

INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary's C of E VA Primary School

Newchurch-in-Pendle, Burnley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119435

Headteacher: Miss S J Waller

Lead inspector: Mr D Clegg

Dates of inspection: 23 – 24 September 2003

Inspection number: 261094

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary school
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	45
School address:	Spennbrook Rd Newchurch-in-Pendle Burnley Lancashire
Postcode:	BB12 9JP
Telephone number:	01282 612191
Fax number:	01282 612191
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Wilkinson
Date of previous inspection:	9 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is much smaller than average with 45 pupils aged between 4 and 11 years. The majority of pupils come from local villages. Virtually all pupils are from a white British background and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

About 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. The main difficulties are learning problems. An about average proportion of children are eligible for free school meals.

The school is part of a network of small schools which promotes the teaching of French to primary aged pupils.

When children are entering the school they are achieving broadly average standards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4341	Mr D Clegg	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information communication and technology, art and design, geography, history
8943	Mrs M Manning	Lay inspector	
4343	Ms S Billington	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English as an additional language, special educational needs, English, science, music, physical education, religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education Limited

3 Greenacres
Puddletown
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8GF

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with several very good features. Pupils achieve well because they are well taught. The school provides a particularly good start for all children. The ethos of the school is very strong and this instils in all pupils the desire to do well. It is very effectively led. The school provides good value for money.

Main strengths are:

- Good levels of achievement; younger pupils achieve particularly well in literacy and numeracy
- Good quality of teaching overall; the teaching of reception and years 1 and 2 is very good.
- Good assessments are made of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are excellent
- Behaviour is excellent
- Leadership is very good
- There is a very good partnership with parents

Main weaknesses are:

- Standards in some aspects of information communication technology (ICT) for eleven year olds
- Standards of presentation in years 3 to 6
- Aspects of provision for reception children

The school has plans to build an extension that will improve the provision for the youngest children and is currently working on ways to improve the standard of presentation.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed the weaknesses and continues to build on the strengths recognised in the last report. Standards have remained broadly similar overall although the younger children now achieve better than the older ones. The school continues to be well led and managed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The above table should be interpreted with a high degree of caution because the number of pupils in each year group is very small.

Overall pupils **achieve well**. The youngest children get off to a **very good** start and **achieve very well** in language, mathematics and personal and social development, comfortably reaching the levels expected by the end of reception. In **years 1 and 2** all pupils make good and often very good progress. They **achieve well** and attain **above average standards** in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In **years 3 to 6**, pupils achieve **satisfactorily**; by the time they leave school they attain standards in English and mathematics that are generally at or above the national average. Standards

in ICT are below those expected in some aspects and standards of presentation are sometimes weak. They are **well** equipped for the next stage of their education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **good**. **Very good teaching** in the reception and **years 1 and 2** class make sure that children rapidly settle into school, work hard and make often **very good progress**. The teaching in **years 3 to 6** is **satisfactory** and helps them to sustain the above average standards.

The school provides a **good** curriculum and a **very good** level of care and support. The school is currently not able to provide enough space for the reception children to play. There are **very good** links with parents and **good** links with the community. There are **very good** links with other local schools that enrich the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school benefits from **good** leadership and management.

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. There is a strong sense of purpose and direction that underpins the work of the school.

The school is **well** managed; there are effective procedures to ensure the school runs smoothly.

The governing body is very supportive and governs the school **satisfactorily**. They play their part in setting the strategic direction of the school and do all the things they should do by law.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are **very satisfied** with the school. They particularly like:

- How much children enjoy school
- The school's approach to homework
- How well children settle into school

Pupils spoke very positively about how much they liked school. They find their lessons interesting and think the school is **good** at helping them to learn as much as possible.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Raise standards in some aspects of ICT for eleven-year-olds
- Improve standards of presentation in years 3 to 6
- Improve aspects of provision for reception children

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The overall standards achieved are **good**. Achievement in the **reception year** and in **years 1 and 2** is **very good**. Achievement in **years 3 to 6** is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Pupils achieve good standards in English and mathematics throughout the school
- Pupils make good use of their literacy skills between years 3 and 6
- Children in the reception year achieve very well in early literacy and numeracy
- Standards in geography are above expectations
- In years 3 to 6 pupils confidently make good use of the internet
- Standards in design technology are good throughout the school

