

INSPECTION REPORT

CROYLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wellingborough

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 133600

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Tite

Lead inspector: Fiona Robinson

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th December 2003

Inspection number: 261620

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	313
School address:	Croyland Road Wellingborough Northamptonshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Fell
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Croyland Primary School is a large new school that opened in September 2002. The buildings have been modernised and the current staff are all new to the school. It is located just to the west of Wellingborough town centre and most of the 313 pupils (161 boys and 152 girls) come from the area around the school. The pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds, though there is considerable disadvantage in the area. The school hosts a designated special provision for eight pupils with statements for speech and language difficulties living in the surrounding part of Northamptonshire. In the main school the proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs, including statements, is well above average. There is an above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The mobility of pupils is above average and is an issue for the school to deal with. When they start in reception, pupils have well below average levels of knowledge and understanding.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9188	Jane McHugh	Lay inspector	
15414	David Carrington	Team Inspector	Mathematics, information and communications technology and design and technology.
22421	Val McGrath	Team inspector	Art and design, physical education and areas of education for children in the Foundation Stage.
1845	Robert Tweed	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties.
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	Science, geography, history and English as an additional language.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a new school that provides a good standard of education. Pupils achieve well. The headteacher gives very good leadership and the quality of management is sound. There is a satisfactory curriculum and the quality of teaching is good, with some very good and excellent teaching observed. **The school gives satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by the age of seven and eleven.
- All pupils achieve well across the school.
- The headteacher gives very good leadership and the deputy headteacher provides very good support to ensure the school improves effectively.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, especially in reception and Year 5 and 6.
- Provision is good in the reception classes and the children make a good start to their work.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those who are supported intensively for speech and language needs.
- Attendance rates are below average and some pupils are not punctual for school.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and to work hard.
- Assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures are underdeveloped.
- The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is good.

The school opened in September 2002 and has not been inspected before. The headteacher has done a very good job of bringing the previous infant and junior schools together and creating an effective primary school. There was a high staff turn over last year but the staffing situation is now settled. There is a firm focus on English and mathematics and pupils' achievement is good from reception to Year 6. Standards are below average overall but in some subjects, especially information and communication technology and religious education they are average. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a good range of extra curricular activities. Teaching and learning are good overall and in some lessons they are very good or excellent. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because specialist teachers and the teaching assistants give good support to the pupils. The procedures to assess, monitor and evaluate learning are not consistent in all subjects. There is a good ethos in school and pupils are keen to learn. The school has many emerging strengths and is well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - high standards; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* low standards. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. There are no results for 2001 and 2002 because this is a new school.*

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching in school. The table above shows that the results were well below the national average in mathematics and science and in the lowest five per

cent of schools nationally in English in 2003. Pupils' results in Year 2 were below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case for pupils in Year 6. Standards are average in information and communication technology, religious education, design and technology, geography, history, and music and below average in all other areas. Children start school with well below average standards and achieve successfully. By the end of reception standards are below average and some children will not achieve the early learning goals in the reception year. **Pupils have good attitudes to learning, they behave soundly and they enjoy coming to school.** They work well in lessons. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.** Attendance is below average and some pupils are not always punctual for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good and is improving. Teaching quality is good and some very good and excellent teaching was seen, especially in Year 5 and 6. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the junior phase. Excellent teaching was seen in mathematics. The use of assessment to monitor progress is inconsistent outside English and mathematics.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced well by the programme of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and the partnership with parents and the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is good and management is satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and she provides a firm focus to the school's work. The deputy headteacher is also a very good leader and there is a strong partnership between them. Other managers are developing their roles well. Management is satisfactory. The procedures for monitoring and evaluation are inconsistent in subjects. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is good and they provide satisfactory challenge for senior managers as they guide the school to better performance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good views of the school. They have some concerns about the amount and quality of information provided by the school but say that teaching is good and that the school holds good expectations of their children. Pupils like the school and they also think that the teaching is good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Maintain efforts to raise standards, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Develop assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures, especially in non-core subjects to ensure pupils' knowledge and skills are built in a progressive way.
- Continue to improve attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. Children's standards at the start of school are well below average and they make good progress in the reception classes. By the end of reception most children will meet the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning, though a significant number will take longer. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Achievement is also good overall in the juniors. This year, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. They are average in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, design and technology, geography, history and music and below average in all other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching in school.
- Results in the national tests in Year 6 were well below the national average in mathematics and science and in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in English in 2003.
- Pupils' results in the national tests in Year 2 were below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.
- This year, standards in Year 2 are below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case for pupils in Year 6.
- Standards are average in ICT, religious education, design and technology, geography, history and music and below average in the others.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including those with speech and language difficulties, achieve well.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also achieve well.

Commentary

1. By Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. This shows that these pupils have achieved well since they started their primary education. Literacy and numeracy are taught well and achievement is good in these two subjects. Expectations are high and good challenge is provided for all pupils. High attaining and pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the work is matched well to ability.
2. Standards are average in ICT, religious education, design and technology, geography, history and music in Year 6. They are below average in art and design and physical education. Standards in Year 2 are similar overall, though they are average in art and design.
3. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and this has a positive effect on the good achievement of pupils. Pupils who are given specialist support for speech and language difficulties are taught well and as a result they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs in main school also achieve well because of the focussed support they receive.
4. There is a small percentage of pupils throughout the school who have additional language needs. An even smaller number of pupils are at the early stages of language acquisition. The school makes good provision to meet these pupils' needs. Their achievements are similar to other pupils as a result. Although the standards of some are below the national average, others are nearer the average. All of these pupils benefit from a good level of well-focussed support. For the few pupils at the earliest stage of language acquisition there is a systematic and perceptive approach to developing their language skills. These pupils make good progress as a result of the finely structured underpinning of their learning.

5. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged through good questioning and the different tasks that are set for them. The setting of English and mathematics in junior classes works well to extend higher attaining pupils. In some mathematics lessons the work is particularly challenging for the very top attainers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.1 (N/A)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.1 (N/A)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.1 (N/A)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. The results of the national tests in 2003 were the first ones for the school and so no comparisons can be made with earlier years. However, the above table shows that results in school were below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.1 (N/A)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (N/A)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.4 (N/A)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. Last year, the results in Year 6 were well below the national average in mathematics and science and in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in English in 2003.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are good overall. Their relationships are satisfactory. Strengths are clearly evident in pupils' social, moral and cultural development, which is good; their spiritual development is satisfactory. **Attendance at school is below average; punctuality is satisfactory.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and the vast majority arrive in good time.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour contribute to their successful learning. Personal qualities develop satisfactorily, supported well by the school's ethos.
- The behaviour system is effective and enables most pupils, including those with behavioural problems, to develop their good attitudes to learning, although a small minority of pupils do not achieve this in all their lessons
- Good care and support for pupils raises self-esteem and contributes to the overall positive relationships throughout the school.
- Too many parents allow their children to stay away from school during term time for holidays or minor illness.

