

INSPECTION REPORT

BEEHCROFT INFANT SCHOOL

Upper Stratton, Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126210

Headteacher: Mrs M L Harper

Lead inspector: RWG Thelwell

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th March 2005

Inspection number: 266398

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	232
School address:	Beechcroft Infant School Beechcroft Road Upper Stratton Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN2 7QE
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Deakin
Date of previous inspection:	7 th – 11 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is set on the northern outskirts of Swindon. At present, 232 pupils are on roll; this includes 68 children in reception. Whilst pupils are drawn from a cross-section of socio-economic backgrounds, a slight majority come from families living in social housing or other rented accommodation. Nearly all children attend pre-school settings before joining the school at the start of the school year in which they become five. Attainment on entry to reception is assessed as being towards the lower end of that considered average for children of this age. The proportion of current pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is, at 20 per cent, above average. Three pupils have statements of SEN allocated to them under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice¹; proportionally, this is average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average, and no pupils are given support due to them being at the early stages of English language acquisition.

Having gained the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2002, the school achieved 'Investor in People' status in 2003. In the recent past, a fire caused significant damage to the school buildings. The resulting programme of rebuilding was still taking place at the time of this inspection.

¹ The Department for Education and Skills' Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20977	Mr RWG Thelwell	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Science, Geography, History.
9644	Mr M Whitaker	Lay inspector	
21313	Mr H Galley	Team inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education.
24342	Mrs D Franklin	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, Information and communication technology, Religious education, Personal, social and health education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, staff and governors have established a very supportive ethos that results in pupils achieving very well in their academic and personal development. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's total commitment to inclusion results in very good provision for all pupils irrespective of their stages of learning, or their physical or sensory needs.
- Despite an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils in Year 2 attain standards in mathematics that are well above average. This is an outstanding achievement.
- Pupils currently in Year 2 achieve very well to attain standards above those expected for their age in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Very effective teaching results in pupils' very good attitudes to learning.
- The school's curriculum is very good and is enriched by an extensive range of visits, visitors and out-of-class activities.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The school's very good care, guidance and support of pupils are built on effective links with parents and carers.
- The rate of attendance, together with pupils' punctuality, is unsatisfactory.

Since the school was last inspected in 1999, improvement has been very good. All issues noted in the last report have been addressed. Standards have risen and the school has gained the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' and achieved 'Investor in People' status. The quality of teaching has been improved, as have procedures and use of assessment and provision for SEN. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed further, and governors are now more involved in monitoring school performance, and in strategic and financial planning. With the near completion of the building work being undertaken due to damage caused by fire, the school is well positioned to make further gains.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	B	C	B	A
Writing	B	C	B	A
Mathematics	C	D	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools refers to schools with 8% up to 20% of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

When taking into account that an above average proportion of pupils assessed in 2004 had SEN, standards were above average when compared with all schools nationally in reading, writing and science, and well above average in mathematics. This is impressive and represents very good achievement. A further noteworthy feature of the school's performance in 2004 is that when compared with similar schools, results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils achieve very well overall. Children now in reception achieve well. Whilst nearly all are on course to reach the recommended levels in each area of learning by the end of reception, around a third will gain them earlier in their personal, social and emotional development, and a quarter in the remaining areas of learning. Pupils currently in Year 2 (where an above average proportion has SEN) achieve very well to reach standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, science and ICT above those expected for their age. Standards that are well above the norm in mathematics represent outstanding achievement. Inspection evidence confirms pupils work at appropriate levels in other subjects and that provision for religious education meets requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The significant achievement of pupils, ranging from those with SEN to higher attainers, is attributable to very good teaching and very effective support from teaching assistants.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well in and around school. They get on very well with each other and the adults with whom they work. Despite having improved, rates of attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a very good quality of education. Teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. Thorough planning results in activities within lessons that are well matched to all pupils' stages of learning. Teaching assistants play a most valuable part in the support of pupils' learning. Assessment is used very well to monitor and track pupil progress and help determine what is to be taught next. Pupils benefit from a very good curriculum that is enriched by an impressive range of visits, visitors and out-of-class activities. The school gives pupils very good care and guidance. The school's effective links with parents, together with very good links with the community and other schools, make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The school is given excellent leadership by the headteacher, who with the very good support of the senior management team has developed a culture of evaluation and improvement. Management is very effective, with subject co-ordinators playing a full part in monitoring provision and outcomes of subjects. Governance is very good. Governors carry out their duties very well and are involved fully in strategic and financial planning. They ensure all statutory requirements are met, and that, in keeping with the school's inclusive outlook, all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and associated resources.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They value the caring and supportive ethos of the school. They consider pupils are taught well and make good progress. Parents are particularly pleased with the accessibility of staff. Pupils enjoy school and the work set for them. They like their teachers and feel they are known well and given good support in all they do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In addition to pursuing the improvements and developments already identified in its improvement plan, the most important thing the school should do to improve is to:

- Continue to work with parents and carers to raise further the overall rate of attendance, and improve pupils' punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards for pupils now in Year 2 are above average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. When taking into account the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, this represents very good achievement overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children now in reception achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. They achieve well in all other areas of learning².
- Pupils currently in Year 2 achieve very well to attain standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and science above those expected nationally for their age.
- In mathematics, standards that are well above those expected for seven year olds, represent outstanding achievement.
- For pupils at present in Year 2, attainment in information and communication technology is above nationally expected levels.
- Across the school, pupils with SEN make very good progress in terms of prior attainment, and achieve very well.