Weaknesses

- Standards of presentation in years 3 to 6
- Standards achieved in some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) by year 5 and 6 pupils

Commentary

1. Consistently good and often very good teaching enables the youngest pupils to make a very good start. Children in the reception year achieve very well. They attain good standards in early literacy and numeracy often surpassing the goals set for children at the start of year 1.
2. **In years 1 and 2** children make very good progress, particularly in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. As a result, by the time they reach the end of year 2, pupils have achieved very well and attained above average standards in both English and mathematics.
3. Satisfactory and occasionally good teaching between years 3 and 6 helps pupils to achieve satisfactorily. At the end of year 6 they are still working at above average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in science are average.
4. Good literacy skills help pupils in years 3 to 6 to learn other subjects. In history, pupils are good at researching information, making notes and then organising their writing. Unfortunately, the finished products are sometimes let down by weak presentation.
5. In all year groups good literacy skills also play a part in ensuring that pupils' work in design and technology (DT) is above expectations. They draw careful designs, labeling each part and, after making their models, they write careful evaluations about what they have done.
6. Standards in ICT are variable. Pupils are very confident about using the internet to research information and are also good at using word processing to enhance their work. However, due to some limitations in resourcing, the older pupils in years 5 and 6 have gaps in their experiences and so they have not reached the expected standards in some aspects of the subject.
7. Standards achieved in geography are above expectations throughout the school because the work is well planned and good use is made of the locality to bring the subject alive.

8. The results in national tests at the end of year 2 are consistently above the national average. The results at the end of year 6 are closer to the national average although the most recent published results in 2002 were above.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance at school is **very good** and their punctuality is **good**. Their attitudes and behaviour are **excellent** due to the **very good** attention the school gives to their personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have excellent relationships with each other and show very high levels of confidence and self-esteem
- They show high levels of interest in what goes on in school because the school makes everything they do interesting
- The school expects very high levels of behaviour and pupils' response to this is excellent

Commentary

9. The importance that the school places on pupils' personal development is very strong. Behaviour in and around school is excellent and the school has very high expectations of this. Pupils have very good relationships and very willingly take on responsibilities; they help each other and their teachers.

10. Pupils are very happy to be at school and thoroughly enjoy taking part in all that it offers them. They talk happily about all the lessons that they enjoy. They work very hard and their levels of co-operation in lessons are excellent. There is a high degree of co-operation that helps them to learn very well from each other.

11. Parents make sure that their children come to school regularly and so their level of attendance is consistently high. This, along with their excellent attitudes, makes a big contribution to pupils' success.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. The quality of teaching is **good** overall and often **very good** for pupils in reception and years 1 and 2. The school offers a **good** curriculum that is enriched through using the locality. There is a **high level** of care and support for all pupils and the school develops and sustains **very constructive** relationships with parents, the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The overall good quality of teaching ensures that pupils learn well. Very good teaching of the reception and years 1 and 2 ensures that these children make a very good start to their learning. Teaching of years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and ensures that pupils make sound progress. A key feature of all the teaching is the good assessments that are made of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mixed age classes are well taught
- Teachers make good use of resources in all lessons
- Support staff are very well used
- High expectations in lessons with the reception and years 1 and 2
- Very strong relationships engender a good climate for learning
- Occasionally there is a lack of challenge for years 5 and 6
- The pace of some lessons is occasionally too slow.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 9 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	4	2	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. The teachers rise to the challenge of teaching a wide age range in each class. Skilful teaching manages to involve all children when it is appropriate but also ensures that pupils in different age groups generally receive the work that meets their needs. Just occasionally, the pace of learning slackens when pupils are listening to instructions that do not apply to them.

13. In many lessons, and all of those seen in reception and years 1 and 2, pupils responded to the teacher's high expectations. They enjoyed the challenges and were keen to do well. Occasionally in lessons, more could be expected of the very oldest pupils, questions and challenges could be a little more demanding. The size of the school means that children are taught by the same teacher for several years. This results in teachers and children knowing each other very well and forming very strong relationships. These relationships are very powerful in creating a good climate for learning.