Commentary

8. Attendance is well monitored. Additional funding has been received from the Children's Fund to improve attendance. This is being used effectively to reduce the above-average number of absences and includes the provision of a Breakfast Club, which has the added advantage of improving the punctuality of some children. Attendance however, remains below the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.2	National data	0.5

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

9. Very good induction procedures to the school sets the tone for pupils' future education. They are keen to explore the wide range of resources set out for them, and the welcoming atmosphere promotes their confidence and self-esteem. The teacher's high expectations encourage the children to try their best, to which children respond well. Very good and high expectations for behaviour ensure that the children feel safe and enable them to develop confidence and self-esteem.
10. Pupils throughout the school are willing to work hard and keen to succeed, although, in all years a minority display immature attitudes that sometimes disrupt lessons. Around the school, behaviour is generally good. These standards are supported by good systems for managing behaviour, consistently applied by all staff. A broad range of sanctions, from caution to temporary exclusion from lessons, suitably deals with most misdemeanours. The school uses exclusion from school as a sanction, giving appropriate support to individuals before that stage is reached. In the previous year, there were no permanent exclusions, while fixed-term exclusions were low.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
271	2	0

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

11. Pupils behave well in and around the school and relationships are satisfactory. They appreciate the calm, secure atmosphere of school. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to others, work well in twos and threes, and share resources appropriately. These are significant strengths in improving the quality of learning. However, this is not always achieved when poor relationships between pupils are not dealt with in class. These were mainly amongst the older pupils where relationships with others in the class are, on times, confrontational rather than co operative. Staff consistently handle such occasions well, with the minimum of disruption to the rest of the lesson. There are not many instances of bullying and these are usually dealt with quickly and effectively. Most pupils feel confident that they can talk to any teacher or adult in the

school about their concerns and that the problem will be resolved discreetly. Worry boxes are a good feature in all classrooms.

12. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are given opportunities to develop personal responsibility and to make the right choices for example in personal, social and health education lessons. Praise is frequently used to improve pupils' self-esteem and confidence. They have a growing awareness of right from wrong; value the high expectations staff have of them; respect the school rules they helped formulate and respond, the majority of the time, appropriately to teachers' expectations.
13. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and operate democratically. The School's council is currently considering rewards and a class of the week award to further improve behaviour and there are plans to involve pupils in the playground redevelopment. A good number of pupils participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include the Breakfast and After School clubs where pupils participate in a "family meal" which contributes well to their social and moral development. The annual residential experience is a real strength for the small number of pupils that participate, enabling them to mature and develop their personal qualities and social skills. Pupils' cultural development is supported well by visits to local places of interest where they learn about their heritage. Good multi-cultural development is achieved through a number of activities for example the visit of the Jamaican drummers.
14. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactorily met and fostered through collective worship, where time is given for some reflection and prayer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Pupils are taught well throughout the school and encouraged to do their best. There are good opportunities for enrichment in the broad and balanced curriculum. The school has a caring ethos and enjoys good links with other schools. Links with parents are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped in the non-core subjects.

Teaching and learning

The school provides a good quality of education in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school with an example of excellent teaching seen in mathematics. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the Upper Juniors. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well taught.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are of good quality overall.
- Lessons are planned well and pupils are well motivated to succeed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of behaviour and involve pupils well in their learning.
- Some excellent teaching was seen in mathematics.
- The quality of assessment is not rigorous enough in the non-core subjects.
- Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is a lack of challenge and pace.

Commentary

15. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. During the time of the inspection 2% of the teaching seen was excellent, 2% was very good, 61% was good, 31% was satisfactory and 4% was unsatisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	1 (2%)	29 (61%)	15 (31%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. The strengths in teaching outweigh the area for improvement in assessment. The headteacher is monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and has worked hard to raise the overall quality of teaching and learning to good.
17. Children in the reception classes are well taught and make good progress. Lessons are well planned, are firmly based on the 'stepping stones' for learning. There is a good balance between the teacher-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves.
18. Lessons are planned well and pupils are well motivated to succeed. The quality of planning is good where teaching is good and care is taken to ensure that curriculum requirements are covered. In a very good Year 5 ICT lesson the teacher is rigorous in her appraisal of pupils' work to ensure that there is thorough use of the multimedia program to organise, refine and present information.
19. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. Planning is consistent and staff are confident at teaching the literacy and numeracy strategies. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through the use of skilful questioning, and reading is very well taught. The pupils' reading skills are good by Year 6 and pupils enjoy reading. Writing skills are taught well and there has been a big effort to raise pupils' achievement. Sufficient challenge is provided for the higher achieving pupils. Work is usually matched well to pupils' ability and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported and taught well. Good use is made of homework.
20. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and involve pupils well in their learning. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils' learning and work hard to help pupils to achieve well. Good use is made of questions to check out progress or to extend learning. For example a Year 5 teacher asked 'How does Roald Dahl's style of English 'give life' to the character of the BFG?' Pupils eagerly suggested 'Phizzwards, Winkquiffers and Ringbellers.'

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 6 mathematics lesson for the higher ability group where outstanding teaching resulted in pupils making very good progress and achieving good standards.

The teacher inspired pupils from the outset and engaged excellent productive learning. The work was very focussed, the pace brisk and pupils gave of their best as they worked out the multiples of 7 and 9 to a timer. Extra challenge was provided for the pupils in their group activities. By the end of the lesson they had a good understanding of the sequencing of numbers and the identification of patterns. The interactions with adults were excellent and the lesson was inspiring because of the outstanding pace of the teaching.

21. Lessons are usually well balanced and sufficient time is given for pupils to complete tasks. Where teaching was unsatisfactory the pace of learning was very slow. For example, as pupils tried to interpret play scripts and act out the scene. In an art and design lesson the purpose of the design was not explicit and therefore there were constrained opportunities to refine and improve the work with a planned outcome.

22. The quality of assessment is good in English, mathematics and science but informal in all other areas. This lack of formal assessment does not help with the planning of the next steps in learning. This is an area of development identified by the school.

The curriculum

There is a satisfactory curriculum that is well enhanced by the programme of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is of appropriate breadth and balance and covers all subjects satisfactorily.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The curriculum for pupils with speech and learning difficulties and other pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language work from a satisfactory curriculum.
- There is good enrichment of the curriculum.
- The quality of the accommodation is very good and there are good quality resources.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is of satisfactory quality. It covers all subjects appropriately and includes good provision for the personal, social and health education of all pupils. This is especially important because many pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and some are in public care. Provision for such pupils is good and they make the same gains in their knowledge and skills as the other pupils. In some non-core subjects, chiefly physical education and art and design, the curriculum is not as well developed as it is in others, such as design and technology. However, the curriculum for ICT is good and staff make effective use of the limited range of resources available for the subject. Literacy and numeracy have good curricula and this ensures that the pupils achieve well in these subjects. The science curriculum is not yet as practically based as that for mathematics and so, pupils' investigation and problem solving skills are not as well developed as they could be.
24. Children in reception work from a good Foundation Stage curriculum. This is well balanced and gives good coverage of the six areas of learning for children of this age. There is a good blend of staff-led and independent activities and very firm focus on the development of personal, social and emotional and communication, language and literacy skills to enable the children to benefit from their work in all areas. Provision is well matched to needs, which ensures that the children achieve well. The very good quality leadership of the Foundation Stage makes sure that the curriculum is planned in detail, evaluated for outcomes and revised as required in order to meet the needs of the children.
25. The pupils who are supported for speech and language difficulties also work from a good curriculum. This is structured carefully to meet their needs. In addition, the resources for this provision are put to good use in supporting other pupils with speech and language difficulties. In this way, the eight statemented pupils and the wider group both benefit from effective provision. Other pupils with special educational needs also enjoy a good curriculum. The work is carefully matched to the targets on their individual education plans and is structured in appropriate small steps. The quality of support from teaching assistants is a strength in ensuring these small steps are learned successfully.
26. The curriculum for pupils who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. For the few pupils at the earliest stage of language acquisition there is a systematic and perceptive approach to developing their language skills. The support assistants effectively deliver a carefully structured programme. There is a well-balanced programme of withdrawal and in class support.

