

INSPECTION REPORT

**ESCRICK CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

York

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121532

Headteacher: Mrs S Brown

Lead inspector: Mr J J Peacock

Dates of inspection: 17-20 November 2003

Inspection number: 260761

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: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 93

School address: 56 Main Street
Escrick
York
Postcode: YO19 6UN

Telephone number: 01904 728570
Fax number: 01904 728570

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr S Smowton

Date of previous inspection: October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average Church of England primary school is on a split site. It is situated in a picturesque village to the south of York. Most pupils live in privately owned houses. However, about a third travel to the school from outside the normal catchment area. There are 93 pupils on roll, 50 boys and 43 girls. Another nine are due to start in the reception class in January. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is above average.

The number eligible for free school meals, one per cent, is well below the national average. There are very few from a minority ethnic background and all speak and understand English as well as other pupils. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below average with about 14 per cent on the register. The school very effectively provides for most but additional help has been sought from specialists for a few with moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural problems. The number with statements of their special educational need is in line with the national average. The mobility of pupils is fairly significant. Last year, for example, eight joined the school and five left during term time and only 10 of the 24 pupils in Year 6 started in the infants. There has been a complete change in the teaching staff since the previous inspection, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25344	Mr J J Peacock	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage
			Special educational needs
			Mathematics
			Science
			Geography
			History
			Physical education
			Religious education
			Citizenship
12536	Mrs S Bullerwell	Lay inspector	
23375	Mr J Hicks	Team inspector	English
			Information and communication technology
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Music

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited
 14 Enterprise House
 Kingsway
 Team Valley
 Gateshead
 Tyne & Wear
 NE11 0SR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection 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	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	7
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	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	16
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES ONE AND TWO	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school where high standards are successfully being maintained from year to year despite the difficulties of being on a split site. It accounts for the excellent reputation the school has in the area and the strong parental support. This is mostly due to the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and a most effective Governing Body. As a result, management of the school is very good. Standards in some subjects are well above average with pupils doing particularly well in mathematics. Most pupils show a very good attitude to learning, behaving very well in lessons. All enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the very high attendance figures. All pupils, including those with special educational needs benefit greatly from the good and often very good quality of teaching. Overall, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and a highly effective governing body are key elements in the school's continuing development.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. As a result, pupils have a very positive attitude towards school and behave very well.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is a strength, giving children in their reception year a very good start to their education.
- The standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are consistently well above average.
- The partnership with parents is very good and another strength of the school.
- The very favourable pupil to adult ratio helps to make the provision for pupils' support, advice and guidance very effective. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well provided for and all pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the adults in school.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected by Year 6. Recent improvements have not had time to make a sufficient impact on standards.
- Targets for learning for individual pupils in English and mathematics are not very specific.

The level of improvement from the previous inspection has been good, considering all the staff changes. Each of the management issues has been successfully corrected and good procedures introduced for planning lessons and assessing pupils' progress. However, the school has had only limited success with improving ICT, which was a key issue in the last two inspections before this one. By Year 2, pupils achieve the standards expected, but the shortage of modern computers and lack of suitable programs is having an adverse effect on standards throughout the junior classes.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

Achievement is good, overall. Pupils achieve well because of the high quality of provision in many areas. Having such a favourable pupil to adult ratio in each class means that pupils are exceptionally well supported in their lessons. This helps the few pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress. In this very effective climate for learning, standards in the national tests for 11 year olds are consistently well above average in English, mathematics and

science compared to all school and those with similar pupils. In mathematics in 2003, for example, pupils' performance was in the top five per cent nationally. Inspection evidence confirms the well above average standards in all three subjects. In Year 2, standards were in line with the average in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics in 2003. The weaker performance was attributable to the relatively small number tested and a number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Inspection evidence shows current standards are now above average in these areas. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Most children in the Foundation Stage achieve the early learning targets in all six areas of their curriculum before the end of their reception year because of the very good provision for them.

Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is another strength of the school. Provision is carefully planned so that it is included in all subject areas wherever possible. School assemblies enhance the provision and reflect the Christian values and beliefs of the school very well. Pupils have lots of opportunities to take responsibility and they willingly embrace these. As a result, most are self-confident and enjoy trusting relationships with all adults. All have an extremely positive attitude to school and attendance is very high.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is also good with some very good features. This was also the case in the previous inspection, showing standards have been maintained as a totally new teaching staff settle in. In 11 out of the 27 lessons seen, teaching was either very good or excellent and in another 10, it was good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. A key strength is the quality of teachers planning and the links they make between different subjects. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good as all the lessons seen were either very good or excellent. The assessment of pupils learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science is very good.

Weaknesses were mostly to do with the unsatisfactory dining arrangements, which disrupt the junior classes and make it difficult for teachers to prepare for the afternoon sessions and the shortage of ICT resources, impacting on standards. Other aspects which need improving are the length of some lesson introductions and pupils targets for learning. Over-long introductions, particularly with older pupils, were an ineffective use of valuable lesson time and led to some pupils switching off. Teachers need to share with pupils and parents specific targets for learning, following the assessment of their work to give pupils a better understanding about what is expected of them and to involve parents in their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is very good and the quality of governance is also very good. Overall, the quality of management is very good and a strength of the school. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when aspects of management were identified as a weakness. Under the inspirational leadership of the energetic and dedicated headteacher, good management structures have been developed and implemented and these are underpinned by sound financial management. The skills of the enthusiastic deputy headteacher compliment those of the headteacher perfectly and they make a very successful management team. Governors are much more involved, acting wisely as 'critical friend' to support the headteacher and her staff and to meet all statutory requirements. The principles of best value are applied to all areas, ensuring areas for improvement are identified and acted upon. In the extension plans for the infant building, for example, space is allocated for a computer area in order to further improve the quality of learning. Staff work extra hard to compensate well for the split site and to ensure that the quality of education for pupils does not suffer.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has a high reputation that is well deserved. Parents' appreciation of the school and all that it does for their children were reflected in the very positive response to the questionnaire sent

out prior to the inspection. A few would like more information on pupils' progress and a small number wanted their views to be sought by the school. Inspectors think the school is doing very well on both counts. Pupils' perceptions are also very positive. However, some older pupils questioned whether lessons were interesting, that teachers were fair and that they listened to them. Discussions with older pupils shows that the concerns relate to the job-share with two teachers. Some pupils obviously find it difficult to relate to both teachers equally well, as each has their own teaching style. This does not detract from the excellent relationships which exist in this and all other classes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the standards attained in ICT by improving the level of resources and teachers knowledge of the programs available, and by using all available resources, more effectively to give pupils better opportunities to practise and consolidate skills.
- Set specific targets for individual pupils to focus their attention on their learning and communicate these to parents to give them the chance to become even more involved.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in Year 6 are well above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science with most pupils achieving well throughout the school. Standards at Year 2 are above average in these three subjects. Most children in the Foundation Stage achieve their targets in all areas before the end of their reception year. The good quality of provision, very high attendance rate and pupils' willingness to work hard in lessons, means that standards are rising broadly in line with the national trend.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils did very well in the 2003 national tests for eleven year olds, particularly in mathematics.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the strength of the provision for them.
- Standards are below average in ICT in Year 6, largely due to a shortage of resources.