14. Resources are well used in lessons. These vary from a good range of suitable reference books for the older pupils to puppets in literacy lessons for the youngest ones. The use of resources keeps children interested and motivated. Teaching assistants are also well used. The reception children benefit enormously from the help and support of a nursery nurse who gets to know them very well and works in close harmony with the class teacher.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A broad and rich curriculum generally meets the needs of all pupils
- Pupils with significant learning difficulties receive a good level of support
- The literacy and numeracy strategies have been skilfully adapted to meet the needs of the younger pupils

- There is good use of the local environment to support learning
- There are gaps in the provision for ICT
- Provision for creative and physical development for the youngest children is inadequate due to restrictions in space

Commentary

15. The curriculum includes all national curriculum subjects and provision for religious education. It is significantly enriched by a good range of learning experiences, often of a practical nature, that interest the pupils and enable them to consolidate and apply what they have learned. Good links are made between subjects such as history and DT. There are some innovative aspects to the curriculum, such as the opportunity for all pupils to learn French.

16. The needs of pupils with significant difficulties are well met. They receive a good level of well-targeted support and their progress is carefully tracked. There are good arrangements for their inclusion in all activities and the sensitive support of learning assistants often enables them to participate successfully in group tasks.

17. The challenge of planning and teaching basic skills to children in reception to year 2 is very well met. The structure of the literacy and numeracy lessons is used well. All children participate in introductory sessions in which questions are carefully targeted to different age groups to encourage them to share and extend their knowledge. Group tasks are adapted to meet the learning needs of each year group. For reception children, practical group work with the nursery nurse is of a high quality and this ensures that they make good progress in early literacy and numeracy.

18. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Pupils have been involved in a study of Pendleside villages and made maps of the locality. A visit to a local wind farm resulted in some high quality work in geography. Visits from musicians and performances by students from the high school support work in the arts.

19. There are gaps in the provision for ICT and the provision for creative and physical development for the youngest children is inadequate. (See paragraphs 46, 32, 31)

Care, guidance and support

The school pays **good** attention to pupils' care, welfare health and safety. It guides and supports pupils **very well** and also involves pupils **very well** by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and children feel very safe in school
- The school takes very good care to help the younger children to settle
- Teachers encourage all pupils to make their feelings and opinions known and value what they have to say

Commentary

20. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their views that teachers are all nice and kind. They feel very confident and happy at school. They know that teachers will take notice of what they have to say. Teachers set aside time for older pupils to talk about any personal matters that they have brought up. This helps them to discuss any worries and share ideas. Pupils' records of achievement show that the school takes notice of and values what they do in and out of school. The staff know all the pupils very well and give them very good support. The school pays good attention to health and safety and all pupils are very well supervised. Several members of staff have been trained in first-aid and there are very good arrangements for medical care should it be needed.

21. Teachers make sure that the younger children are included very well in activities along with the older ones. Older pupils are encouraged to support the younger and this helps to create the pervasive family atmosphere.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information to parents
- The school values, seeks and acts on parents' views
- The school has strong links with the local church and the community

Commentary

22. Parents' views of the school are very positive. The school keeps them very well informed about their children's progress through their annual reports. In these it gives them 'advice for next year' so that parents know how best to help their children. The prospectus and governors' annual report tell parents all they need to know about the school. Parents are particularly pleased that the staff take notice of their opinions and they feel very comfortable approaching the school.

23. The school benefits very well from being part of a group of schools that includes a local high school. Strong partnerships have developed over many years and through this pupils have the advantage of being taught French and the staff have worked with other schools to improve aspects of their work such as curriculum planning.

24. The school is proud of its links with St Mary's Parish Church and it plays an important part in school life throughout the year. The vicar takes assemblies, pupils attend church services and the Parish magazine keeps the community informed about school events. Local businesses play their part well in supporting the education of the pupils; pupils visit the local mill and learn about its work and in turn local businesses provide useful equipment to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and well managed. The manner in which the school is led is **very good** and the management is **good**. The governors fulfil their role satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a strong sense of direction and purpose
- The governing body is very committed, hardworking and well organised
- The school is well managed with good systems and routines
- There is not enough checking up on the quality of work in subjects other than literacy and numeracy

Commentary

25. Everybody involved in this small school is committed to its success. The school has a very strong ethos that is shared by governors, teachers, pupils and the community. There is a sharp focus on ensuring that all pupils enjoy success. The headteacher, working closely with the governing body, shows a determined approach in seeking constant improvements. Despite having responsibility for a class for more than half the week, the headteacher leads by example, setting high standards towards which everyone in the school aspires. There are regular checks on the teaching

of literacy and numeracy. The headteacher is aware that the same checks now need to be made on how other subjects are taught to ensure the same high quality.