27. The full curriculum is well enhanced by a good range of enrichment activities. In particular, the programme of educational visits and visits provides additional breadth and depth to the curriculum. There are regular residential visits that develop pupils' personal, social and health education well. The breakfast club and out of school club are popular with pupils and other extra curricular activities are well supported by pupils and staff alike.
28. The re-modelled accommodation is of very good quality. It is not yet completed and the school has had to cope with much disruption in the last fifteen months. It is a tribute to school leaders and staff that good quality educational provision has emerged during very trying circumstances brought by the building works. There is no dedicated ICT suite, though staff use the available computers in their classrooms effectively. In general, the school has appropriate resources for its work, but some are new, such as some equipment for physical education, and have yet to have full impact on the development of skills and knowledge.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares well for its pupils, provides satisfactory advice and guidance and is beginning to involve them well in its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Each pupil is known, treated and valued as an individual
- Behaviour support system for targeted pupils is good.
- Assessment to enable each child to receive support and guidance appropriate to their needs is not yet developed to include the foundation subjects.

Commentary

29. Good arrangements for pupil's welfare and child protection cover all required areas, with sufficient staff trained in First Aid. Governors are involved in monitoring health and safety arrangements. Learning support assistants and the special needs coordinator provide very good support for pupils with additional needs. A Home School Liaison worker is having a positive impact on pupils' attendance. There is good social support for targeted individuals by the provision of a Breakfast and After School club. The majority of pupils are confident there is an adult in school they could talk to if they had a problem.
30. Relationships in the school are satisfactory. The greatest concern for pupils of all ages is their perception of poor behaviour and bullying by a minority. The school, aware of this, has provided worry boxes in each classroom where pupils can express their concerns. The Home School worker also provides a "friendly ear" by operating a complementary system where pupils can make an appointment to speak about issues that are causing them concern. Good behaviour support systems are in place for pupils who find it difficult to conform to the socially acceptable behaviour of the rest of the school. These include a time out facility where pupils are removed from their lesson to a partner class and then allowed to return at a time of their choosing, when they feel ready and have had time to reflect upon the consequence of their actions. This was seen during the inspection to be used to good effect with pupils taking responsibility for their own behaviour.
31. Very good induction procedures to school, including, for those entering the reception class, attending on a part time basis, and parents remaining with them until children are happy to stay alone, helps pupils settle very quickly into new routines and have a gradual entry into full time education. Even those pupils who have only been in school a matter of weeks before the inspection are confident and happy in their surroundings. The transition from one stage of their education to the next is seamless.

32. Staff know pupils extremely well and treat all as individuals providing good emotional support. Small steps in their personal development are informally monitored and rewarded for example by the awarding of certificates during the weekly *Well Done* assemblies. Pupils with special educational needs are identified as early as possible and individual education plans set.
33. The tracking of pupils' academic progress as they move through the school is satisfactory. Pupils receive appropriate support from staff to help them improve. In some subjects, such as English, targets are set showing pupils the level they are working at and what they have to do to reach the next level. The school system does not yet enable staff to set sufficiently sharp focused individual targets in all subjects aimed at raising individual attainment and then checks to see if these targets have been met.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with other schools are good and there are sound links with parents and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good relationships with parents of pupils in the Foundation Stage.
- The school's emphasis on building constructive relationships with parents and the community through the work of the home school liaison worker is effective.
- There is good social provision in Breakfast and After school clubs
- Communications with parents are satisfactory but more remains to be done.

Commentary

34. Since the opening of the school, much has been done to raise its profile within the community and gain the confidence of parents. A parents association is now established and a small but growing number of parents, regularly help in classrooms with activities and working with groups of children. Governors assist in the residential visit and members of the community contributed to a display in the school about world war two, loaning artefacts and memorabilia of their time as a prisoner of war. Parents and carers that returned the pre inspection questionnaire show they are satisfied with the school. Those spoken to during the inspection are enthusiastic of the school and feel it is a warm and welcoming community. Any complaints or concerns receive an immediate and sympathetic response.
35. However, the school rightly acknowledges the need to develop its partnership with parents and the community further to enable children to achieve their full potential. Some consultation with parents has taken place over a new home school agreement and parents' opinions are sought informally. There are daily opportunities for parents to visit their children's classrooms and speak to staff. Parental support is sought actively by the school for its work with pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is beginning to form into a good partnership.
36. Good induction leaflets are available for parents of pupils entering the reception class, which are extremely valuable in keeping them informed. A helpful information brochure is at a draft stage of production. Regular newsletters and other written communication with parents are, at present, mainly limited to factual information about trips and visits. Written reports about pupil's progress fulfil legal requirements and are good for the core subjects of English and Maths, where parents are informed of the level their child is working at and areas where they need to improve are clearly indicated. However this is not the case in all subjects, where comments are sparse and focus on what has been covered during the year; they do not clearly tell parents where their children's strengths and weaknesses lie, how they can improve or whether their progress is sufficient.
37. Good links with the nursery on site and neighbouring secondary schools ensure the appropriate transfer of information and a smooth transition for pupils at the time of transfer.

Induction procedures, for those pupils requiring additional support or feeling insecure with forthcoming transition, include several visits to secondary school accompanied by a learning support assistant

38. The home school liaison worker is invaluable in building relationships with parents. A focus on extending use of the school by the community is developing. Already a weekly coffee club takes place, courses for parents are organised on issues as diverse as “positive parenting” and “aromatherapy”. Other adult education options are being explored in consultation with parents.
39. The effectiveness of the growing partnerships between home and school and the positive support of the local community makes a very effective contribution to supporting children’s personal development and raising their self-esteem.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher is ably supported by a skilled deputy headteacher. Together with the effective involvement and support of a committed governing body they are instrumental in developing an improving, highly inclusive school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher shows a clear vision and drive towards raising standards
- The school is highly inclusive where leaders at all levels are good role models
- Good strategic planning ensures priorities are clearly identified but the school’s use of its self-evaluation is only just beginning to support raising standards
- Governance of the school is satisfactory overall, as a committed governing body understands the school’s strengths and weaknesses
- Finance is used well

Commentary

40. The well below average attainment of the pupils on admission and the impact of the difficulties of some of their backgrounds are the barriers to learning that exist in the school. The school compensates well for these through the rigorous leadership of the headteacher, hard work of the senior staff and commitment of the governing body. Their team commitment to raising standards so that pupils are achieving consistently well is a strong focus.
41. Underpinning the work of the school is the headteacher’s sense of purpose and the drive given to pupils’ higher achievement. The school is highly inclusive and effective policies ensure that the needs of a variety of pupils are being met. The governors, headteacher and staff ensure that all statutory requirements are being adequately met.
42. The very good leadership of the headteacher has led to the creation of a team, in a short space of time since the school opened, who take their responsibilities seriously. A skilful deputy and senior team of teachers ably support the headteacher. The leadership of subjects is good overall. There is a general sense of purpose to the development of the curriculum in order to promote achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have good data analysis skills. They use these to inform staff to promote a shared commitment to improvement. This useful management tool is beginning to support the school’s aspirations appropriately. Although there is a clear commitment from all staff towards improvement more consistent application across the school to target setting in all subjects is not secure. Monitoring is in its initial stages of development but is already being clearly linked to setting targets for staff that are linked to performance management. Both teachers and support staff are involved in appraising their work so that pupils will benefit from the input given to them by everyone. This

positive ethos is a powerful aspect of the school's ambitions. There are very effective systems to support staff new to the school.