Commentary

1 In the Foundation Stage, which covers the seven children in reception, children's rapid progress is due most of all to the exceptional quality of teaching provided by the very talented and highly motivated class teacher supported by equally dedicated teaching assistants.

2 In the 2003 national test results, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards, which were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented a drop in standards from the previous year. However, this was due to the small number tested and the fact that there were some pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The effect on the overall standards of each of these was magnified because of the small number tested. There was no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. Detailed tracking records show all pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment level. The comparison with similar schools was also adversely affected, being below the average in reading and writing and well below in mathematics. Teacher assessments for science in the Year 2 group show pupils' performance was also below average nationally for those achieving the standards expected but well above average for those achieving at the higher Level 3.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3 In the 2003 national tests for 11 year-olds, the school's overall performance compared to all schools nationally in English and science was well above average. In mathematics it was very high, being in the top five per cent nationally. Compared to similar schools, the standards achieved were well above the average for mathematics and above average for English and science. Pupils achieved well in English and science and very well in mathematics. Fluctuations from the previous year are again attributable to the relatively small number tested and the proportion of lower attaining pupils in the year group. The targets for English and mathematics in 2004 have been raised to 100 per cent reaching expected levels and about half are expected to achieve the higher Level 5 in

English and in mathematics. The trend in the school's results over time is keeping pace with the national trend for improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.1 (29.6)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	30.4 (29.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.7 (31.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4 Inspection evidence shows that current standards in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science. The scrutiny of pupils completed work confirms the standards being achieved in these three subjects. The quality of teaching is a key factor. Teachers use the teaching assistants and volunteer helpers effectively to ensure that all pupils have the close attention of an adult when working in class. In some of the lessons seen, there were as many as three or four additional adults in the classroom, giving a very favourable pupil to adult ratio. This is of particular benefit to pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils produce a lot of written work to support their studies in science and English and it is neatly presented, showing all pupils take a pride in their work.

5 Pupils continue to make good progress through the junior classes, thanks again largely to the good and often very good quality of teaching. Additionally, all have a very good attitude to their learning and most behave in a mature and sensible way in lessons. Every parent who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection agreed that staff expect pupils to work hard. Pupils invariably do! As a result, they attain well above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. All make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

6 ICT has been a key issue for the school in the two previous inspections as well as this one. Standards are undoubtedly rising due to the developing staff expertise and the efforts of the knowledgeable subject coordinator. Inspectors saw that computers were used much more in some classes such as Year 3 and 4, than in others. Standards, from an analysis of completed work, are in line with those expected by Year 2, however, they are still below those expected in Year 6. Some staff are not fully aware of the programs that are available and so miss opportunities to use computers to support or extend pupils learning in some subjects. In addition, there is a shortage of modern computers for pupils to use when learning new skills. This means it takes longer for all to have the chance to practise in order to consolidate skills.

7 In music, the expertise of a specialist music teacher, who takes all classes is provided. This helps to ensure that standards are in line with those expected throughout the school. Inspectors think it would benefit pupils and teachers more if in some lessons, the class teacher supported the music specialist rather than leaving to undertake other duties. Teachers' expertise would benefit and pupils could be given some practice on new skills during the rest of the week. In physical education, swimming is a strength because the school ensures that all pupils in the infant classes are taught to swim at the pool in the neighbouring private school for girls. By age seven, school records show that all pupils can swim to the required standard. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus in both Year 2 and Year 6.

8 Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all lessons. The quality of teachers' planning ensures that they have suitably challenging work and teaching assistants give valuable support in many lessons. In the mixed Year 4, 5 and 6 English lesson on Macbeth, for example, pupils were able to work in small groups and receive individual help to complete their work. Care is taken to incorporate pupils' specific targets for learning in lesson planning. As a result, pupils' achievement is very good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Their level of attendance is very high and no pupils have been excluded from school since the previous inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and learning, their very good behaviour and the very good relationships create a positive learning environment.
- Pupils' attendance is very high because of parents' commitment to ensure learning is continuous, and pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils' very effective personal development is due to the school's very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

9 Children in the Foundation Stage are eager to explore new activities that are planned very well by staff to be both interesting and challenging. Pupils throughout school listen carefully to their teachers and each other and confidently contribute to discussions and group work during lessons. They work hard and concentrate well showing commitment to learning and achievement.

10 Pupils' attendance is very high because parents have a strong commitment to education, and many help in school. Pupils' enthusiasm for coming to school is in response to the very good relationships promoted by staff, the interesting lessons and the many extra-curricular activities available.

11 Due to the complete change of staff since the previous inspection, the provision for pupils' personal development was audited to ensure it was being as effectively promoted as possible. This audit led to the introduction of 'circle time' and citizenship lessons as a way of enhancing pupils' sense of responsibility and of giving them plenty of opportunities to share their views on a range of issues such as consideration for others and bullying. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is carefully planned into all subjects. The school was successful in winning a grant of £2300 for valuing cultural diversity in the curriculum. This enabled the school to use a specialist to upgrade the library to adequately cover this aspect of the school's provision and to purchase appropriate resources.

12 Pupils' very good personal development is the result of many opportunities to understand Christian values and beliefs, and also those of other faiths and cultures. Pupils put what they learn into action and the school is a happy, caring community where pupils show empathy with others, have a very good understanding of right and wrong, show respect for people, property and the environment and contribute positively to the school and wider community. For example, pupils initiated a bring and buy sale in aid of New York fire fighters and they regularly raise funds for charity, help to organise the school fete, the playground rota and are actively involved in setting class rules.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.9%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	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.

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	86	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit from the good quality of education provided throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a very good start to their education because of the high quality of provision.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and good with some strengths throughout the rest of the school. Assessment procedures are good, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The consistently high quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children achieve very well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All these pupils are fully involved in all lessons.
- Teachers plan lessons very carefully and link subjects effectively.
- Teachers are very well supported by extremely conscientious teaching assistants and on occasions, parent volunteers.
- The very favourable pupil to adult ratio helps all pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The quality of assessment of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is very good. The information is used effectively to plan lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory for all other subjects.
- Lengthy introductions in some lessons results in some pupils losing concentration.
- The shortage of computers makes it difficult for teachers to teach new skills effectively. Some are not sure what programs are available.
- The split site and unsatisfactory dining arrangements are an inconvenience to teachers and pupils alike. However, teachers compensate well for these.
- Pupils apply themselves very well in lessons as a result of the lively and stimulating quality of teaching. They produce lots of very neat work.

Commentary

13 The previous inspection in October 1998 described teaching as good with some very good features. Since then there has been a complete change of teaching staff, including a new headteacher and deputy. The quality of teaching has been maintained since then. During this inspection, in 21 out of the 27 lessons seen, the quality of teaching was either good, very good or excellent. This consistency has a major impact on the quality of pupils' learning, which is also good. Despite the inconvenience of the split site, teachers work together very effectively to ensure that pupils' learning is a continuous process. Little time is wasted travelling between the two buildings for physical education or assemblies as these are timed to follow or lead into break times, saving valuable lesson time. However the unsatisfactory dining arrangements, which take up all the junior

classroom space means that teachers are unable to work in their rooms at lunchtime to prepare for the afternoon session. All work extremely hard to compensate for this ensuring that the high standards being achieved by most pupils do not suffer. The exceptionally close and trusting relationships pupils have with their teachers are a key factor in promoting a very good ethos for learning in the school. Pupils behave maturely and responsibly in lessons and can be allowed the freedom to work together in groups, often independently of their teacher.