Commentary

1. In recent years, nearly all children have reached the required levels of performance in each area of learning by the end of reception. This represents good achievement when considering overall attainment on entry was towards the lower end of that considered average for children of this age. Children currently in reception make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning, except for personal, social and emotional development where achievement is very good. Inspection evidence indicates that whilst nearly all children are on course to reach the officially recommended levels in each area of learning by the end of reception, almost a third will gain the required levels earlier for personal, social and emotional development, and around a quarter will do so for the remaining areas of learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.8 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.5 (16.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results of statutory assessment of seven year olds in 2004 showed significant gains were made in each subject over those of the previous year. In each subject assessed, the rate of improvement (in terms of average points scored) was above the national trend. Standards were above average in reading, writing and science, and well above average in

² The curriculum for children in reception comprises six 'areas of learning': Personal, social and emotional development; Communication, language and literacy; Mathematical development; Knowledge and understanding of the world; Physical development; Creative development.

mathematics. The proportions of pupils gaining the higher level of performance³ in each subject were well above the national norm. When taking into account the above average proportion of pupils in the year group with SEN, results reflect very good achievement.

3. Following a review of statutory assessments for seven year olds in 2004, it was decided that in order to raise standards further, in addition to the ongoing focus on speaking and listening and on the quality of pupils' writing, greater emphasis would be given to problem solving in mathematics, investigational work in science, and further development of pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum. Inspection evidence confirms these foci have been successful in terms of pupil performance.

4. The proportion of pupils now in Year 2 who have special educational needs is above the norm. As such, current seven year olds achieve very well to attain above average standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and science. Attaining standards that are well above average for their age reflects outstanding achievement. Standards in ICT exceed nationally expected levels and this represents very good achievement. Inspection evidence confirms pupils use their ICT skills to good advantage to support learning in other subjects. Work sampled in other National Curriculum subjects indicates it to be at an appropriate level for the age groups concerned. In music the standard of singing for Year 2 pupils is good. Although no judgement is made on overall attainment in religious education, provision meets requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with SEN achieve very well and make very good progress in terms of prior attainment and targets in their individual education plans.

5. The school surpassed targets it set for the proportion of pupils to reach the expected levels or above in reading, writing and mathematics in 2004. Whilst the targets set for 2005 are challenging, particularly when taking into account over one out of every five pupils has SEN, inspection evidence indicates the school is on line to achieve them. This reflects the school's very positive attitude to maintaining high standards and its commitment to giving pupils every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and contributes significantly to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Relationships are very good. However, attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal development, including social, moral and cultural development, is very good.
- Very good relationships contribute to freedom from harassment and a high level of inclusion.
- Pupils behave very well at all times and display very good attitudes towards school.
- The incidence of term time holidays is a significant factor in pupils' unsatisfactory attendance.

Commentary

³ The national expectation is that, when assessed at the end of Year 2, pupils should gain Level 2; the higher level being Level 3.

6. At the last inspection, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be very good. This continues to be the case. Moral development is very good. Pupils discuss and agree class rules. The ethos of the school provides a clear moral framework for pupils: for example in the excellent role models provided by adults, and the strong commitment to inclusion. Moral issues such as choices are addressed as part of the very good programme of personal, social and health education lessons. Social development is very good; pupils play an active part in the school community: for example by carrying out responsibilities and acting as 'playground buddies'. Pupils' awareness of the wider community is demonstrated by the range of charity collections children organise, and in the interest shown in environmental issues. Spiritual development is good and is supported well through the school curriculum and assemblies.

7. Cultural development is very good. Pupils are made aware of their own cultural traditions through art and music, including a range of visiting musicians and visits from theatre companies. Their awareness of the cultures of other traditions is very well promoted. The school organises multicultural arts and music events in which children explore the art of Africa and of native Americans. Assemblies with African themes are held and pupils consider the significance of festivals such as the Jewish Shabbat and Chinese New Year.

8. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Adults in school present children with exemplary role models. Teachers and teaching assistants have very good relationships with their pupils; the atmosphere in lessons is encouraging and boosts pupils' self-confidence. Pupils' relationships with each other are very good. The school's ethos ensures inclusivity of an excellent order. Pupils with emotional, physical, sensory and learning difficulties are included fully in all the school's activities.

9. Behaviour is very good, an improvement on the good standard noted in the previous inspection report. Pupils respond well to the school's very high behavioural expectations, lively teaching and skilled classroom management. Pupils are orderly in moving about the school, respectful in assemblies, lively at play and polite to visitors. In lessons, they comply well with staff's consistent application of class rules. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaires, a minority of parents expressed concern about bullying. During the inspection, no instances of such behaviour were observed and pupils themselves did not regard bullying as an issue. There have been no exclusions over the preceding twelve months.

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to respond to challenge. They are proud of their school and eager to take up the opportunities it offers, such as participation in community and after school activities. Children in reception classes are confident and content to be left by parents and carers at the start of the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Although better than at the time of the last inspection, the rate of attendance is below the national average. The school works hard