43. The leadership of provision for special educational needs and for pupils with additional language needs is good. Individual needs are clearly identified and resources targeted to maximum effect. Targets are set that are based on secure evidence. The targets are shared with pupils and parents and reviewed regularly. This has supported pupils well and secured an improvement in these pupils' achievements.
44. The governing body is not fully constituted but the current members are fully committed to the school. They are very capably led so that they all have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Many of the members are new to their roles. Although tentative in some respects, links with subjects and aspects of school life are helping them to form an extensive overall picture of the school and its needs. They are ambitious for the school and are keen to make the right decisions based on the good information provided by the headteacher and staff. They are settling in satisfactorily to their roles.
45. The school's priorities are clearly identified in the development plan. Staff and governors have joint responsibility for its conception as a good consultative process. This good level of strategic planning is not securely enough based on its use of its equally well-focused self-evaluation. The need to bring these factors together is recognised by the headteacher as a further helpful tool to support the raising of standards and pupils achievements.
46. Day-to-day management and administration work well and help to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The school's administrative staff are all very clear about their roles. They are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. They work flexibly and help one another in all of their duties.
47. The school has recently become able to define its financial position clearly. Finance has been used effectively to resource the school appropriately. Due care has been taken to plan with thoughtfulness. Governors have effective financial oversight of the finances and budget. The very recent audit confirms that the finances of the school are being well managed. The small number of verbal recommendations that were made has already been responded to positively even though the school has not received them in writing. Decisions about spending are linked efficiently to the school development plan. The principles of best value are responded to satisfactorily through the careful monitoring of spending on supplies and services.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

The school hosts a designated special provision for pupils with statements for speech and language difficulties living in the surrounding part of Northamptonshire. This provision is shared with the neighbouring nursery school and is funded by the county.

Overall, the quality of this provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is very good and the pupils achieve soundly overall.
- The pupils are keen to learn and make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans.
- Teaching and learning are of good quality.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The provision manager is due to leave school soon and future plans are uncertain.
- Resources are used effectively for the benefit of all pupils in school with speech and language needs.

Commentary

48. Pupils benefiting from this provision are taught on an inclusive basis within their own classes. They are withdrawn for short periods of the week, individually or in small groups, for speech and language exercises aimed at improving their articulation and communication skills. It was not possible to judge their standards or achievements independently of other pupils in the course of this inspection, or to test the school's view that their progress in basic skills is better than that of pupils generally. From the examples of work seen, their achievements match those of pupils generally.
49. Pupils with speech and language difficulties make good progress towards their individual education plan targets. They respond confidently in individual or small group tuition and learn well. They happily come out of lessons for short sessions of practice, without any embarrassment or resentment. They are eager to share their achievements with adults in the school. They show sustained effort in practising oral motor skills to improve their speech and articulation. Their personal and social development is good, and they participate fully in the life of the school.
50. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and teaching assistants use carefully structured teaching activities that build success in small steps, for instance by modelling good articulation. ICT programs are used to build good language development. Pupils' targets are prominently displayed, although the language in which they are written is not always accessible to pupils. Teaching assistants who work with these pupils show high levels of expertise, not only in applying the special programmes laid down by the teacher/speech therapist, but also in observing and evaluating pupils' progress. Pupils share in their own assessment as part of the annual review process.
51. The provision is managed at present with commitment and enthusiasm by a dually qualified teacher/ speech therapist, who divides her time equally between the school and the adjacent nursery. These arrangements ensure good continuity of provision across the phases. The management of the provision is due to change in the near future as the manager is leaving and at present, plans for the future are uncertain. Links with parents are close and supportive, and are a particular strength of the specialist provision. This good practice has been shared with other schools in the county.
52. The school has made efficient use of the additional resources of the provision, for instance by extending its support to pupils within the school with speech and language difficulties who do not have statements, without detriment to the provision for the eight pupils with statements.
53. The transition to new arrangements in the near future poses a challenge to the school in continuing to maintain the very good quality of provision. The school's special needs coordinator rightly sees this change as an opportunity to extend the inclusive nature of the provision by encouraging class teachers take more direct responsibility for pupils' individual teaching programmes.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The good provision in the Foundation Stage has some very good features and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction procedures and the good level of provision ensure that children settle well to their time in school.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Attainment when children start school is well below average.

Commentary

54. There is good provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The children start reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five, and attend part-time for the first half term. Very good induction arrangements, including home visits, liaison with the on-site nursery, and meetings with parents, promote good emotional development. Children quickly adapt to the daily routine and display good self-confidence. The vast majority of children have attended nursery education.
55. All children achieve well because teaching is consistently good. The curriculum planning is very good and the good balance of child-initiated and adult led activities meets the needs of young children well. Behaviour and the promotion of personal development are managed very well, and the early years team provide very good role models. Children and adults clearly enjoy working together. All members of the team contribute to the good teaching and the very good assessment procedures. Consequently the team are secure in their understanding of children's competencies and are able to provide good levels of challenge, promoting good learning. The accommodation, both indoors and out, provides a good learning environment. The management of the Foundation Stage is very good.
56. When they start school children are attaining levels well below those expected for their age, except in reading, which is in line with expectations. They achieve well and the majority are on line to attain or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Approximately 20% of the children have special educational needs, primarily in speech and language development. These children achieve well. The designated provision for speech and language provides very good assessment and planning guidance for the individual needs of these children. 6% have English as an additional language. The emphasis placed on speaking and listening, in child-initiated activities, promotes good achievement for these children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good achievement is promoted by consistently good teaching and challenging expectations.
- Children attain average standards in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Very good induction arrangements establish good relationships with parents and promote good emotional development.
- Positive and supportive relationships promote good behaviour, independence and confidence.