14 One excellent lesson was seen in the reception and Year 1 class where the youngest children were being encouraged to start writing letters. A purposeful approach, great ideas and very high expectations, coupled with an excellent use of resources, including the outdoor area and all the adults in the classroom, ensured that learning was very effective. All teachers plan their lessons very carefully, matching work to the ability level of all pupils and at the same time providing sufficient challenge to maintain interest. However, on occasions, some teachers talked for too long in introductions and lost the interest of some pupils. A strong feature is the way skills from other subjects are used in lessons. In an English lesson on Macbeth, for example, historical facts about entertainment in Tudor times were discussed. In a science investigation into the link between heart rate and exercise, mathematical skills were used and pupils made aware of how to live a healthy lifestyle. All had to use computers to research facts about the function of the heart and use their writing skills to record information. Class teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and enjoy very good relationships with their pupils. Pupils work hard and inspectors were able to make judgements about standards in subjects such as science and religious education from the volume of neatly produced work.

15 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is of a high standard. All teachers set the targets for the pupils in their class and these are checked carefully to make sure they are relevant and sufficiently challenging by the experienced special educational needs co-ordinator. Care is taken to include these targets when planning pupils' work. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in lessons and that the tasks they are set are matched to their ability level.

16 Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the teaching of an experienced and skilful teacher and other dedicated teaching assistants. Parent volunteers and students also add valuable support and substantially reduce the number of pupils in each group when they work with one of the many adults present. Children settle in quickly and make very good progress in all areas of learning. All of the teaching seen in the reception class was either very good or excellent. The accommodation is imaginatively used to provide interesting areas which stimulate children's interest. The good range of resources in this key stage is an added benefit. The outdoor area, although fairly small is sufficient in size for the number of pupils and is used most effectively for promoting learning in all six areas of learning which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum. Good use is made of computers in this section of the school. In other lessons seen throughout the school during the inspection, pupils had few opportunities to use computers to support their learning. Some teachers were not sure about the range of programs available to them to support learning in the different subjects. However, there was sufficient evidence in pupils completed work to show that, overall, pupils do make satisfactory use of computers.

17 The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is undertaken regularly and in depth for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results of assessments made of progress in pupils' termly work and their performance in the national tests are carefully analysed. Assessment information is used to modify the planning for future work and to track progress from year to year. Specific learning targets are planned for pupils from the results of the detailed assessments, ensuring all pupils build progressively on their previous learning. However, these targets are not communicated very well to individual pupils or their parent in order to involve them more and give a better understanding of what needs to be achieved. In the non-core subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory. Some subject coordinators are at present reviewing assessment procedures with a view to making the information generated more useful when planning future work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	10	10	6	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, being broad and balanced and is firmly based on Christian values. It is further enriched by the very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those for sport and the arts. The split site accommodation is satisfactory, overall. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and they are now satisfactory in all subjects except ICT where the up-grading of computers and range of programs has not been sufficient.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and classroom support staff work well as a team so that pupils are well taught in small groups.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The staff work hard to overcome the inconvenience caused by the split site and unsatisfactory dining arrangements, ensuring that standards are affected as little as possible.

Commentary

18 The school provides a good curriculum that is extended and enriched by a very good range of additional activities such as extra-curricular clubs. These clubs include Spanish, swimming and a book club and there are also valuable opportunities to learn to play musical instruments. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Teachers are confident and thorough in their use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. As a result, pupils received a thorough grounding in the basic skills and these are developed and extended well as they move through the school. Pupils make good use of their English and mathematics skills in other subjects such as science, art and design and history. The school welcomes a number of visitors such as theatre groups and musicians who develop and enliven the arts curriculum. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also benefit from residential visits which greatly help their personal and social development which gives them a valuable taste of the world outside the classroom.

19 The school has developed a very favourable adult to pupil ratio and this situation is used to good effect to help overcome the problems associated with having up to three year groups in one class. For example, in one Year 3 and 4 English lesson, the teacher focused on one group planning stories whilst two support staff worked with pupils with special educational needs and a group on the computer. As a result, all pupils learned very well. Where classroom assistants have a special interest or skill, like ICT, they are given responsibility for teaching groups of pupils.

20 Provision for the few pupils who have special educational needs is very good partly because of the favourable pupil to adult ratio in most classes. This enables them to make very good progress and achieve very well. The full range of pupils with special educational needs is identified at an early stage and appropriate individual action plans are drawn up to support their learning. Care is taken to ensure that higher attaining pupils are provided with suitably challenging work.

21 The school accommodation is satisfactory, overall and the outside areas are particularly attractive and well developed. The shortcomings arising from the split site and present dining arrangements, are overcome by thoughtful planning. For example, assemblies are timetabled so that movement between the two buildings usually takes place at break times. The split site,

however, does not allow all the resources for ICT to be shared effectively because of the difficulty in moving computers. This is having an adverse effect on standards in that subject. The school has purchased a number of laptops to help overcome the problem and there are plans to create a computer area in the planned extensions to the infant building.

Care, guidance and support

The school effectively ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Staff provide very good support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school is good in seeking to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- Pastoral care is very good as teachers have a good knowledge of and close relationship with individual pupils.
- Assessment information is used well to plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils.

Commentary

22 The level of care is of a high standard, ensuring the health and safety of all pupils. There are very good arrangements for the induction of new pupils to the school. The close family atmosphere and support available from the numerous adults makes sure all settle in quickly. The school gives very good support and guidance for pupils' personal development through the very good provision for their spiritual, social and moral and cultural education. This, in turn helps to foster pupils' very good attitudes and relationships with staff and with one another. The support and guidance given to pupils in the Foundation Stage, for example, is exceptional and gives children a very good start to school teaching them to share, take turns and be considerate to one another. Staff make good use of assessment information, gained from monitoring pupils' academic achievement, to identify pupils with special educational needs or pupils who are higher attainers to provide very good support for their learning.

23 Pastoral care is based on teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils through the very effective partnership the school has with parents, and the good ratio of adults to children in the classrooms due to the many volunteers who help in school. Pupils know they can talk to any of the adults in school and they feel they are well looked after. They know if bullying occurs, it will be dealt with quickly. Pupils' self esteem and confidence is most effectively developed through the opportunities to be active in helping in school. For example, they act responsibly when serving others with their school lunch, help in assembly and are responsible for taking out and bringing in play equipment at break times. Most feel trusted and valued. Elections for a school pupil council are to be held shortly and the 'buddy system' works well to support new pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and the local community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parental support in lessons is very good and results in a very favorable pupil to adult ratio in most lessons.
- The school provides a very good range of information for parents but targets for learning are not as specific as they could be to enable parents to better support their children's learning.

Commentary

24 Parents are proud of the school and its achievements. Almost a third of parents are from out of the immediate area and willingly travel past other schools to the one they have chosen for their children. Many support teachers by coming into school to help in lessons or on visits and also provide resources for the school. For example, one father constructed a large wooden car wash for the outdoor play area for the reception class. The active Home and School Association raises substantial amounts of money to provide extra resources for teaching and learning and is also a forum for consulting with the headteacher. Parents help their child with homework and know what needs to be done each week as a 'pupils' planner' was introduced after consultation with parents.