to improve attendance: all absences are followed up with records kept on the circumstances for each absence. The education welfare officer visits regularly, and an attendance cup is presented to the class with the best attendance each week. A significant factor to absences comes from term time holidays. Since the start of the current school year, over a quarter of parents have sought authorisation for a term time holiday. Lateness is confined to a small, but persistent number of families. Such latenesses are recorded and followed up by the education welfare officer.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	160	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a very good quality of education. Teaching is very good, as are procedures and use of assessment to establish what pupils know and can do. A very good curriculum is enhanced by a very wide range of out of class activities, visits and visitors. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The school takes very good care of its pupils. The partnership with parents is good. Very good links are maintained with the local community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Strengths are in the teaching of children in reception, and in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science. The quality of teaching has been improved significantly since the last inspection. Procedures and the use of assessment are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in reception are taught very well.
- The key skills of literacy and numeracy, together with science, are taught very effectively.
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge, together with very thorough planning, results in lessons that meet the needs of all pupils ranging from those with SEN to high attainers.
- Teachers make very effective use of ICT to support teaching and learning.
- Teaching assistants contribute very well to pupils' learning.
- Procedures and the use of assessment are very good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	21 (51%)	16 (39%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. The teaching of children in reception is consistently good. It was very good in nearly three out of every five lessons observed. Very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the age group were reflected in teachers' preparation and delivery of lessons, and in the careful and ongoing monitoring of children's performance. Very detailed planning, based on recommended Early Learning Goals, covers all required areas of learning for children of this age. Children are provided with a very good range of interesting activities that contains a good balance between teacher directed activities and those children choose themselves. As such, much learning is gained through play, with adults working alongside children to explain, question and enthuse. In all lessons observed, many opportunities were created to develop and extend children's language, and to develop their independence. These were a marked feature of the good practice observed.

13. Teachers make effective use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to plan lessons that are both interesting and challenging. A little over half of lessons observed in both subjects were judged to be very good. In literacy, all teachers focus very well on pupils' speaking and listening skills. Questioning is used effectively to elicit pupils' understanding and to develop vocabulary and use of language. Pupils' reading books are matched closely to their ability, and pupils are given many opportunities to use their developing writing skills in other subjects. In mathematics, interesting activities, allied to teachers' clear explanations, reinforce pupils' understanding of concepts taught. A particularly effective element of numeracy lessons is the emphasis given to pupils having to explain how they arrive at their answers. Teaching of science, in which all lessons seen were very good, resulted in pupils carrying out a variety of investigations that enabled them to use their developing skills of scientific enquiry to good advantage, and learn well.

14. Teachers' very thorough planning, underpinned by very good subject knowledge, ensures lessons meet the diverse learning needs of pupils in each class, and contributes significantly to the very good achievement noted. In nearly all lessons observed, learning objectives were explained clearly at the outset, thus enabling pupils to know what was expected of them. At all times teachers had high expectations of pupils in terms of performance. This contrasts well with the findings of the last inspection that found instances of teachers' expectations being too low. Across all subjects observed during the inspection teachers made very effective use of interactive whiteboards and other computers to support teaching and enhance pupils' learning.

15. Pupils with SEN are taught very well, and, in keeping with the very inclusive nature of the school, are included fully in all activities. Very good support enables them to meet targets in their individual education plans. Teachers provide equally well for higher attaining pupils who are given tasks well matched to their stages of learning. This marks a considerable improvement on the last inspection which found that, on occasions, such pupils underachieved because tasks given them were not sufficiently challenging.

16. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' learning, and work in close partnership with teachers who ensure all adults working with pupils have a clear understanding of learning objectives, methods and resources to be used.

17. Information gained from the school's very good assessment procedures is used very effectively to track and measure pupil progress, modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning. When last inspected the marking of pupils' work was found to be inconsistent; this is no longer the case. The oral feedback given to pupils in class, together with marking of work in pupils' books, is good. Teachers take much care to express and record their appreciation of effort, and ensure pupils understand how to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has been developed well since the last inspection and is now very broad and well balanced.
- There are very good links made between subjects, with particularly effective use of ICT.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, or who are high attainers, is very good.
- The curriculum is greatly enriched by a very wide range of visits and visitors.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good.

Commentary

18. Children in reception are given a very good range of activities that cover all required areas of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very broad, rich and well balanced. As such, it caters very effectively for pupils' interests, aptitudes and abilities, and meets statutory requirements. As part of the school's drive to raise standards the school has strengthened its curriculum planning, which is now very good. Schemes of work, based on officially recommended advice, underpin provision for all subjects, and very effective strategies are in place for evaluating the quality of the curriculum so that good practice is shared and issues are addressed.

19. A strength of curriculum provision is the lively and interesting links teachers make between different subjects, often bringing lessons to life for pupils of all abilities. A good example during the inspection occurred when, as part of a geography project on the Scottish islands, the school was able to invite a parent who plays in a pipe band to demonstrate this aspect of Scottish culture. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed this presentation and it brought to life their project and enhanced their knowledge and understanding of both geography and music. There were many other similar examples during the course of the inspection.

20. A significant improvement since the last inspection has been the use teachers make of ICT to support pupils' learning in subjects across the curriculum. Every class has an interactive whiteboard and these are used with skill and imagination to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

21. The school has very good arrangements for teaching the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are applied to other subjects to good effect. In particular, writing skills are developed well in subjects such as history, where pupils have written detailed and lucid accounts of the Great Fire of London. Good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum.

22. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with SEN. Individual education plans are very well written and targets are clear, realistic and achievable. The very good number of knowledgeable and experienced teaching assistants makes a significant contribution in delivering the school's very good support for pupils with SEN. The school provides equally well for more able pupils. An example of such provision is in mathematics where high attainers are taught in groups with pupils of similar ability.

23. The personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils' learning well and contributes to the strong and caring ethos within the school. Provision meets requirements relating to sex and relationship education, together with appropriate emphasis given to the safe use of drugs and medicines. A recent healthy eating project has proved popular and effective, as was the school's participation in the Swindon 'Get Active' day last year. The PSHE curriculum is enhanced by the good quality of play opportunities afforded by the school's imaginative and well resourced play areas.

24. The school works hard to make the curriculum relevant and interesting by providing a very wide range of visits and visitors. The policy of having a series of themes, focused on over the course of a week, has been popular and successful. A music week, for example, featured a group of African drummers, as well as musicians from the local community. A similar art week was equally popular.