26. A strong sense of teamwork, that includes all the teaching and non-teaching staff, pervades the school. This ensures a good level of management that results in the school running smoothly. The governing body is particularly well organised and very conscientious in fulfilling all its responsibilities.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£190754	Balance from previous year	£33479.00
Total expenditure	£167710	Balance carried forward to the next	£23044.00
Expenditure per pupil	£4090.00		

The balance carried forward is being used in the following manner

- £8368 to be returned to Department for Education and Science (this is due to the school not seeking to renew its 'Beacon Status' and)
- £15000 allocated to the building programme

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children in the reception year join an established class of year 1 and 2 pupils. At the time of the inspection, these children had been in school for about four weeks. Their early experiences, and the work and records of children now in year 1, show that they make very good progress. Teaching is very good and this ensures that children achieve very well, particularly in basic skills in literacy and numeracy. By the end of the reception year, almost all children achieve expected levels in these areas and many exceed these and are working in the early stage of the national curriculum. Children also achieve very well in their personal and social development and are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly learn to work as part of a group
- They form very good relationships with adults and other children
- They are encouraged to take turns, to share equipment and to try out new ideas
- They are encouraged to understand what is right and wrong and to consider the consequences of their actions on others

Commentary

27. Children benefit from being in a mixed age class. Older pupils are very good role models and the youngest children quickly adapt to classroom routines and expectations. There are good opportunities for reception children to work together in a small group in which they can explore new experiences. Sensitive discussion and guidance helps children to understand the need for fairness and co-operation.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high level of attention is paid to teaching early literacy skills
- There are very good opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts and ideas with adults and their peers

Commentary

28. A well-structured programme for the teaching of literacy ensures that children learn to enjoy a wide range of stories, poetry and information books. Teaching of key skills, such as recognising letter sounds and commonly used words, is very good. There are high expectations of what children might achieve, for example, in recognising different types of punctuation. Work in a small group with the nursery nurse enables children to discuss their ideas and observations; she extends their language well by introducing new vocabulary and encouraging them to speak in sentences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to learn about number patterns and relationships
- A good range of practical experiences encourages children to use mathematical vocabulary accurately

Commentary

29. Regular experiences of counting, ordering and recognising numerals gives children a good basis of understanding of numbers to 20 and sometimes beyond. They are introduced to ideas such as counting in twos and tens, and practical addition through working out 'more' or 'less'. Very good use of resources and careful questioning encourages the children to learn to describe size, position and the properties of shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to find out about the natural world
- There are good opportunities to use a variety of tools and materials
- ICT is used well to support learning across the curriculum

Commentary

30. The school grounds and visits to local places are used very effectively to encourage the children to observe and explore key features of the environment. They have good opportunities to ask about why things happen and how things work. Stories and action songs are used well to support learning, for example, about the function of different parts of the body and the senses. Activities such as making puppets enable children to learn about the techniques needed to cut, shape and join a variety of materials. Children are confident in using computers and know key commands and how to use the mouse to point, click and drag images.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area is **poor**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no designated play space for reception children
- There is no large equipment to provide an appropriate level of physical challenge

Commentary

31. Restricted accommodation means that the school cannot provide the range of activities recommended. Although children go out regularly for walks and games in the main playground, there is no equipment such as climbing apparatus or wheeled toys to promote their skills in co-ordination and control. Children are occasionally taken to the park to use the climbing frame.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lack of space limits the range of opportunities on offer

Commentary

32. It is not possible to give children the range of choices that they should have to explore and express their ideas. Although they have regular opportunities for experiences in all aspects of this area of learning, what can be provided is limited. For example, it is not possible to set up permanent role play or an art area. There is some opportunity for imaginative play on a small scale, for example, using model dinosaurs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for this area is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in years 1 and 2 get a very good start in reading and writing
- Pupils achieve good standards in speaking and listening
- Pupils make good use of their literacy skills across the curriculum
- Resources are good and used well to support learning
- Presentation skills are sometimes weak

Commentary

33. Very good teaching ensures that children acquire a secure base in early literacy. Good attention is paid to teaching children to recognise commonly used words, letter sounds and the conventions of print. By the end of year 2, almost all children read accurately and with expression. They understand the differences between different types of books, such as stories and information books. They use a variety of approaches to read and spell words, for example, thinking about sounds or rhyming patterns. By the end of year 2, pupils write in a variety of forms, such as instructions and short descriptions. Stories are well structured and pupils are beginning to make good use of descriptive language to enliven their written work.