25 Community links in this rural area are promoted well and the school has successfully developed a very good relationship with other schools in the area. Pupils use the swimming pool at the neighboring independent school and its pupils visit regularly to work with the pupils of all ages. During the inspection, for example, three students were completing work for their Gold Award in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

26 Parents are very happy with most areas of the school and its work. They receive a very good range of useful information about routines and procedures of the school and are kept informed about school life and the curriculum through the regular newsletters. The school prospectus contains some very useful information on how parents can help to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Parents meet with teachers three times a year to review their child's progress and discuss targets. The annual written reports are of good quality as they include pupils' strengths in all subjects. However, some of the targets included are not specific enough to enable parents to know exactly how to help their child with the next step in their learning. Teachers have a clear knowledge and understanding from detailed assessment records of what pupils need to do to improve. The learning targets need to be shared more with pupils and communicated to their parents, giving all a clearer understanding on what is necessary to bring about further improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. Governance is equally effective with governors making a major contribution to the leadership and management. Management is very effective, ensuring that the principles of best value are applied to all aspects of the schools work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is an inspiration to staff. The exceptionally talented deputy headteacher supports her very well.
- The school makes very good use of all its resources.
- The split site has a negative effect on school life although staff work hard to minimise this and generally cope well.

Commentary

27 The governing body provides a very strong and supportive element in the leadership and management of the school. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The governors have re-organised their structure to provide a much clearer focus on standards and those parts of their work that support the raising of standards. For example, there is now a school development committee whose brief has that specific goal and whose work is helping to maintain and raise high standards. Governors are committed to the school and some are involved in supporting it in its day-to-day work. This helps them to understand the needs of the school better and ensures that the governors are in a strong position to help to develop and share the aims and vision of the school. They successfully act as "critical friends" to ensure that proposed changes are thoroughly considered before being implemented. Governors have been particularly successful at appointing new staff so that their strengths complement each other. The governing body systematically ensures that statutory requirements are met.

28 The headteacher is very committed to the school and provides inspirational leadership. As a result, she is successfully developing a very effective team of teachers and ancillary staff. Her

skills are well complemented by those of the deputy headteacher and they form a very strong and effective management team. This strong teamwork extends right through the school and the dedicated, hard-working teaching staff integrate very well with other school staff. Pupils benefit greatly from the very positive ethos generated by this strong group of adults who set such a very good example to them in so many ways. There is a clear, shared vision of how the school needs to develop and all members of the team strive to bring this about. Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has undertaken a full review of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, together with the governors, developed and carefully implemented plans to bring about secure improvement. For example, teaching and learning have been improved by an open and frank series of discussions based on focused lesson observations. This has enabled teachers to build on their strengths whilst addressing weaker areas of their work. The school has a high reputation that is well deserved. When all these factors are taken into account, along with the standards being achieved by all pupils and the significantly higher than average costs, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

29 There are a number of aspects, which have particularly contributed to the raising of achievement and the chief one is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. The close relationship with parents, fostered by all the staff at the school has secured a high level of parental interest and support. Parents are willing partners and their help in the classrooms means that there is a very favourable adult/pupil ratio. This has a significant impact on the quality of provision and how well pupils learn. The good teaching, with much being very good, is another important factor.

30 The main barrier to learning at present is the inconvenience caused by the split site – although teachers generally cope well with the inconvenience. The present dining arrangements mean that the junior building cannot be used at lunchtime for lesson preparation. A shortage of space and having to share computers between the two sites means that there are not enough resources for ICT in one place to allow pupils sufficient hands on experience to consolidate new learning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	336,267	Balance from previous year	22,570
Total expenditure	313,697	Balance carried forward to the next	77,547
Expenditure per pupil	2,950		

31 The above average funding carried forward to the next financial year is largely the result of a generous split sit allowance provided for the school by the Local Education Authority. Much of this will be used to boost resources for ICT and to improve resources in the infant hall after the new kitchen and dining area have been completed.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in reception is **very good** and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of a very high quality with all the lessons seen being either very good or excellent. As a result, the children are given a very good start to their education.
- Children achieve very well. All are well placed to reach or exceed the early learning goals well before the end of their reception year in the six areas of learning.
- Relationships with parents are very good. Parents and staff are genuine partners in the children's education.
- The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a clear commitment to high-quality care and high achievement for each child. She has a very clear overview of provision and is a very effective model for teaching.
- Good use is made of the outdoor learning area. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the under-fives did not have this facility.

Commentary

32 The Foundation Stage covers the period when children are in the reception class. At the time of the inspection, there were only seven pupils in their reception year. Another 10 are due to start in January. The accommodation is adequate for all of these pupils. The well resourced outdoor area is used effectively to add challenge and interest to children's learning experiences. It also takes pressure off the available indoor area, giving children more space for activities.

33 The children's attainment on entry to the school is above average although the full range of ability is represented. The teacher, teaching assistants, parent volunteers and student teacher work very effectively as a team ensuring consistent, high quality provision. Planning is carefully structured and fully meets the learning needs of all children, including those who have special learning needs and higher ability children. A particularly effective strategy adopted by the class teacher is the ten minute free-time between activities which demand children's concentration. These 'concentration breaks' allow children to enjoy the many exciting activities prepared for them and to return to more demanding work, suitably refreshed. All activities, including these breaks are closely supervised by adults. Assessment procedures are of a very high quality. Teachers closely monitor the children's achievements and the information gathered is used very effectively to set the next targets for learning.

39 Parents are warmly welcomed by staff and a few regularly help within the classroom. This helps to provide a very favourable child to adult ratio, adding to the quality of provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the needs and interests of young children and ensure that they feel safe and secure.
- Staff are very good role models through what they say and do.
- Routines are well established so that the children know what is expected of them. This results in very good relationships and behaviour.
- Staff listen carefully to what the children have to say and provide many opportunities for them to speak. This effectively promotes confidence.

- A carefully planned balance between adult support and self-choice activities, results in the children developing good independent learning skills.

Commentary

40 The children are eager to learn and attentive. They settle quickly and happily to the wide range of activities provided. They are very well behaved and many are quite mature in their relationships and attitudes. Carefully balanced opportunities for the children to make choices results in most being very willing to take on responsibilities. For example, all take care to tidy areas such as the ice cream shop area before moving to another activity. The children are confident and quite willing to talk about what they are doing and ask and answer questions. Independence skills are promoted well, for example, through self-registration or being given the freedom to choose activities. Children are mostly mature for their age and have no difficulty in sharing resources or taking their turn.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and listening is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many interesting activities are planned and provided for the children to speak, listen, read and write.
- Activities are exciting and stimulating and are planned very effectively to capture the children's interest.
- A love of books and the systematic development of reading skills are carefully planned and children achieve well in this area of learning.
- Children are provided with many opportunities to understand about writing as a method of communication and to develop their writing skills as they move through the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

41 Children quickly develop confident speaking skills due to the close attention of adults. When making masks, for example, the teaching assistant encouraged children to re-tell the story of the ' Bear hunt'. Most have enough confidence to share their news with the rest of the class each morning. Plenary sessions at the end of the lesson offer very good opportunities for the children to explain what they have been doing. A particular strength lies in the reception teacher's skills in responding to individual children. Whispering 'brilliant!' to one boy as he went past the teacher to sit down made him visibly glow. Plenty of time is given and each child knows that he or she is special and will be listened to.