25. The school provides a very good range of activities outside the school day. All pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to attend at least one of these activities. During the inspection, pupils clearly enjoyed taking part in the recorder club and performed with enthusiasm and confidence. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by the provision of weekly swimming lessons for pupils in Year 2. The school has close and effective links with the local junior school and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

26. There are sufficient, well qualified teachers to ensure the curriculum is well taught, and all pupils' needs are met. A very good number of teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' learning, and work in close partnership with teachers.

27. Issues relating to accommodation are still informed by the devastating fire in 2002 that destroyed, amongst other things, the administration block as well as significant resources, including all the computers. The school has responded to this with determination and imagination. A new block is currently being built and is due to open later in the year. In the meantime, the school has developed a useful computer suite as well as other teaching areas, and the impact of the fire is not obvious to any visitor. Overall, indoor accommodation is satisfactory, whilst the outdoor environment is good, with a range of attractive areas. Resources are good across the curriculum, with no weaknesses.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is very good. Arrangements for health and safety of all in the school community are very good. Pupils' involvement in the day-to-day life of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care and concern for pupils' welfare is very good.
- Arrangements for ensuring health and safety are very good.

- Very good relationships together with very good assessment procedures ensure very effective personal and academic support.
- Pupils' involvement in school and in the management of their own learning is good.

Commentary

28. The school provides very good care for its pupils. The genuine concern for children's well-being is immediately apparent in lessons, in discussions with staff and pupils, and in correspondence from parents. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes; all staff are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. The school's own procedures for ensuring pupils' security, especially at the end of the school day, are particularly effective. Concern for pupils' welfare encompasses the promotion of healthy diet and lifestyle, after school training in first aid, curriculum work on healthy diet, and arranging for the lifestyle van (a mobile exhibition focusing on health and safety issues) to visit the school. The community police officer talks to pupils about personal safety.

29. There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out on all activities including school trips. All the necessary procedures for meeting pupils' medical needs are in place. Following the criticisms in the last inspection report, a medical room has been created and the passage of vehicles across the playground has been stopped. Regular safety inspections are carried out on fire equipment, physical education and play apparatus, and on electrical items.

30. Personal and academic support for all pupils is very good. The school's strong ethos of care, together with very good relationships, ensures that pupils are well known to at least one adult in school. Assessment procedures are very good and used to inform pupils' academic targets. These procedures, together with good knowledge of personal development, ensure that all pupils have access to very good, informed support. Induction procedures are very good for both parents and children. Throughout children's time in reception, parents are encouraged to settle their children in their classrooms in the mornings - all reception classes radiate parent friendliness.

31. Pupils' involvement in the life of the school is good. All pupils have duties such as seeing to the morning fruit and taking registers to the office. A number from each year group, including reception, act as 'playground buddies', supporting children who have nobody to play with. All classes discuss and agree their class rules; pupils are involved in their own learning by discussing targets.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school successfully promotes effective links with parents. Very good links with the community and other schools enhance pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range and quality of information provided for parents are very good.
- Links are good; parents are seen as important partners and their views are consulted.
- The school is friendly and open and seen by parents as accessible.
- Pupils' experiences of school are enriched by very good links with other schools and the community.

Commentary

32. The school's communications with parents - written and oral, formal and informal - are very good. Parents are supported well through their children's first term of school with meetings and guidance on the curriculum. All year groups hold meetings for parents in which the literacy and numeracy curriculum for the ensuing year is outlined. There are termly consultation meetings for parents, and pupils' individual targets and class curriculum plans are sent home. Every class has a parents' information notice board. Pupils' annual reports are thorough, comprehensive and appreciated by parents. In the pre-Ofsted inspection questionnaire, 96 per cent of respondents felt that the school kept them well informed.

33. There are good links between home and school. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of school activities and a number of parents volunteer to help in school. Links between school and parents of children with special educational needs are especially good; in addition to teachers, the teaching assistants who support those children attend their annual review meetings with parents. Parents' views are consulted by means of annual questionnaires and, where practicable, incorporated in future planning. Parental support for children's learning at home is effective - parents support homework and home reading - but the effectiveness is diminished by the significant number of families who take children out of school for term time holidays.

34. The effectiveness of the links between school and home is supported by the ease of informal contact. Twice a day, every day, parents in each class have the opportunity to exchange a few quick words with staff, passing on a child's worry or resolving a small issue. In the Ofsted questionnaire, 95 per cent of respondents said that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with an issue.

35. The school has developed very good links with other schools. There are close links between the school and the two pre-school groups from which it principally draws children. Pre-school children visit the school to attend sports days and share snack time. Links with the junior school to which most pupils transfer are very good. The two schools have developed a 'buddy' system so that all Year 2 pupils will have someone they know when they move up. There are very good links with the neighbourhood secondary school, whose orchestra visits, and Year 10 pupils read stories they have written for the infant pupils. The infant school provides work experience opportunities for secondary students and placements for student teachers. Very good links with the community serve to enhance pupils' learning: these include the library, fire station and local police. Children work with local artists and writers and take part in local musical festivals.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. The management and governance of the school are both very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very caring, supportive and focused leadership.
- The headteacher has developed a very effective team of senior managers and teachers who work very well together.

- The school has a total commitment to inclusion.
- Subject co-ordinators are very effective in leading and managing areas of the curriculum for which they are responsible.
- Management and provision for pupils with SEN are very good.
- The school's culture of self-evaluation and development is underpinned by a very clear, and well structured, improvement plan.
- Governors play a full and active part in the management of the school.
- The school's finances are managed very well.