34. Throughout the school there are good opportunities for pupils to participate in discussions, presentations and debate. They are very attentive listeners, showing by their responses that they understand and can follow the main thread of ideas in a discussion. Most older pupils speak confidently and clearly articulate their ideas and opinions. Some use an extensive vocabulary with assurance. They understand when it is appropriate to use Standard English.

35. Pupils in years 1 and 2 begin to make good use of their literacy skills in subjects such as geography and science. For example, they make lists to categorise key features in the environment and write simple labels for diagrams. Use of literacy skills is further extended as pupils move through the school. Older pupils write structured accounts of experiments in science; in history they research and re-present the information that they have found.

36. The school has a very good range of books and materials that are used effectively to teach reading. 'Big books' enable younger children to read together following the teacher's lead. She effectively draws attention to important words and features of print, such as punctuation, that give

clues about the expression to use while reading. Older pupils are taught specific skills such as how to use a glossary and how to skim or scan for information. The Internet is also used well to teach research skills.

37. Standards of presentation are variable but overall this area is weak. Most of the younger pupils learn to write legibly and letters are usually well formed but few write well in a joined script. A minority of the older pupils write well using a fluent and legible script consistently. For many pupils however, skills practised in handwriting sessions or evident in written work in English are not transferred to other subjects. Work in subjects such as science and history is often untidy and careless. This is a particular weakness for boys.

MATHEMATICS

The school makes **good** provision for teaching and learning mathematics

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics is consistently good or very good
- The children in years 1 and 2 make a very good start and achieve well
- Pupils in years 3 to 6 maintain a good level of achievement and reach above average standards

Commentary

38. Mathematics is well taught in both classes. The teaching is often very skilful in planning work that meets the needs of children of different age groups.

39. Children in years 1 and 2 respond to the teacher's high expectations and are very keen to answer questions and take part in discussion. In both classes, lessons are a very judicious balance of whole class teaching, with different challenges for the different age groups, and teaching that is directed towards specific age groups. The use of simple, but effective resources, such as dice and number wheels, means that the activities are carefully tailored to meet a range of abilities. Where necessary, teaching assistants give valuable extra help to those pupils who need it.

40. Teachers know pupils well and take good account of how much they already know and understand. The starts of lessons are very effective because they encourage a good deal of discussion about how numbers work and teachers provide good explanations that are often supported and reinforced through clear illustrations or demonstrations. Teaching makes it very clear to children how to calculate and has sharp focus on making sure that children learn the important aspects of mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

41. Very limited evidence of mathematics across the curriculum was seen. There is some use of measuring and recording in science for the older pupils.

SCIENCE

No lessons were seen with years 1 and 2 and samples of pupils' work were too limited to form judgements about the quality of provision. Provision is **satisfactory** in years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities for practical work
- Pupils enjoy science
- There are lengthy gaps in pupils' experiences in the subject
- Much of the recorded work is at a similar level for all pupils

Commentary

42. In all areas of study, good opportunities are provided for pupils to set up tests, discuss findings and draw conclusions from what they have observed. In work on electricity, for example, pupils make circuits and test to see what makes a bulb glow brightest. Year 6 pupils described how they set up tests to identify the type of habitat preferred by woodlice. Pupils have an understanding of how to make a test fair and know that 'sameness' is important for all but one element of the test. In a lesson in which pupils were testing the absorbency of different types of paper, they showed good skills in working with accuracy and noting their findings as each part of the test was completed.

43. Discussions with pupils and observations of a lesson show that they are enthusiastic about the subject. They are keen to describe what they have done and found out. In the lesson observed, pupils listened very attentively to the teacher's introduction before starting a range of practical tasks. All worked with good application and co-operated well in small groups to share tasks and discuss their findings.

44. Written work from 2002-3 shows significant gaps in pupils' experiences. Following some extensive work on the topic of forces in the first half of the autumn term, there is no written work until the start of the spring term. Similarly, there is nothing recorded in the second half of the spring term. The planning for the year shows what is to be covered in each unit of work but not how it is planned for specific periods. Although science is timetabled to be taught each week, the lack of opportunity for regular recording means that pupils' skills are not developed in a systematic and progressive way.