42 Reading skills are promoted very well through many opportunities to respond to stories and other written text and reading sessions between an adult and individual child. The classroom is attractively decorated with large colourful displays of favourite stories such as ' The Three Billy Goats'. All enjoy using and listening to the good range of story tapes. In the reading area, children 'read' stories very expressively to the reading bears, a collection of cuddly toys for them to share their book with.

43 The large majority of children are already well on the way to achieving the early writing targets well before the end of the reception year. Evidence from work completed so far confirms the high standards being achieved. Children are invited to get their fingers ready to write by undertaking a range of exercises both inside and outside of the classroom. These activities are interesting, exciting and challenging and aimed at improving children's co-ordination. Outside, for example, children use a large paint brush dipped in water to paint letters on the dry paving slabs. Inside, they use tweezers to carefully pick out small foil shapes from a dish, draw straight lines across a shoe box lid or trace letters with their fingers in different coloured sand trays. All activities are under the close supervision of adults who encourage the use of the phonic sound of the letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics is made purposeful and enjoyable through a wide range of play activities.
- Mathematical skills and language are systematically taught.

Commentary

44 Most children are on course to attain the learning goals in this area well before the end of reception. Most are already confident with numbers to 20. In one session seen, children worked alongside Year 1 pupils during the short oral part of the lesson and most were able to keep up with the counting on and counting back with numbers to 20. Entertaining methods employed by the teacher ensured full attention. Children enjoyed punching the air like Jasper, the puppet as they counted out loud or trying to count silently for themselves when counting the squawks made by Squawker, the duck. In activity sessions, they play dice games, use number stepping stones outdoors or try and persuade inspectors to buy an ice cream from their shop or breakfast from the 'Escrick Diner.' Both of these outlets had real money for children to use. Computers are frequently used to consolidate children's knowledge of numbers and vocabulary such as 'more' or 'less'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a wide range of carefully planned and stimulating activities. This builds well on their previous experiences and helps them achieve very well.
- The development of technical language and language for thinking is carefully planned into activities through discussions and skilful questioning.
- Computer skills are taught effectively and this enables the children to become more independent and confident as they use the mouse to work through a range of programs.
- Good use is made of the outside environment, both in school and in the wider locality.

Commentary

45 Computers are always available and programs are well prepared to help the children develop ICT skills or to reinforce learning. A girl showed exceptional mouse skills, for example, as she drew herself and her favourite toy, a fairy princess.

46 Children use accurate terminology well to describe the different parts of their body and describe their weather chart. All are able to sort toys by their age, looking carefully for scratches and other signs of ageing. Cross curricular links are a strong feature as children learn to take turns with special toys like the clockwork penguin of football rattle, discuss how they work and try to draw their favourite.

47 Outdoor activities, such as the car wash or bear hunt cave are very well planned to ensure that the children are provided with exciting and stimulating opportunities which encourage them to use their senses. Not only do they explore their senses but they develop and use language effectively to describe their feelings, and what they see, taste and hear.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children attain the learning goals well before the end of their reception year. Some do particularly well in the development of skills that require finer, more precise movements such as using scissors and pencil control.
- Children are given time to explore in activities in the classrooms and through the provision of regular opportunities to play and learn outside in the well organised outdoor area.
- The indoor and outside learning environments are well resourced.
- All children are taught to swim.

Commentary

48 Children quickly develop skills in running, climbing and controlling a range of wheeled toys. Skills, such as cutting out shapes and controlling pencils, crayons and brushes are well developed. In one physical education lesson seen where reception children worked with Year 1 pupils, all concentrated exceptionally well when responding to music and enacting the Bear Hunt story. All show confidence when performing hops, skips, turns and jumps. The provision for swimming is very good. All have the opportunity to learn to swim at the nearby pool at the Independent School for Girls and during the inspection, a boy in reception was presented with a certificate for doing a length of the pool.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are provided with high quality time to experiment, communicate, be imaginative and discover things for themselves.
- A good balance between adult involvement and independence results in children confidently building up their skills and being able to make their own choices.
- Good quality resources and exciting role play areas encourage the children to relate well to others as they develop language, imagination and practical skills.
- Music sessions could be better organised.

Commentary

49 Activities, such as the bear cave in the outdoor play area, converted cleverly using the car wash are imaginative and enjoyable as the children explore and sit in the cave to listen to stories. The children enjoy singing and joining in with the actions for songs. A specialist music teacher takes one session each week and children carefully follow musical rhythms using a good range of percussion instruments. The organisation of the children took valuable time from the lesson as the class teacher was not present to support the specialist during this session. Not knowing what the children were doing in the session means that the class teacher would be unable to practice some of the activities during the rest of the week.

50 Resources for drawing and painting are very good. Children were provided with good opportunities to decide what they were going to use to make masks, for example, and the close attention of an adult meant that they were fully engaged in conversation about what they were doing.

51 Role-play opportunities are carefully planned to provide opportunities for the children to develop their imagination and to relate to the wider world. In the 'Escrick diner', all patiently waited their turn for breakfast.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are very good by Year 6 and pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- The subject is looked after well by the subject manager who has a clear focus on standards and inclusion across the English curriculum.
- Lessons are well planned, challenging and organised to make very good use of the favourable staffing ratio.
- Teachers make good links with other subjects so that pupils' English skills are developed on a broad front.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and behave very well in lessons.
- Pupils' targets for learning are not systematically applied, monitored or shared with parents.
- Music tuition means that some pupils miss out on part of their English lesson.

Commentary

52 Standards in English were well above average in both key stages at the time of the previous inspection. They are now above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6. The variation in test results at Year 2 from year to year is due to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the impact of their performance on the small numbers taking the tests. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and this is an improvement. Basic skills are well taught as when Reception and Year 1 pupils are given an interesting and challenging lesson so they develop a better knowledge and understanding of phonics.

53 The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good examples being seen in some lessons. Planning is very good so that the needs of different groups of pupils are carefully met. This is a particularly important aspect because all of the classes contain more than one year group. Lessons are well constructed to make very good use of the available adults so that pupils work in small groups with clear learning objectives. For example, Year 1 pupils are taken on a "bear hunt" through an imaginative outside area and develop their understanding of the class reading book in an exciting and stimulating way. Teachers are very good at keeping a clear overview of all pupils without being distracted from focused teaching with their own selected group.

54 Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and this is because of the very good relationships that exist in all classrooms. A strong feature of most lessons is the very good pace of learning because teachers do not have to spend time correcting poor behaviour or inducing pupils to concentrate. A small number of pupils miss parts of their lesson when they go to instrument tuition. Although teachers do their best to describe what the rest of the class have learned it is a situation that requires very careful monitoring.