Commentary

36. The headteacher gives excellent leadership. She sets a very clear direction for the school's development, based on her outstanding understanding of the needs of pupils. In her quest to raise and maintain standards and provision, she has built a strong team of senior managers and teachers who are hardworking and share a common vision regarding what needs to be done to improve further. Under the leadership of the headteacher, standards have risen, the school has gained the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2002, and achieved 'Investor in People' status in 2003. The school has a strong commitment to inclusive education. To this end, staff have established a very caring, supportive and fully inclusive ethos that promotes and supports all pupils' learning. Such achievements are particularly creditable when taking into account a recent fire caused extensive damage to the school's buildings. The resulting rebuilding work is still in progress.

37. Since the last inspection, the role of subject co-ordinator has been developed further. Co-ordinators manage their subjects very well. They participate in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and are involved fully in the development of subjects for which they are responsible. The very good management of the school's equally good provision for SEN has been maintained by the recently appointed SEN co-ordinator who shadowed the previous SENCO prior to her retirement

38. The school has successfully developed a strong culture of self-evaluation and improvement. This has been supported by the effective development of procedures for the performance management of teachers. An impressive breadth of assessment materials is used to very good advantage to help evaluate all aspects of school performance. The thorough analysis of assessment results provides information that is used by staff to monitor pupil progress, modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning. The school's ongoing development is underpinned by a very clear and well structured improvement plan that sets appropriate targets, includes costs and timescales, together with success criteria by which outcomes will be judged.

39. Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school, its curriculum provision, and standards pupils achieve. They are involved fully in all aspects of strategic and financial planning. Governors carry out their duties very well and ensure all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to a daily act of collective worship.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	629,080	Balance from previous year	90,171
Total expenditure	652,322	Balance carried forward to the next	64,200

Expenditure per pupil	2,471
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40. Although the 'carry forward' figure is well above recommended levels, it includes, in addition to a planned contingency fund, money allocated for a range of appropriate developments and purchases.

41. Finances are managed very effectively. The school's budget is linked closely to the improvement plan, and the school seeks to ensure that services it purchases are provided at the best value. The last audit of the school's financial management systems, undertaken on behalf of the local authority in 2001, identified a small number of recommendations for further improvement; appropriate action has since been taken. The school's cost per pupil is below the national average. Therefore, in view of the very good quality of education provided, together with pupils' noteworthy achievement, the school gives very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) is **very good**. At present, 68 children attend full time. Close liaison with pre-school settings, together with very good induction procedures, helps children's smooth entry to reception. Over recent years, assessment of children on entry to reception shows levels of performance to be towards the lower end of that considered average for children of this age. Inspection evidence indicates nearly all current reception children are on course to reach the expected levels in each area of learning by the end of their reception year. However, around one third will attain the expected levels for personal, social and emotional development earlier, and a quarter will do so for other areas of learning. Teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very effective, and provision is managed very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in this area of learning.
- Children show an enthusiastic approach to work and play. Behaviour is very good.
- Adults working with children provide excellent role models.
- Supportive relationships enable children to feel confident and happy.
- Very good provision is made to promote children's independence.

Commentary

42. Very effective teaching and support enables children to settle quickly into the day-to-day life of the school. From the moment children join reception, sensitive talk and guidance from adults help children understand the difference between right and wrong, and reinforce their understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Adults set up a very good range of activities that allow children to make choices, share and take turns. Children do so willingly. They follow adults' clear, well paced instructions and begin tasks eagerly. Relationships between children, and all with whom they work and play, are very good, as is behaviour. Children are keen to take responsibility: for example in tidying up, carrying out their duties as 'special person', and in managing their own activities. This results in them developing good levels of independence and prepares them well for future learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in the acquisition of communication skills and achieve well.
- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Teaching in this area of learning is very effective.

Commentary

43. From the outset, children are taught the importance of listening carefully and taking turns to speak. Children have many planned opportunities to speak with, and listen to, adults and each other. For example, as part of their work on 'feelings', children discussed with their 'talking partner' about what makes them scared. Children then took it in turn to report carefully and confidently to the class what their friend had told them. Carefully chosen texts, together with a well taught programme of phonics (letter sounds), are used very well to help children recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. Such was the case when children enjoyed joining in with the reading of 'The Owl Babies'. Whilst many children were observed making effective use of their phonic knowledge to construct, read and write three and four letter words (some considered as 'tricky'), several children were heard to read texts confidently from the reading scheme. Through a variety of 'writing' activities, children learn the correct way to form and write letters with increasing control. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time children leave reception about three-quarters write simple sentences unaided.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Progress and achievement in this area of learning are good.
- Teachers provide a wide range of activities to support this area of learning.
- Very effective teaching results in children's enthusiastic participation in all activities.
- Effective use is made of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

44. During the inspection children were observed counting and ordering numbers to twenty with confidence. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games, and put together number puzzles and jigsaws to reinforce learning. Their understanding of '*more than*' and '*less than*' is good. Whilst several children were observed using a programmable toy to move forwards and backwards along a number line to solve simple addition and subtraction sums, higher attaining children confidently worked out sums involving three sets of numbers. Children sort objects in a variety of ways, for instance, by colour, shape and size. Children were seen to recognise and repeat several patterns, and, when asked, "How can we make our pattern more difficult?" they gave a good range of sensible suggestions. In such activities teachers make effective use of interactive, computer linked whiteboards to aid learning. Throughout all activities, adults work directly with children to support, reassure, question and praise.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are enthusiastic learners and achieve well.
- A good range of interesting activities promotes learning across all elements of this area of learning.

- Children have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills.