Commentary

57. During the last year, improved procedures for induction and the involvement of parents, have contributed to the good provision for personal, social and emotional development. These enable a smooth transition for home and nursery education to school. Staff set clear expectations for behaviour in a calm and undemonstrative way. A small minority of pupils with underdeveloped social skills, who find it hard to conform in large group situations, are sensitively reminded of what is expected. When necessary they are encouraged to work individually with an adult. A consistent approach, and good understanding of the developmental needs of young children, promotes good behaviour and relationships.
58. Children have quickly adapted to the routine, and respond well to opportunities to work independently. They show good levels of concentration and collaboration during child initiated play. For example they use computer programmes and listen to story tapes, controlling the mouse and stop, start and volume buttons independently. On one occasion a child special educational needs was working alone on the interactive whiteboard. Another child spontaneously joined her, demonstrating how to highlight words and turn pages in the projected book. Overall, standards are average in this area of learning.
59. Co-operation and awareness of the needs of others are promoted well as children play in the home corner, use puppets and build with construction toys. They manage the sharing of wheeled toys well. Adults regularly praise children when they show consideration to others, and consequently these behaviours are well promoted. Children quickly access activities set out for them in two classrooms and outside. Their decision-making and self-management skills could be promoted further, however, by encouraging children to think about which resources to use for which purposes, before beginning work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Emphasis is placed on the teaching of reading, and children show good achievement.
- Overall standards are likely to be below average by the end of the reception year, though they are average in reading.
- There are good levels of challenge in teaching sounds and letters.
- Speaking and listening are well promoted.

Commentary

60. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils enthusiastically engage with stories, when listening to adults and when using audiotapes and the computer. They act out the story of Three Billy Goats Gruff using puppets. They show confidence as they match letters to sounds and practice reading commonly used words during whole group reading sessions. Standards in reading are likely to be average by the end of the reception year. Some children, particularly girls, are keen to use the writing area to write their names and captions. At this stage in the year most children are using marks not letters, but they are quickly acquiring knowledge about letters, sounds and word building. Opportunities to engage in writing for a range of purposes could be further promoted by providing writing materials in all play areas, such as the home corner, construction and book corners. Writing areas could be further enriched to promote more interest, particularly from boys. This should include providing reasons for writing, such as sending messages to each other, characters from fiction or adults. Currently, standards in writing are below average.
61. The whole team are involved in making assessments of children, and these are used to ensure the planned work does not undermine confidence, or under-estimate competencies.

The needs of all ability groups are met well. The analysis of assessments made at the beginning of the reception year shows children have already made good progress in reading and speaking and listening and have made satisfactory progress in writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Stimulating activities engage children well and promote good achievement.
- Standards are likely to be average by the end of the reception year.
- Good assessment and planning procedures lead to good levels of challenge.

Commentary

62. Children show real enthusiasm for stimulating mathematical activities. Good teaching is characterised by good planning and assessment and effective use of resources. For example children raced against time to see how many shapes they could stick down in one minute. They then counted their efforts accurately and compared numbers to find who had most. This promoted good achievement in the understanding of time, and good use of counting skills to solve a simple problem. They use number lines and puzzles regularly, and the vast majority can count confidently to twenty and read numerals to 10. Overall standards of mathematical development are likely to be average by the end of the reception year. The curriculum is totally inclusive because a systematic routine ensures all groups of children access all mathematical activities planned for the week. Careful consideration has been given to the potential of play and learning resources for mathematical development. Most children are working at levels expected for their age, showing good achievement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for promoting knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching promotes good learning.

Commentary

63. Good teaching and learning is characterised by good questioning which prompts children's talk and observations. For example, as children were exploring the properties of materials when using magnets, children were encouraged to talk about what they noticed and then to sort the materials into those that were and were not attracted to magnets. This promoted learning well, particularly the acquisition of new vocabulary. Good use is made of ICT to promote learning, and children show confidence as they use computers and tape recorders. They also develop a good understanding of technology as they explore ways to construct, join, cut and adapt construction materials. For example, children built a castle outside using very large cardboard boxes, and attached smaller boxes to create cupboards and shelves. The outdoor environment is used effectively to provide opportunities for sensory experiences, observations and exploration. A visiting police officer has promoted good awareness of the wider community and different kinds of work. The majority of children are on line to attain the Early Learning Goals by Year 1, showing good achievement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Standards are average in physical development.
- Some aspects of physical development could be promoted more strongly.

Commentary

64. Children have access to a good outdoor area, providing a safe and challenging learning environment. A circuit, with a gradient, demands good control of wheeled vehicles. The hall is used regularly for dance and gymnastics. Unfortunately, regular opportunities to climb and balance are not provided, constraining children's opportunities to develop skills and confidence in this aspect of physical development. This is an area for development identified by the Foundation Stage leader. However, overall standards are average in this area of learning. Pupils develop manipulative skills well as they play with a wide range of malleable materials and construction toys. They use a range of tools for cutting, joining, sticking and painting. Teaching and learning in the physical area of learning is good, with the potential to improve to very good when improved facilities are established.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is satisfactory
- Some aspects of creativity could be promoted more strongly.

Commentary

65. Children show satisfactory achievement as they engage in imaginative play, singing and music making. In the outdoor environment they are encouraged to explore sound on musical stepping-stones and with a toy piano. They paint with confidence, although the range of materials and stimuli provided in the creative area could be further extended. This is necessary in order to promote more interest in this area of learning during child-initiated activities, and to stimulate children's own ideas of what to create, and what materials to use in the process. Teaching and learning in adult led activities is satisfactory, and a strength is the positive encouragement children receive as they work. This area of learning could be further promoted, however, by offering children more tactile and visual stimuli for creativity. These might include natural materials, living things or the work of other artists, to promote observation skills and a wider range of creative responses.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good. Overall, the quality of the teaching and the work planned for pupils are good and this ensures that they achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are good
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and are supported well in their learning
- Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- The subject is well managed
- Attainment is below average in writing
- Pupils' independent learning skills are underdeveloped

Commentary

66. Standards in English are rising because of the school's focus on improvement in this subject. In the 2003 national tests pupils achieved below average standards in reading and writing in Year 2. Standards were very low (in the bottom 5%) in Year 6. This was due to a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group and a high mobility factor. Boys achieved significantly better than girls in these tests.
67. The inspection found that pupils achieve well in reading. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. There is a structured reading programme, with pupils working through a published scheme. There are good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group, paired and silent reading. All pupils are encouraged to read with parents and carers at home and these strategies are helping pupils to move forward well. Their knowledge and enjoyment of books is being developed well, alongside the development of their reading skills. Pupils are clear about the strategies that they need to use and most tackle new reading material confidently. Dick King Smith and J K Rowling are favourites. Generally book areas are well organised and pupils are keen to use these. The school has identified the need to develop pupils' use of the library.
68. The inspection found that all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, achieve well throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported. Every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned work and good support and encouragement. In all year groups there is a wide span of ability. The school has worked successfully to raise girls' achievement, which has improved.
69. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 1 and are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils are keen to offer their thoughts and ideas. They are speaking confidently and make themselves understood. The youngest pupils are limited by a restricted vocabulary. Staff work hard to help pupils to extend their vocabulary by
- Encouraging pupils to talk to each other
 - Repeating and explaining unfamiliar words
 - Using drama activities to help pupils to communicate confidently.
70. A good example occurred in a Year 5 lower ability set English lesson where good teaching led to pupils making good progress in understanding how the BFG listens to dreams.
71. Staff have worked hard and successfully to drive up standards in writing. These are now below average in Years 1 and 2 and below average by Year 6. Pupils achieve well in all year groups because of good teaching. Standards are rising because of
- Focused in-service training
 - Good planning techniques
 - Interesting writing tasks set