55 The use of individual targets to identify and focus pupils' learning is not yet well developed. Simple targets such as, "Use interesting words" are contained in most books but many are not easy to assess and there is very little reference to them in subsequent marking. The best marking values pupils' efforts but also indicates clearly how their work can be improved so they develop a better understanding of their own learning. Because parents are not made aware of their children's current learning targets they can not give the level of support that they would like.

56 The subject coordinator manages the subject well so that all of the essential elements are systematically addressed. She actively monitors and encourages the on-going development of English by examining planning and giving good advice about teaching following focused lesson

observations. Staff use the National Literacy Strategy well and use their good knowledge and understanding of the subject to give pupils a strong base for future learning. The level of resources has been improved and are now satisfactory, overall. The school is not satisfied and is in the course of further strengthening and developing them, particularly computer programs to support pupils' learning in English. Assessment is much improved and the results are used to focus teaching on those elements identified as being weaker than others. For example, the school has prioritised writing and the development of ICT in the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57 The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is a particular strength of teaching in English lessons because of the care teachers take to plan and make good links with other subjects. This encourages the pupils to see education as an "all-round" experience and thus to understand how different skills, knowledge and understanding combine to strengthen each other. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class learn about the life of the artist, Vincent van Gogh, when they share the book "Camille and the Sunflowers". Pupils show great insight when they say, "The people are unkind and aggressive" and, "They didn't like him because he was different". The teacher skilfully linked this new understanding to pupils' work in personal, social, health and cultural education so they gained valuable insight into the feelings of other people. This, in turn, enabled them to plan and write interesting stories about their own feelings in an English lesson.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high standards achieved by pupils in Year 6.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented.
- The good quality of teaching and learning. Lessons are well planned and incorporate a good variety of activities.
- Pupils' work is analysed regularly so that strengths and weaknesses in learning are identified.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together providing very effective support for pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils' to use their mathematical skills across other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

58 Since the previous inspection standards have improved from above average to well above average by Year 6. Pupils consistently achieve high standards in mathematics. Other improvements have been in the level of resources, which are now satisfactory and in procedures to monitor teaching and learning. The quality of teaching and learning is evaluated carefully each year by the coordinator and headteacher and any weaknesses discussed with staff in order to bring about improvement.

59 In the national tests for 11 year-olds, standards have been well above average for the three years from 2000 to 2002. In 2003, pupils' performance was in the top five per cent nationally with very high standards being achieved by that year group. Results in the national tests in Year 2 were well above the national average in 2002. However, in 2003, they were in line with the average. This does not mean that there has been a decline in the standards seen in the classroom. The overall performance was affected by the number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, which was also relatively small with only 15 pupils tested. The impact of each pupils' results therefore had a significant impact on the overall standards. In comparison with similar schools, the performance of Year 6 pupils was well above average. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are above average in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. The very high targets set for this coming year are likely to be achieved. All pupils, including those with special educational

needs, make good progress. There is no significant difference between the standards reached by boys and girls throughout the school.

60 Throughout the school pupils are developing a good knowledge of number. The mental part at the beginning of the lesson is used to provide a good focus for counting and using number multiples. When pupils use individual whiteboards to write down their answers the level of engagement is high. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils confidently ordered numbers from the smallest to the largest and could count in 2's 10's and 100's. Tasks such as sorting letters for houses along a street with two and three figure door numbers was challenging. The ratio of five pupils to each adult meant that all had the support needed to succeed. Year 3 and 4 pupils showed that they had a good understanding of fractions. In this lesson too, adult support was a key feature.

61 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are extremely well planned and teachers set challenging work for each age group within each class. For example, in a good lesson seen in the Year 4/5 and 6 class when the pupils were working out problems, the higher attaining pupils had to work out examples using much higher numbers than the rest of the class. This helped to extend their knowledge whilst the rest of the class were still able to consolidate their own understanding of the processes involved in calculating the answers. Similarly in an exercise on measuring accurately, older and higher attaining pupils were expected to use millimeters rather than centimetres for younger pupils. All pupils are able to work independently or within a group very well. For many, their level of concentration throughout lessons never wavers.

62 Teachers use good open ended questions to test the pupils previous knowledge and consolidate their learning. Opportunities are given for the pupils to explain their answers that show their understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils very well and have formed very good relationships with them. The very low pupil to adult ratio in most classes means that the quality of support is very good. This motivates the pupils and makes them willing learners. They enjoy mathematics and work hard in the lessons. The varied activities planned ensure that no time is wasted and pupils settle down quickly to begin their work after the tasks have been explained.

63 Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the high standards are maintained. Regular monitoring of teaching has taken place to see where further improvements could be made. Results of tests are analysed and rigorous assessments identify the pupils' individual needs. However, individual targets for pupils are not very specific and most pupils do not appreciate what is expected of them. Setting individual targets may not necessarily raise standards significantly, particularly at Year 6 where they are already high, but the school is keen to encourage independence and a sense of responsibility and this would be an effective way of involving pupils more in their own learning. An additional benefit would be to inform parents of these targets so that they too could be better informed and share in the learning process.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64 All areas of the mathematics curriculum are taught and good opportunities are given for pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge whilst using mathematics in different situations. In Science, for example, the pupils arrange information in charts and graphs. However, more use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics in some lessons. Not enough opportunities are given to the pupils to use selected programs to develop their mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good attitude towards the subject. They particularly enjoy the practical work in science.
- Pupils achieve high standards by Year 6.

- The support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

65 Only one science lesson with Year 3 and 4 pupils was seen. However, there was sufficient evidence from pupils completed work and teachers' planning files to make secure judgements about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Standards are well above average for the present Year 6. Pupils' performance in the national tests for Year 6 and in teacher assessments in Year 2 over the past three years confirm that science is a well taught subject where pupils do well. In the national tests in 2003, for example, standards for Year 6 pupils were well above average compared to all schools and above average when compared to the results for similar schools. All pupils did well in relation to their prior attainment. In the previous two years standards were very high, being in the top five per cent nationally. The smaller than average size of the year group and impact of just one pupils performance is the only reason for the difference in overall performance. There is no difference in the performance of girls and boys. Detailed assessments show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school.

66 Teacher assessments in 2003 show that a small number of pupils with special educational needs did not achieve the expected level in Year 2. As only 15 were tested, the result was that standards were below average. However overall, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average. Inspection evidence shows that current standards are above average in Year 2.

67 In the lesson seen, linking pupils' heart rate to exercise, work was very well planned and good use was made of resources such as stopwatches, individual whiteboards to record results and the class computers to answer questions on the functions of the heart. Pupils enjoyed finding their pulse rate and recording it after different levels of exercise. The presence of three adults meant that very good support was available for individual pupils.

68 The scrutiny of work showed that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in some depth and that pupils have lots of opportunity to conduct experiments or investigations for themselves. There were records of junior pupils' attempts to dissolve materials, for example, and investigations involving sound, electrical circuits and in growing plants. Pupils work hard and obviously take pride in their work, which was neatly presented. Records of how they tested lollipop sticks and left apples to rot show they have a good understanding of fair testing. Pupils in the infant classes investigate sounds, sort materials by their properties and make bread to see how some changes to materials are irreversible.

69 There were some good examples of pupils using computers to support their learning in science with graphs and databases completed and accounts of experiments written up using a word processor. Good use is also made of pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. In one topic about a healthy lifestyle, historical facts about sailors and scurvy were explored. Pupils learnt that it was because of James Lind, who gave sailors limes to combat the condition that the term 'limeys' came about. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.