Commentary

45. Inspection evidence confirms a good range of activities helps children to gain an understanding of chronology, and that the school site and immediate locality are used well to support children's awareness of place and position. Children carry out a range of simple investigations regarding senses, and learn about parts of the body associated with each sense. During the inspection children enjoyed 'listening walks' around the school during which they used a digital camera to record the source of each sound they heard. Children make particularly good gains in their use of computer technology. In addition to making good use of programmable toys, on several occasions, children were observed using computers and interactive boards confidently – both in class and in the computer suite – to enjoy a range of interactive programs. Children are given a good introduction to 'design and make' activities, as when they made bodies with jointed and moving limbs. A review of planning confirms appropriate provision is made for children's religious education.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good gains in their learning and achieve well.
- Good provision is made for children's outdoor structured play.

Commentary

46. In their fine manipulative skills, children handle tools, scissors, paintbrushes, construction kits and malleable materials safely and with growing control. In an indoor activity lesson, children responded well to adult encouragement as they explored ways of travelling along, up, over and around a range of balancing and climbing apparatus. In their work children showed good levels of concentration and co-ordination. Since the last inspection provision for outdoor structured play has been improved with each class now having its own secure play area. During the inspection children were observed making effective use of a wide range of resources, including wheeled toys, to support physical development and enhance aspects of children's co-operative and imaginative play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good gains in this area of learning and achieve well.
- Children use a good range of media with which to draw, paint, print and model.
- There is good provision for children's structured role play.

Commentary

47. Although limited observation was made of children carrying out activities relating to this area of learning, vibrant displays of their work enhance each of the classrooms. Such work,

including an impressive underwater collage, models of the 'owl babies', together with a range of paintings, demonstrates children's good achievement. All children make effective use of 'small world' toys to create imaginary environments and play situations. Good provision is made for structured role play in the 'Beechcroft Surgery' and 'dark forest', with adults often supporting activities to add realism and encourage the use and development of language. In music making, children were observed handling and playing successfully a range of simple instruments. Children enjoy singing a range of songs from memory, and, when doing so, show a good sense of rhythm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for pupils now in Year 2 are above nationally expected levels in all aspects of English. In view of the proportion of pupils with SEN, this represents very good achievement.
- Writing is used very well in many other subjects.
- Teaching is very good, and very effective use is made of ICT to support learning.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

48. Standards in English continue to improve steadily and are currently above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. In national tests in 2004, standards in reading and writing were above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. In particular, the proportion of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 in reading and writing was well above that which is found normally. Pupils' attainment is better than at the time of the last inspection and issues such as improving the quality of writing have been addressed fully.

49. All lessons provide very good planned opportunities for speaking and listening. By Year 2, pupils are confident speakers for their age and listen attentively. For example, pupils confidently discuss story settings and say how the settings influence the outcome of the story. In Year 1, pupils describe the basic elements of a story clearly and concisely.

50. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve very well. Pupils enjoy books and read enthusiastically. They read accurately, with expression and show an appropriate awareness of the use of punctuation when reading. More capable and average readers use a good range of strategies to decode unknown words, and the less capable are beginning to develop these skills very well. Many pupils talk confidently and enthusiastically about the books they enjoy reading at home and some pupils make good use of the local library. Most know how to use the library in school for pleasure and research. Each classroom has an attractive book corner that promotes reading very well and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

51. A significant strength in writing is the way pupils use their basic writing skills in all areas of the curriculum. This develops an understanding of the purpose of writing very well. Attainment in writing is above average by the end of Year 2 and all pupils, including those

with special educational needs, achieve very well. Whilst average attaining pupils write in sufficient detail to engage the reader and use a range of connectives to extend their sentences, more able pupils use a wide range of interesting vocabulary to good effect. Punctuation and spellings are usually accurate. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes including descriptive writing, poetry, instructions, letters and creative work. Examples of writing in other areas of the curriculum include: letters, facts and newspaper reports about 'The Fire of London', and reports of investigations in science. The quality of pupils' handwriting has improved significantly.

52. The quality of teaching is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was mainly good and satisfactory. Lessons are very well planned with tasks that closely match the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. Support staff are very effective, particularly when supporting pupils who find learning difficult. For example, in a Year 2 class the teaching assistant provided puppets of characters from the story the teacher was reading to the class so pupils could follow the story and take an active part in the question and answer session. This ensured that these pupils achieved as well as the rest of the class. All teachers use ICT extremely well to support teaching. The use of the interactive whiteboards in all lessons provides a clear focus which stimulates pupils and helps them to achieve very well. Teachers ensure that pupils know their targets which are clearly displayed in each classroom and create a successful working environment to help pupils to achieve them. The quality of marking of work in pupils' books has improved significantly since the last inspection, and is very good. Pupils are now given a very clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

53. The subject is very well led and managed. Careful monitoring of teaching and learning, together with use of information from assessments, is used very effectively to track progress of individual pupils and year groups, to modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. There are many very well planned opportunities for pupils to use their language and literacy skills in other subjects. This ensures that literacy skills are developed very well and pupils achieve very well. Very good examples of pupils using literacy skills were seen in history on the life and work on Florence Nightingale, and in pupils recording investigations in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for pupils now in Year 2 are well above average. This represents outstanding achievement when considering SEN levels.
- Very good teaching results in pupils' very good attitudes to mathematics.
- Teachers are very successful in providing challenging work for pupils of all abilities.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT to support pupils' learning.
- The school has a range of highly effective assessment strategies.
- Mathematics is led and managed very well by a dynamic subject co-ordinator.