- Opportunities are provided for pupils to write across the curriculum
 - Opportunities for extended writing
 - Pupils' writing is celebrated in displays
72. The school is continuing to target writing for improvement. Teachers have high expectations of handwriting and presentation. There has been improved marking so that pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve. Standards of handwriting and presentation show considerable improvement due to consistently good teaching. There is good use of ICT to support pupils' learning and pupils are encouraged to draft their work in each lesson. ICT is also used well to support their learning across the curriculum.
73. In the lessons seen teaching was good overall. This is reflected in the progress being made by all pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing and take every opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills. In a Year 1 and Year 2 literacy lesson they used the interesting and varied vocabulary necessary to bake a cake. This helped them to choose the right ingredients and resulted in lively animated conversation and squeals of delight as they baked their cakes. Where teaching was less satisfactory the task was not matched so well to the pupils' ability and they found it harder to read their play scripts making slower progress.
74. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has a clear view of the strengths and needs in the subject. Teachers' planning is monitored and lessons are observed to inform priorities for development. She has identified the need to develop pupils' independent learning skills and extend the use of the library.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

75. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and adapted appropriately to support effective learning. Pupils take books home regularly and are encouraged to read every day, often to adults. Effective use is made of subjects such as mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education to develop writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because the quality of teaching in mathematics is good.
- Results in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 last year were well below the national average in mathematics
- This year, standards in Year 2 and 6 are below average.
- There is good challenge for higher attaining pupils
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also achieve well.
- The curriculum is good and there is firm focus on investigations and problem solving.
- Mathematics is very well led and managed.
- Good use is made of mathematics in other subjects.

Commentary

76. Mathematics is a well-taught subject and this impacts positively on pupils' achievement, which is good through the school. The staff hold high expectations of their pupils and they adopt a brisk pace for the work. Planning is good generally, particularly since it identifies clearly what pupils of different attainment levels will do. This is coupled with the effective grouping of pupils into sets for mathematics that ensures that the different attainment groups work from tasks that are well matched to their needs and graded systematically for difficulty. The overall quality

of teaching is good, though some excellent teaching was seen in Year 6 and there is very good teaching in other parts of the school. The scrutiny of pupils' work supports the judgement of good teaching and provided ample evidence of the good curriculum in place for mathematics. The focus on problem solving and investigation is strong and this clearly contributes to pupils' good achievement and rising standards evident in school.

77. Children starting in reception have well below average standards in mathematical development. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn effectively and their achievement is good. However, much learning has to be made in order to reach the expected standards at the age of seven. This year, standards in Year 2 are below average, which is an improvement on the level in the 2003 national tests where they were well below average. There is evidence amongst Year 1 pupils especially that standards are not far short of average at present, which gives good prospects for the future. Pupils also achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Again, standards are below average in Year 6 at present, and were well below average in last year's national tests. The key reason for the good achievement in mathematics is the high expectations of the staff, which is evident in most mathematics lessons.
78. Pupils of different needs are provided for well. The higher attaining pupils are set challenging tasks that stimulate their imagination and motivate them well. They strive to out perform each other in friendly rivalry and keep their teachers and teaching assistants on their toes. Much work is done against the clock, which sharpens their skills and knowledge well. There are good prospects for the higher attaining pupils in Year 6 in this school year's national tests as many are already working at the higher level 5. Some impressive achievement was evident in the excellent lesson observed where pupils were working to identify a generalised rule from a sequence of number patterns. By the end of the lesson, the very top attaining pupils were working out, for example, the 1225th term of their algebraic sequence.
79. The pupils in the middle sets also achieve well. Many reach the expected level 4 by the age of eleven, though some are a little way off this level and their speed of calculation is not always quick. However, timed activities, for example as seen in Year 1 and 2, are improving the efficiency of their arithmetic. The achievement of pupils in lower sets, including those with special educational needs is good too. The individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties in numeracy are well focussed and teaching assistants give good support to enable these pupils to build skills and knowledge at a steady rate.
80. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. They too are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. Separately, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are equally successful as other pupils. They are represented in all attainment groups and all have a positive outlook on learning mathematics. The pupils in public care are well provided for. They were observed to do just as well as the other pupils in mathematics lessons.
81. Mathematics is very well led by the deputy headteacher, who provides very clear educational direction for the subject. She is very well organised, knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject thoroughly and has undertaken some effective analysis of assessment results to set challenging targets for pupils in all year groups. Assessment in mathematics is a strength and serves as a good model for subjects where assessment and evaluation are not as strong. Management of mathematics is also very good. There is an ongoing programme of monitoring and evaluation, which includes direct observation of lessons. The outcomes of this monitoring are analysed thoroughly and shared effectively with other staff. Again, this is a good model for other subjects.
82. Mathematics provision is a strength of the school and the prospects for the future, especially in the improvement of standards, look bright.

Mathematics across the curriculum

83. There is ample evidence of the good use of mathematics in other subjects. Links to science and ICT especially strong. Pupils develop their knowledge of basic numeracy, measures, data handling and shape in work such as the setting out of results in graph and table form in science and the planning of work in design and technology. There is a strong strand of mathematics in ICT when pupils use spreadsheets and databases to compile, edit and present statistical information.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils achieve satisfactorily
- Pupils in junior classes are beginning to develop the language of science appropriately
- Assessment, monitoring and evaluation in science could be stronger

Commentary

84. The school has an appropriate scheme of work that ensures all aspects of science are being adequately covered. There has been a recent thrust to base pupils' scientific understanding on a more investigative approach to learning. The sample of work shows that pupils were moving towards more independence in recording their knowledge and understanding in infant and Year 5/6 classes. Some Year 3/4 classes were also recording more independently but this was not consistently the case across the year groups. This was holding the pupils back from achieving any better than satisfactorily by the end of Year 6, though pupils' science vocabulary is being built appropriately.
85. Overall the teaching is satisfactory. A minimal volume of work is being recorded in infant classes as science is covered within topic work. Teachers are planning separate tasks for pupils in the different year groups within each class that ensures satisfactory progress is being made. However, there is too little challenge for higher attaining pupils because there are not enough different levels of work within the year groups. There is a lack of consistency of approach to developing work in all Year 3/4 classes. However, there is a surge of improvements in Year 5/6 classes where different levels of work present challenges at an appropriate level.
86. This trend was clearly apparent in lessons observed during the inspection in all year groups. In the best lessons in infant classes pupils achieved well because teachers built learning upon previous knowledge and understanding. Activities are more practical and give pupils effective opportunities to investigate and draw conclusions. They are beginning to achieve satisfactorily. In junior classes in all year groups all pupils are beginning to achieve well. Teachers plan and resource carefully. Topics are introduced briskly and clearly. Pupils are able to interact with teachers and support staff to ensure their understanding. Both boys and girls enthusiastically take part in investigating and exploring. For example, in Year 3/4 the pupils build bridges from a suitable range of restricted materials. In Year 5/6 the pupils recognise the purposefulness of creating an electric circuit because it is to be used to power a vehicle made in their design and technology lesson. Experiments are mainly conducted in mixed ability groups and pupils with special or additional language needs are well supported by their classmates as well as teachers and support assistants. All pupils achieve as well as one another as a result. Good use is made of subject language. This is being particularly thoughtfully developed in junior classes and the pupils are beginning to use it effectively.

87. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The highly skilled deputy headteacher took this over immediately before the inspection. Already there is a clear action plan drawn up as part of the school improvement plan. Priorities, including assessment, monitoring and evaluation, which are not strong enough at present, have been clearly identified to improve the pupils' performance in order to raise standards across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and attainment is average.
- Pupils of different backgrounds achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- There is a good curriculum for ICT, with good links to other subjects.
- ICT is very well led and managed.
- The quality of resources is satisfactory; they are used effectively to build skills and knowledge.

Commentary

88. There is a good curriculum for ICT that permeates the whole school and has a good cross-curricular dimension. Pupils were observed using computers in many lessons during the inspection and the evidence of previous work indicates that this is not unusual. Pupils build skills and knowledge in ICT well. Achievement is good and standards are average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject and are keen to research, investigate and use the available software to extend their learning. These strengths are developed because the subject is taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and provide good learning experiences that interest and motivate the pupils well.
89. All pupils, regardless of background, do well in their ICT work. Higher attaining pupils, for example, are challenged well and given good opportunities to polish and extend their skills and knowledge. In a Year 3/4 religious education lesson the higher attaining pupils were setting the story of the Nativity into a newspaper format using professional word processing and publishing packages. The very top achievers had used a flowing banner for the heading, set the text in two columns, centred the text, imported several images from the Internet and other sources and were using good journalistic writing to express Mary's surprise at the Angel's visitation and other events at the time: "December 25th was a day to remember...Mary was stunned..." Other higher attaining pupils were also successful in the lesson, despite insisting that the three kings brought "Mur, frankinstine and gold"!
90. The curriculum for ICT has been carefully linked to that for other subjects, as shown by the above example where literacy skill development was as much part of the work as that of religious education and ICT. The level of ICT resources is satisfactory in that there are enough computers for the number of pupils on roll and software availability is appropriate. The resources are used effectively by staff to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. The accommodation too is satisfactory. The school does not have a computer suite, so all lessons take place in classrooms. The staff manage this well and ensure that all pupils have equal access to computers in order to build their ICT skills.
91. ICT is a very well led and managed subject. The subject leader is a dedicated, hard working teacher who has high expectations of pupils and staff. She gives very good guidance and has ensured that ICT is used effectively to aid learning through the school. The system of assessment is firming up well, though there are still things to be done to make it thorough and rigorous across the school. The subject leader knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject thoroughly and has shared this with other staff to good effect in improving provision.

There are clearly stated plans for the enhancement of the subject and positive prospects for the future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. ICT is taught as part of work in other subjects. This good cross-curricular coverage ensures that the skills of ICT are built successfully through the school. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the pupils developed their knowledge and skills of history and ICT equally successfully as they created slide shows using a professional presentation package that were to be shared with other pupils in the class at a later stage. They used their existing knowledge of fashion in the decades from 1950 to 2000 effectively in this work and extended it by using the Internet to find out more about particular styles, such as flared trousers and mini-skirts in the sixties and trilby hats and formal dresses in the fifties.

HUMANITIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The subject is well planned and well led.
- There are no formal assessment procedures.

Commentary

93. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs achieve well in relation to prior achievement. The religious education curriculum is firmly based on the locally agreed syllabus and lessons are well planned with tasks matched well to pupils' ability.
94. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are used successfully to promote religious education. Stories and music such as the song 'St Saviour's Day' bring the story of the Nativity to life. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on deeper meanings and to consider their place in the wider world. Music plays a significant part in assembly and pupils contemplate on 'Living and Learning' in song. They are keen and enthusiastic to explain the significance of the candles to Advent and why Christmas is important to Christians. There is also a time for quiet contemplation and prayers, all of which help to develop pupils' awareness of spirituality.
95. Lessons are well planned and good use is made of ICT to support pupils learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to open up discussions and promote pupils' spiritual development. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.
96. The subject is well managed by the headteacher. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of how work in this subject can support the development of pupils' literacy skills and this is carried out well. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively, however there are no formal assessment procedures in place.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.

Provision for geography and history is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in geography and history are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily in junior classes.
- Standards are below average and achievement unsatisfactory in Year 2.
- There is an appropriate curriculum for both subjects with good focus on the development of basic literacy skills.

Commentary

97. From the small amount of evidence available standards are average by the end of Year 6. This moves the pupils on from below average standards by the end of Year 2. The pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. This again moves the pupils on from unsatisfactory achievement at the end of Year 2. The judgements are based upon a sample of work and displays around the school as no lessons were timetabled during the course of the inspection. The displays particularly confirm that all aspects of both subjects are being covered adequately. They also confirm the value that the school places upon the opportunities that the subjects give to pupils' practical learning. Much of the work is related to visits into the community or visitors coming into the school to make learning more meaningful for the pupils. A particular strength is in the way that both subjects are being approached through literacy. Both subjects are developing all pupils, including those with special and additional language needs, speaking and listening skills. They are now beginning to move on to developing writing skills effectively, particularly in Year 5/6 classes.
98. The subjects are well led by the same enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a relevant development plan. A well-researched audit has been completed and a budget spent wisely to begin to build up new and appropriate resources. A clear plan of future action has been drawn up to support further developments effectively. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation all require strengthening in geography and history.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is satisfactory overall, though there are aspects for improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recently improved planning guidance has been implemented in the infant classes, leading to satisfactory provision and average standards.
- Standards are below average by the age of eleven.
- Assessment, monitoring and evaluation do not pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in a rigorous way.

Commentary

99. Lessons were observed in junior classes, and a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers planning was completed. Infant pupils show satisfactory achievement in their completed work. A portfolio of work illustrates a satisfactory range of experiences offered, including the use of different media and the study of other artist work. For example, they have undertaken projects on weaving, using shades of colour in their Fire of London paintings, and have used clay, paint and paper silhouettes to create portraits. Standards are in line with expectations by the age of seven, showing satisfactory achievement.

100. Standards by the age of eleven are below expectations for their age. The programme for junior pupils has provided insufficient breadth in the art and design curriculum, with too few opportunities for creating three and two-dimensional outcomes. Achievement in the learning of knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move from years 3 to 6 is not as consistent as it could be. The work of other artists is used to develop and appreciation of materials and techniques. For example, pupils discussed Lichtenstein's 'Pop Art', and were able to describe the use of bold colour, and geometric shapes. However, there was insufficient challenge when pupils were asked to make their own geometric pictures. Teaching was unsatisfactory in this lesson because pupils lacked a clear purpose for their work and the task required low level drawing skills. However, in this lesson, ICT was used satisfactorily to promote learning through the use of the *Colour Magic* software to create designs in the style of Lichtenstein.
101. Leadership of the subject is at an early stage of development. After one year there has been an improvement in the implementation of planning guidance in infant classes, but this has yet to be put in place in junior classes. A well-planned extra-curricular art club offers opportunities to all infant and junior age groups. This is popular with pupils, and makes a positive contribution to the curriculum. There are no procedures for assessment and little monitoring and evaluation has taken place with a view to identifying what needs improvement and what are strengths. The school has appropriately placed emphasis on raising standards in core subjects in recent years. The school acknowledges the need to develop creative and aesthetic areas of the curriculum, following a period in which the core subjects have been the main foci.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Design and technology is well represented in the curriculum and curriculum plans show that pupils have good opportunities to build skills and knowledge in the subject. The quality of leadership and management by the two coordinators is good. They have clear and appropriate ideas about the way they want to shape the subject. They have already provided good quality documentary guidance for staff to ensure that the subject is developed systematically and progressively as pupils move through the school. Work on display around the school and the one lesson observed in Year 1/2 on fabric puppet making indicate that pupils achieve at least satisfactorily in the work. The teaching in the lesson seen was good and was enhanced by the adult to pupil ratio. The teaching assistants present had a good impact on learning, as the level of support for individual pupils was good. The end of the lesson included a good review of learning by the pupils to the effect that their fine-sewing skills were needing improvement. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation require improvement, but the good start made by the new coordinators suggests that future improvement in design and technology is assured.