70 The subject is well led and managed. The three weaknesses identified in the previous report; no budget and a shortage of resources; no development plan and inadequate monitoring have all been corrected. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the quality of the work they produce each term are assessed very rigorously along with the quality of teaching. Any areas of weakness are quickly identified and staff act as one to put things right. Each year, the coordinator draws up an action plan for science and an appropriate budget is allocated. Resources available for pupils to study science are now satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements in staff expertise are beginning to improve standards, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- Management of the subject is satisfactory, overall.
- Resources for the subject spread over the two sites do not allow pupils in Years 3 to 6 in particular to practise their ICT skills enough.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not develop the necessary depth of knowledge and understanding of the subject because of the limited time allocated and the limited resources.

Commentary

71 Standards have risen since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory by Year 2. However, standards by Year 6 remain below those expected. Teaching staff and some classroom assistants have undertaken the necessary training and now teach the subject with increasing confidence. This has had a positive impact on standards in Years 1 and 2 but there has not been time for a similar improvement to become apparent in Years 3 to 6.

72 There have been improvements in resources for the subject but they are not always used to best effect. For example, some teachers do not always know about available software and opportunities are sometimes missed to use computers to extend and develop learning in all subjects. Large groups of pupils are taught basic skills using only one computer as a teaching aid. This method means that pupils cannot see the screen well enough and have very little time to actually practise the skills they have learned, sometimes several days later.

73 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection. The improved quality of teaching, however, has not yet had sufficient impact to improve standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils reach satisfactory standards in some elements, such as word processing, partly because they frequently develop and practise these skills on their computers at home. They are taught to use spreadsheets and databases and learn to control a small robot with simple commands but much of their knowledge is shallow because of the limited amount of practise they have had. Some elements such as email and the use of sensing equipment are hardly developed at all although the planned curriculum recognises that they should be included at an appropriate level. Although all pupils have a positive attitude to the subject those in Years 3 to 6 say they often do not fully understand what they are taught. They say they do not remember what they learn because they have not practised their new skills well enough.

74 The subject coordinator demonstrates a high level of subject expertise and is providing invaluable support to other members of the teaching staff. Teachers' planning is routinely monitored and evaluated and a subject action plan has been drawn up. This includes matching available programs to the topics covered in some subjects like history and geography, further improving the range of programs and reviewing the current satisfactory assessment procedures. There is a strong determination to raise standards and each year, ICT features as a priority in the school improvement plan. This is helping to raise standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75 ICT is used in many areas of the curriculum and this is something that is gradually being developed. Younger pupils, for example, create simple human figures using the relevant software and those in Year 2 use the program to produce shapes in the style of the artist Mondrian. Year 3 and 4 pupils devise a basic database linked to their study of the wives of Henry VIII. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 extend their work on word processing to develop short but interesting Powerpoint

presentations. However, in all cases, the pace of this work is slowed by limited time and limited access to computers.

HUMANITIES

76 Only one history lesson and no geography lessons were seen so no firm judgement on provision of teaching and achievement can be made in these subjects. This in part was due to the way the two subjects are taught alternatively each term and to inspectors timetabling arrangements during the inspection.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources for all aspects of the curriculum have been improved significantly since the previous inspection when they were unsatisfactory.
- Management of the subject is good.
- The Locally Agreed Syllabus has been carefully adapted by the school and guides teachers' planning most effectively.
- School assemblies are well planned and effectively support the curriculum. Frequent visitors add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning.

Commentary

77 Standards are in-line with expected levels at Year 2 and in Year 6 with most pupils achieving satisfactorily. There is good support for pupils who have special educational needs because of the low pupil to adult ratio in lessons and as a result, these pupils also make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The oral parts of lessons are the most effective with lots of good questions and discussion. This is possible because of pupils very good behaviour and their positive attitudes towards their lessons. In Year 5 and 6, for example, pupils contributed well to a discussion about angels and concluded that angels were a symbol of all that is spiritual. Cross-curricular links were very effectively made as pupils examined and described the work of art by Edward Burnes-Jones of 'An angel playing a flageolet'. Their artistic and literacy skills were employed as they wrote short imaginative accounts about witnessing an angel arriving and tried to sketch an angels head and wings.

78 The quality of teachers' planning is good, ensuring full coverage of the curriculum. An appropriate emphasis is given to teaching about Christianity in this Church of England school and pupils are also given a clear understanding about the other major religions of the world such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Links are effectively made with other subjects and teachers can draw upon a wide range of quality resources to support their lessons, adding quality and interest to the learning process. In one lesson with lower juniors, for example, pupils used tape recorders in a role play situation to interview the shepherds in Bethlehem about their feelings after seeing the angels. Computers were also used to build up a nativity scene.

79 School assemblies are an important part of the school day and contribute much to pupils' knowledge and understanding. During the inspection, the assembly theme was 'Symbols'. Visitors follow the same theme and class teachers are also able to follow up aspects from assemblies in their lessons, the Year 6 lesson about angels being a typical example. All pupils behave exceptionally well and are keen to make a contribution. Pupils of all ages had a very good knowledge of the story of Noah, for example, and were keen to answer questions on the significance of light in religious ceremonies for Christians and Hindus. All were familiar with the Hindu festival of Diwali.

80 Management of the subject is good. Planning closely follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus and includes elements of national guidance for religious education. This ensures that legal requirements are met. Religious education is taught as a discrete subject with sufficient time being given to it. The school has devised two topic cycles to take account of the fact that children have to spend more than one year in each of the mixed age classes. The multicultural dimension is in place and pupils are helped to understand the important features of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Resources to support teaching and pupils learning about these religions have been improved significantly.

81 **History** was the main focus for this term for most classes. In the previous inspection, the level of resources and assessment procedures were found to be unsatisfactory. However, much has been accomplished to bring about an improvement in both areas. Resources are now satisfactory and there are appropriate procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress at the end of each teaching unit.

82 The completed work for each class from this academic year was available for inspectors to analyse. Pupils in each class produce neat work for their topic on the Tudor period in history as well as studying the history of the local area. The work on the Fire of London in 1666 by pupils in Year 2 showed that teachers encouraged pupils to make good use of the Internet for research and computers to record their work. Good links are also made with other subjects. In the Year 2 study of historical toys, pupils use their art and design skills to design and make toys of their own, some with moving parts. In the lesson seen, pupils enjoyed sorting toys by their age. All remembered their interesting visit to the nearby toy museum. Year 6 pupils put their literacy skills to good use when writing dialogues between Henry VIII and one of his wives using the class computers.

83 Subject management is effective. The coordinator draws up an action plan for the subject each year, based on the careful monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of teaching. Standards are regularly monitored by all teachers examining pupils' books together and the co-ordinator and headteacher monitor the quality of teachers' termly planning in depth. As a result of feedback to teachers, their planning is good. The quality of teaching is assessed through an evaluation of pupils completed work and some classroom observations.