Commentary

55. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard, and with considerable effect, to raise standards in mathematics. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests and assessments results were the best ever attained by pupils at the school and were well above the results of all schools nationally and those of similar schools. Inspection evidence shows these high standards are being maintained by pupils currently in Year 2. Standards have risen well above the national trend since the last inspection.

56. A feature of provision across the school is the consistent and effective use teachers make of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lesson plans are detailed and thorough and cover all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. Teaching and learning are very good across the school. All teachers manage their pupils very well, presenting lessons in a lively, interesting fashion. All teachers speak clearly and introduce new vocabulary with great care and precision. This enables all pupils, but especially those with special educational needs, to take a full part in all aspects of the lesson. In all lessons, teachers use ICT well to support learning. The introduction of interactive whiteboards in every classroom has had a positive impact on the quality of learning, and teachers use this resource with skill and imagination. In all lessons observed, pupils had a very positive attitude to mathematics. They thoroughly enjoy the lively, mental warm-up sessions at the start of each lesson and respond very well to the emphasis placed on them having to explain how they arrive at answers.

57. A significant strength of teaching is the very good use made of the school's comprehensive assessment strategies. Teachers work very hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported well, whilst at the same time making sure more able pupils are challenged fully. The quality of marking of pupils' work in books is good and represents an improvement on the last inspection. In class, teachers give much useful praise and encouragement and ensure pupils know how they can improve work.

58. A recent focus in the school's improvement plan has been an attempt by teachers to improve pupils' thinking skills by posing challenging, practical problems. Younger pupils are supported by the use of innovative, structural apparatus that helps them develop their thinking skills, and older pupils make very good progress as a result of searching, and often interesting, problems set by the teacher. The impact of this strategy is best seen in the much better progress now being made by more able pupils. In the 2004 statutory assessments for seven year olds two out of every five pupils reached the higher level (Level 3); a proportion well above the national norm. A similar proportion is on course to reach this level in the forthcoming assessments for 2005.

59. Leadership and management are very good. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and sets a good example through her own inspired teaching of mathematics. She has a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and an impressive determination that standards should continue to improve. She monitors the quality of provision rigorously and gives useful, evaluative feedback to colleagues.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Lesson observations, together with a review of work, confirm pupils apply their skills in mathematics to good advantage in other subjects. For example, measuring in science, using co-ordinates in simple maps in geography, and weighing and measuring in food and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for pupils now in Year 2 are above those expected nationally for this age. When considering SEN levels, this represents very good achievement.
- There is a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry.
- Very effective teaching results in pupils' very positive attitudes towards science.
- Effective use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning.
- The subject is led and managed very well.

Commentary

61. When last inspected, attainment of seven year olds in science was judged to be average. Since then there has been a steady improvement in attainment that reflects the school's ongoing focus on practical and investigative activities within science lessons. Inspection evidence indicates standards for pupils currently in Year 2 are above those expected for their age. This represents very good achievement when taking into account the proportion of pupils in the year group with SEN is above the national average.

62. Lesson observations together with a review of pupils' work confirm a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry. As such, pupils learn well through setting up and carrying out a good range of interesting investigations that require them to predict, observe and record. In so doing, pupils gain a clear understanding of the need to ensure their activities are carried out in a 'fair' manner. The subject provides good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, and to discuss with their 'talking partners' what they have observed. Such was the case during the inspection, when, as part of their investigations as to which colour can be seen best in a 'dark box', pupils had to consider what should be done to ensure investigations were fair.

63. In all lessons observed, teaching was very good. Teachers' thorough planning, underpinned by very good subject knowledge, provides a programme of activities that are well matched to pupils' stages of learning. Teachers give pupils clear explanations of lesson objectives and of what is expected of them as lessons unfold. In lessons observed, it was clearly evident that pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations. Pupils enjoy very much the practical nature of science lessons and reply with enthusiasm to teachers' questions such as, "How do you know?" and "How can you find out?"

64. Teachers make effective use of computers and interactive whiteboards to support teaching and make learning interesting. An excellent example was observed when pupils in Year 2 enjoyed using a program to control and simulate (with varying degrees of success) conditions required for healthy plant growth.

65. Leadership and management of science are very effective. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, together with information gained from assessment, ensures curriculum provision is constantly under review, and that performance of pupils is tracked and monitored. As such, pupils are given every opportunity to perform to the levels of which they are capable.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils now in Year 2 attain levels of performance above those expected for their age.
- Teaching is very effective and pupils achieve very well.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Pupils make effective use of their ICT skills to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

66. Attainment is above average and has improved since the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently use a range of computer software to develop ideas and solve problems, and devise sequences of instructions to control programmable toys. In Year 1, pupils navigate a CD-ROM to find specific information about topics such as dinosaurs and the body. Pupils in Year 2 insert a 'textbox' and a picture from clipart into a word document. They change the border and background colour and pattern on their piece of work before saving their work.

67. Very good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve very well. Teachers are very well organised and plan in detail to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Expectations are always high and all teachers challenge pupils very effectively, particularly those who are more able. Teachers use assessment procedures well to guide their planning, and to track individual pupils' progress. Imaginative use of the interactive whiteboards in all subjects was a strong feature of the very good quality of teaching observed during the inspection.

