quality of teaching. Teachers are confident in their own knowledge of the subject, have well-planned and organised lessons, and enjoy good relationships with pupils. Good use is made of demonstrations and teaching points and ensures that improvement takes place in the development of appropriate skills. Pupils enjoy the activities and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to play a full part in all aspects of physical education.

103. The good leadership has ensured physical education has a high profile in the school, and the well-balanced curriculum enables pupils to achieve well in all areas.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	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	3
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	4
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	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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