84 In **geography**, each class follows a range of topics and a scrutiny of work from this year showed that the work produced by pupils of all ages was of a satisfactory standard. Year 6, for example, studied the effects of a proposed new A19 bi-pass, and following a residential visit to the Durham area, made detailed comparisons with their own area. There was little evidence in the scrutiny of work of computers being used to support pupils learning in geography throughout the school. Year 2 had virtually no work in their books on which to judge standards or the quality of teaching. Their topic on the seaside overlapped closely with the history topic as pupils compared features of seaside holidays from one hundred years ago with today. All, including those with special educational needs, who are very well supported by the low pupil adult ratio, were able to describe the main human and physical features of a town from maps. Year 2 clearly understand maps and showed that they had a good knowledge of their local area.

85 Teachers plan their lessons well and take care to provide work which is suitably challenging for pupils of all ability levels. Pupils work hard and produce neatly presented work.

86 The subject is managed satisfactorily. Teachers' planning is closely monitored by the headteacher and co-ordinator. As part of a whole-school review, the sound assessment procedures are to be further improved this year. The headteacher and co-ordinator have responded to comments in the previous report about monitoring classroom practice more often, in particular the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring visits are regularly made and the frequency increases when the subject features in the School Improvement Plan. Resources for geography are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

87 There was not enough teaching seen in art and design or in physical education to make a firm judgement on all aspects of provision. However, work in these subjects was sampled and reported upon. Only a very limited amount of work was available in design and technology and no lessons were seen. No judgement could be made about provision.

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music throughout the school is taught by a visiting music specialist so that the key skills are developed systematically.
- Pupils' very good speaking and listening skills are used well to develop their understanding and appreciation of musical performance.
- Music resources have been improved since the previous inspection and are now sufficient to teach the full music curriculum.

Commentary

88 The school has decided to buy in expertise for the subject so music is taught to all age groups by a visiting music specialist. She uses her very good level of expertise to good effect so that lessons are well structured and enjoyable. Pupils are familiar with the teaching routines and join in lessons with enthusiasm and interest so that their skills are developed satisfactorily. They develop a clear understanding of rhythm and pulse. For example, the younger pupils learn to recognise the names of different animals such as `alligator` and `bee` by the teacher using clapping as a rhythm technique. This is developed well by the pupils in Years 5 and 6 when they use a range of instruments to play sequences of tunes and rhythms based on animal names. Pupils enjoy their music lessons because they are interesting and challenging. They achieve satisfactory standards at the end of both key stages and some show good skills. For example, pupils in the school choir respond to the example of their teacher's very talented singing by performing a delightful and uplifting song in two-parts.

89 Pupils are successfully encouraged to work together during music lessons and to develop their critical ability. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed very good levels of cooperation and discussion when deciding the shape and form of their instrumental presentation. They evaluated the performances of other groups sensibly, giving good reasons for their judgements. Pupils learn to appreciate the value of rehearsing their work before performing so that their standards improve.

90 Management of the subject is satisfactory. Resources have been developed systematically since the previous inspection so that they now support the music curriculum fully. The visiting teacher takes good advantage of the range and quality of instruments by ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to play and practise throughout her lessons. This ensures that they develop their musical skills by first-hand experience and maintain their enthusiasm for the subject.

91 In **art and design**, teachers' plans show that it is an important, valued part of the curriculum and work in the subject is undertaken in all classes. The subject is used to enhance work in a number of other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the Tudors in history and show perception and sensitivity when comparing Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII with David Hockney's photomontage entitled "Mother". Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are successfully encouraged to exercise choice of materials when they learn to make prints so they begin to take responsibility for aspects of their own work. Examples of art on display show that pupils of all ages produce satisfactory work, and some is good for their age. Pupils' work in art and design is sometimes linked to their studies of other cultures and this helps to broaden their understanding of how other people have developed. For example, older pupils produce some attractive, vivid Batik prints based on African masks.

92 In **design and technology**, evidence was very limited as the subject is not covered by some classes this term. Pupils had taken most of their models from last year home. Planning documents show that the subject is taught in all classes and curriculum requirements are met.

93 In **physical education**, most pupils respond very well to their teachers' instructions and appear to enjoy doing physical education. Behaviour in the lessons seen was invariably very good. However, in a Year 6 games lesson outdoors, some pupils took far too long to get changed causing others to become restless whilst waiting for them. The teacher then spent too long explaining behaviour and safety rules. Activities to promote better hockey skills were well planned to gradually develop and extend skills. Unfortunately, lesson time was short due to the time wasted earlier. When practising their tackling, dribbling and striking skills in small groups, all pupils worked well to achieve standards which were in line with those normally seen.

94 Standards in a Year 3 and 4 dance session were better than average for this age group. All pupils responded very well to the good quality of teaching and were totally engrossed as they developed a sequence of cat movements. Planning of the lesson was very good, allowing time for pupils to demonstrate and then discuss ways of improving their performance. A strong feature of the lesson was the links made with other subjects. Actions were based on the story of Dick Whittington and pupils had also previously read the poem 'Song of the Jellicles' by TS Elliot. Pupils viewing the 'Jellicle Cat' from the 'Cats' video rounded off this lesson perfectly, with some pupils able to join in with the singing. Year 1 pupils were equally hard working in their dance lesson as they enacted the story of 'The Bear Hunt'. Movement and facial expressions were used well to show a range of emotions.

95 Swimming provision is very good. Pupils from the reception class onwards use a nearby pool and the school reports that all pupils attain the expected level of competence before the end of Year 2. During the inspection, a boy in the reception class, for example, was presented with a certificate for swimming 25 metres.

96 Teachers generally have an excellent relationship with all pupils and constantly challenge them, maintaining their interest and involvement. In the physical education lessons seen, pupils had the confidence to perform for others and boys willingly partnered girls. All teachers demonstrate a satisfactory subject knowledge when planning lessons and the quality of their planning is good. In lessons, good use is made of teaching assistants to support individual pupils or groups. Pupils' capacity to work collaboratively or independently and their positive attitudes are helping to raise standards.

97 Coordination of the subject is satisfactory. The grounds are spacious with good grassed areas and an adventure play area. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. The school belongs to the Derwent Sports Association and all older pupils have the chance to represent the school in competitive events such as rounders and football matches. There is also the opportunity for Year 5 and 6 pupils to take part in a residential experience with adventurous activities such as orienteering. The assessment procedures for physical education are satisfactory and give teachers a clear picture of each individual pupil's attainment and progress following each half terms teaching programme. The headteacher and coordinator frequently monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and are quick to discuss any problems identified with all staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

98 Relationships are the cornerstone of the PSHCE provision, with pupils enjoying an excellent, trusting relationship with the adults in school. This enables pupils to talk openly and frankly in special discussion sessions called 'circle time'. One girl, in anticipation of the lesson, told the inspector that 'circle time is really good!' In the lesson with younger junior pupils, for example, all freely contributed to the discussion about different scenes depicting winning a trophy, a birthday party or pupils laughing unkindly at someone. All pupils showed a good level of understanding and sympathy for the different peoples feelings in each scene.

99 The development of the provision for PSHCE is having a significant impact on pupils behaviour and their attitudes to school in general and towards one another in particular. Pupils behave in a mature and responsible way in school and this helps to create the very good ethos for learning seen in most lessons. Pupils' views are regularly sought and the current Year 6 committee is being developed into a full school council as soon as the elections are held.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgments</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	4
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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