68. Subject leadership and management are very good. The scheme of work, based on the national recommended guidelines and adapted by the school, is comprehensive and clearly identifies a progression of skills. The current co-ordinator has effectively monitored the impact of training, provided by the previous co-ordinator, on the quality of teaching and learning, and is currently supporting teachers to provide opportunities for pupils' further use of information technology across the curriculum. Resources are very good. All classrooms have at least two computers and an outbuilding has been used very creatively for a computer suite. Resources are set to improve further when a new computer suite is created in the building currently under construction.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. In addition to teachers making very effective use of interactive whiteboards in each class, pupils make good use of their developing ICT skills to support their learning across the curriculum. For example, whilst pupils in Year 1 use computer technology to help them solve 'real-life' money problems, those in Year 2 make very good use of a 'simulation' program to control the conditions required for healthy plant growth. When designing a poster for a book, older pupils successfully enhance its appearance by inserting a picture and changing the colour of the borders and background. Pupils make effective use of encyclopaedic CD-ROM programs to gain information for their topic.

HUMANITIES

70. Only one lesson could be observed in history and geography, and two in religious education. As such, insufficient evidence is available to make overall judgements on standards or the quality of teaching. However, a review of planning together with past work

shows the programmes of study for geography and history meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, and provision for religious education complies with the locally agreed syllabus.

71. Pupils' previous work, together with displays, confirms that in **geography** pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about their own environment, and compare and contrast it with life in other localities. Such was the case in an observed lesson in which pupils in Year 2, having listened to a story about life on a fictional island, undertook a range of activities to develop their appreciation of differences between their own life in urban Swindon and that on a remote and rural island. A further outcome of pupils' work was the development of their understanding of physical and human geographical features. Through the travels of the school bears Beechcroft and Barnaby, pupils gain an appropriate understanding of places and countries further afield. Work reviewed and observed in class was to a standard in keeping with levels expected for pupils' ages.

72. In **history**, work on display and in books shows pupils gain sound knowledge and understanding of the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale, and of important events including the Great Fire of London. In an effective lesson observed, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed being 'history detectives' as they carefully handled, examined and played with a range of old toys. In so doing, pupils developed their awareness of how toys have changed over time in terms of design and materials from which they were made.

73. In **religious education**, pupils now in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and Judaism and understand the significance of some of the practices and beliefs associated with both religions. They recall religious stories from the Bible. For example, during a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils recalled events of Palm Sunday well and used role play activities to very good advantage to support their understanding of the atmosphere and feelings of the crowd who were waiting for, and saw, Jesus. In Year 2, pupils talk confidently about the feelings that are experienced when they lose someone or something special. Pupils are beginning to understand why Jewish people celebrate Passover. In lessons observed, pupils' attainment met with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

74. Each subject provides good opportunities to develop pupils' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. Only two lessons were observed in art and design and in music, and one each in physical education and design and technology. As such no overall judgements are made on provision or on the quality of teaching.

76. A scrutiny of pupils' work in **art and design** indicates that the subject is covered thoroughly, with examples of creative and imaginative work, particularly in Year 2. Pupils have worked in a range of media, with a good balance between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Teachers make constructive use of ICT to bring the subject to life, as for example, in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher was able to show pupils a number of images of different types of sculpture before pupils made their own attempts using clay. Another inventive use of ICT involved pupils in taking digital photographs of an action scene, projecting the images onto an interactive board and then sketching the scene. In lessons observed, pupils worked at a level in keeping with that expected for their age.

77. Teachers help to make art and design interesting by making relevant and stimulating links with other subjects. For example, as part of a history topic on the Great Fire of London, pupils produced some lively 'wash and collage' work. The work of famous artists is effectively used to develop pupils' cultural awareness and their wider knowledge of art and design in the world around them.

78. In **design and technology**, pupils are given a satisfactory range of experiences to understand the process of design, make and evaluate. As in other subjects, good links are made with other areas of the curriculum, especially science. For example, in a lesson in which Year 2 pupils made turning mechanisms, their work linked well with work undertaken in science relating to the principles of 'push and pull'. Useful links are made with the school's personal, social and health education programme when pupils make soup and salads and, apart from evaluating their own likes and dislikes, they discuss healthy and unhealthy foods.

79. A strength of the provision in **music** is the good use of a music specialist on the teaching staff who takes all classes for a weekly lesson. Such a lesson observed during the inspection showed the positive impact of this, as standards of singing in this lesson were above the expected level for Year 2 pupils. The subject co-ordinator leads with great commitment and expertise, and it is clear that music has a high profile throughout the school.

80. A positive aspect of provision in music is the cultural development of pupils as they experience different types of music from across the world. A music week last year was very successful and introduced pupils to African drummers as well as more traditional music from members of the local community. During the inspection pupils were thrilled by a superb performance from a volunteer parent who plays the bagpipes.

81. Although there was not enough evidence to make any judgements about the quality of **physical education**, teachers' plans indicate that this subject is covered very thoroughly. Although it is not part of the statutory curriculum for this age group, the school offers a weekly swimming lesson to pupils in Year 2. As a result, most are well prepared for their future swimming lessons when they move to the junior school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

82. As only two lessons could be observed in this curriculum area, no judgements can be made about overall standards or quality of teaching. However, inspection evidence confirms provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is well established throughout the school. The school has a comprehensive programme of work, which is used effectively by all teachers. Provision meets statutory requirements relating to sex and relationship education, and on the importance of the safe handling and use of drugs and medicines. From early on in their schooling, pupils are taught to distinguish the difference between right and wrong, and to understand the responsibilities of living in a community. For example, in an effective lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 showed a good understanding of why rules are necessary for the safety and wellbeing of others, and of the consequences of breaking the rules. Inspection evidence confirms pupils receive important health and safety guidance, such as learning the importance of keeping fit and healthy eating. Pupils enthusiastically take on responsibilities given them, such as 'buddies' (playground helpers), and enjoy taking part in a variety of charity fundraising activities throughout the year. In so doing, pupils come to appreciate the situations of others less fortunate than themselves. Representatives for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the fire service are regular visitors.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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