45. Much of the written work for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is identical. Variations occur at times when different objects have been used in testing; this was apparent, for instance, in work on friction. However, the introductions and conclusions for the experiments were identical, suggesting that these had been copied or dictated. Not enough is expected of the oldest pupils in particular, in terms of their using their scientific knowledge to predict and describe the outcomes of experiments and to draw conclusions and formulate hypotheses on the basis of what they have found.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for teaching and learning ICT is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good use of ICT across the curriculum
- Younger pupils are attaining expected standards
- The older pupils in years 5 and 6 have not reached expected standards

Commentary

46. The school has invested significant resources to ensuring that ICT makes an impact across the curriculum and that pupils can use computers to enhance their learning in a range of subjects. However, the older pupils have not experienced the full range of the curriculum and so they do not have the skills and understanding that are expected for their age.

47. Throughout both classes pupils are confident users of computers and are particularly proficient in using word processing programs, occasionally combining text and pictures. They are also good at using the internet to research information, for instance when trying to find out the exact dimensions of a Viking longboat. The younger pupils have a satisfactory range of skills. They are becoming increasingly familiar with the keyboard and can use the mouse to click, drag and drop.

48. The small computer suite is very accessible to both classes and this encourages the use of ICT in different lessons. Pupils' excellent behaviour means that there is no problem in letting them use the suite quite independently.

49. Despite heavy investment, the school has not yet got access to all the necessary software needed to teach the full range of ICT skills. For instance, year 5 and 6 pupils have only very limited experience of working with spreadsheets and have had no opportunity to use computers to monitor or control things such as the temperature or sets of traffic lights.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50. In some respects this is a good aspect of the provision. ICT is used in different lessons but the older pupils' lack of experience in some key ICT skills restricts what they are able to do. ICT for instance makes very little impact in science or geography although it is used in history and English where pupils use word processing to present work or research using the internet or CD ROMS..

HUMANITIES

There was only limited opportunity to inspect history although one successful lesson was observed with the older pupils. They successfully used their literacy skills to research information using books and the internet. Some of the work in pupils' books indicates a good range of teaching strategies that extend pupils' speaking and listening through activities such as role-playing. The work also indicates that the pupils work with evidence and begin to understand chronology through the use of timelines.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

No teaching of geography was seen but there was a good range of pupils' work and teachers' planning available.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned
- There is good use of the locality
- Key subject skills are taught.
- Literacy skills are well applied

Commentary

51. The geography curriculum is carefully planned on a four-year cycle of topics that makes sure that all pupils cover the work they should. The planning is particularly effective because it highlights the key geographical skills that will be taught during each topic.

52. The subject is brought alive through a number of visits to places in the locality as well as walks around the immediate environment. One particularly successful visit is to the local wind farm. This inspires pupils to reflect carefully on the environment and to consider the pros and cons of creating energy in different ways. Well argued pieces of writing showed a mature and sensible weighing up of the aesthetic drawbacks of the wind farm against the 'green' production of energy. The visit also provided pupils with a very effective 'live' opportunity to write in a particular way and extend their literacy skills.

53. The visit was also used to extend other geographical skills, including map reading. Pupils planned routes using compass directions, used a range of maps with different scales and drew their own maps using a key. They also worked with maps and aerial photographs to get even more to grips with what maps show. Some of this work was of a good standard.

54. There is also some good work based on a study of a developing country. Pupils are encouraged to find out about a completely different environment but at the same time to think carefully about their own through making comparisons between their lives and the lives of a family in a village in Kenya.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was no opportunity to observe teaching or scrutinise pupils' work in music, art and design or physical education.

Design and technology (DT)

Provision in DT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is linked effectively to other subjects
- The quality of teaching is good
- Pupils have a good level of skills

Commentary

55. DT is well integrated into other subjects so that pupils are well motivated to learn, and to apply, key skills. For instance the older pupils have produced models of pyramids and Egyptian tombs as part of a history study. The models are well made and indicate a good use of designing and making skills such as measuring, cutting and joining. DT also makes a good contribution to history.

56. The younger pupils do well when making a range of puppets using different joining techniques. A good lesson involved children changing their designs for their own puppets in the light of experience. The teacher was very skilful in ensuring that all pupils benefited from the lesson despite the differences in age and experience. The way other adults supported the groups was very effective and resulted in all children achieving some success. The year 2 children cut, shaped and adapted materials well and produced good quality designs.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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