MUSIC

103. In music, lessons are carefully planned to enable pupils to develop their musical skills. The quality of singing is good throughout the school. The junior choir leads singing in assembly and tuneful expressive singing was heard during the inspection. Pupils especially enjoyed singing 'Living and Learning,' 'I climb the Highest Mountain' and the 'Lord's Prayer.' It is clear that the good subject expertise of teachers is used well to help pupils to progress. Older pupils sing tunefully in lessons, with awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics. Concerts and performance also contribute to pupils' overall musical experience. Standards in music are in line with expectations by seven and eleven years of age. The choir have performed in a Carol Concert at a local theatre. Violins, cello, guitar and brass peripatetic teaching has been introduced for junior phase pupils. There has been an effective introduction of the use of ICT in music lessons. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic, clear educational direction for work in this subject. However, the school has no formal assessment procedures in place at the moment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education (PE) is satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and achievement is satisfactory.
- A good range of extra curricular sporting opportunities is provided.
- There is a good programme for teaching swimming and pupils achieve well
- Insufficient time is allocated to teaching PE in some classes.
- Planning and assessment procedures are under developed

Commentary

104. Gymnastics and dance lessons were observed, discussions were held with pupils and teachers, and a scrutiny of planning and assessment procedures was completed. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, the overall standards achieved are below those expected for infant and junior pupils. This is partly because the allocation of time for PE, in most classes, is less than the recommended minimum of 2 hours per week.
105. Satisfactory lessons are characterised by a clear structure for lessons, including raising awareness of the need to warm up and cool down and the effects of exercise on the body. However the time for physical activity is not always used to good effect when pupils wait too long for their turn, or spend too much time listening. The level of challenge in gymnastics and dance lessons needs to be increased in order to improve the quality, fluency and range of movements. Teachers draw on a range of planning guidance, including National, County and local guidance. This needs to be rationalised in order to make subject knowledge and guidance more accessible to teachers.
106. A good swimming programme ensures all the junior pupils have access to one term of lessons each year. Pupils achieve well in swimming and the vast majority attain their 25 metre swimming award by Year 6. The extra curricular programme makes a good contribution to the PE programme, offering some pupils opportunities to attend clubs for netball, football and dance. All physical education activities are included in the programme, including gymnastics, dance, athletics, games and outdoor and adventurous activities.
107. The recently appointed co-ordinator has been in place for one term and has received support through a network for primary PE teachers, led by a secondary School Sports Co-ordinator. The priorities in the action plan for the network of primary schools are appropriate, but have yet to be implemented in the school. Aspects requiring development include: providing adequate time allocation, developing planning guidance, introducing assessment procedures and bringing higher levels of challenge to teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is well planned as part of the overall curriculum.
- Cross-curricular links are strong.

Commentary

108. The programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship is well integrated into the curriculum. Many pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and the school has to work hard to ensure that their needs are met. The programme is taught through circle time, religious education, science, dance and drama. In science, for example, the need for a healthy diet is developed; in religious education the importance of tolerance and respect for minority faiths and cultures is developed effectively. There are appropriate arrangements for sex education and learning about the effects of smoking and the misuse of drugs. The dance and drama sessions are seen by the school as important elements in the work to improve pupils' self-esteem. The welcoming atmosphere in school promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem successfully.

EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Example of outstanding practice

A mathematics lesson for nineteen Year 6 top set pupils on multiplication tables and associated algebraic relationships.

Following a spirited mental/oral starting session on multiplication tables the pupils in the set began work to compile sequences involving the combination of different shapes. The starting point for this work was a good set of slides shown on the overhead projector and a brisk, challenging explanation by the teacher. The lesson was very well planned and organised and the very good quality of resources and outstanding support from the teacher and teaching assistant ensured that learning was maximised. Within moments of the start, the pupils were confidently using vocabulary such as "term" as they copied and extended physical patterns and tried to identify the relationships in the sequence. All pupils were urged to find a general rule to explain the emerging pattern and skilful questioning by the teacher enabled some to track the systematic increase in the separate elements of pattern. The pupils were able to say that to repeat the pattern was to add a term by the end of this introduction.

Pupils next worked in three attainment groups. The starting point for this was the re-creation of the original pattern using counters and cubes. The highest attaining pupils were split from the higher attainers for the practical work. These top attainers worked to build a table to show the successive values produced when the sequence for $3n$ was extended to its 125th term. They wanted to take this on towards the 150th term but the teacher, sensing that this might lack challenge, asked the pupils to devise a new sequence for investigation. The other higher attaining group made a concrete sequence of counters and cubes without the need for adult intervention. Over half of this group developed the skill of extending the sequence by development of the pattern rather than by successively adding one unit.

Meanwhile, the teaching assistant worked with the middle attainers and gave sustained very good support to the group that enabled the pupils to achieve very well. They quickly numbered the divisions made of circles and drew lines to show the progressive linkages shown by different multiplication tables. The pupils talked confidently about the different patterns produced for the same table on circles that had been divided into different sized segments. They also talked about what each straight line represented in terms of successive multiples of the original value.

The lower attaining group were assigned to computers to investigate the patterns made on the multiplication square. The resources aided their achievement because the results were presented without delay and errors were trapped quickly. The pupils worked productively and were able to talk about the symmetry shown by different multiplication tables when shaded on the square. They then went on to identify the pattern of square numbers and used small whiteboards to note their explanations to share later with the rest of the class.

During the final part of the lesson, the pupils explained their initial predictions and gave their results,

commenting on their methods and what they had discovered. The original sequence was revisited and one of the lower attaining pupils identified that there were 3 times as many counters as cubes in the whole sequence as well as just its first term. The challenge throughout the lesson had been constant for all pupils. At this stage the teacher asked the pupils "shall we get a little harder?" The enthusiastic response was "Yesss..." The teacher wrote $n=25$, $3n=?$ The correct answer was near instantaneous. Next came $n=150$, $3n=?$ The pupils' complete knowledge was well underlined by the speed of answering this. The highest attainers were given the problem of solving the 1225th term of the same pattern. The answer was accurate and quick.

The lesson was packed and productive. The teacher's high expectations ensured that concentration and effort were spot-on. The humour that pervaded the lesson kept the discussions focussed on what mattered. It was very evident that at the end of the lesson the pupils knew a lot more than when they started. It was evident that for many of these pupils, standards were above average, with ample evidence of level 5 thinking and skills.

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	N/A
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

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

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

