

INSPECTION REPORT

**BOLTON-LE-SANDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bolton-le-Sands, Carnforth

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119521

Headteacher: Mr Timothy J Cross

Lead inspector: Mrs J Ann Sharpe

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 2004

Inspection number: 266453

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	299
School address:	Mount Pleasant Lane Bolton-le-Sands Carnforth Lancashire
Postcode:	LA5 8DT
Telephone number:	01524 - 823606
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Sparks
Date of previous inspection:	26 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large school is situated in the thriving village of Bolton-le-Sands, a few miles from Carnforth. With 299 pupils on roll (149 girls and 150 boys), the school is almost full. Many pupils live locally, but about a third come from nearby towns and villages. When children start in the reception classes, their attainment is broadly typical for their age. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Almost all the pupils are white British, and the school only occasionally has pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language and there are no refugees, asylum seekers or travellers. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, is broadly in line with the national average. About 10 per cent of pupils have been identified as able, gifted or talented in at least one subject or aspect of their learning. Most pupils start and finish their primary education at this school. The school received a national award for pupils' performance in Year 6 tests in 2003. There are no significant barriers to raising achievement, and the school is situated in an area of outstanding beauty. The headteacher was not at this school at the time of the previous inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18101	J Ann Sharpe	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Music English as an additional language
14141	Ernest Marshall	Lay inspector	
32283	Denis Goodchild	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
9446	Mary Griffiths	Team inspector	Mathematics Citizenship Geography History Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This good school gives its pupils a good quality of education and provides good value for money. Good teaching and learning have resulted in good standards by Year 6 and good achievement overall for pupils of all capabilities. Good leadership and management ensure that the school is a very caring, friendly, welcoming and happy place where pupils love to come, and where their academic and personal development needs are well met.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, senior staff and governors work together successfully to keep the school moving forward.
- Pupils achieve well overall because much of the teaching is good or better.
- Children in the Foundation Stage (reception classes) make a very good start to their education.
- Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development help them to do well at school.
- Staff and governors do not make fullest use of assessment information in their efforts to raise achievement.
- Very high standards in science by Year 6 are the result of improvements in teaching.

Despite the unsettled staffing situation in Years 1 and 2 in the last few years, there has been good improvement since April 1999. Teaching has improved, owing to better checking and to staff training. The school has kept up with the pace of national change, particularly by responding to guidance about teaching in the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics. Pupils' work has improved, particularly their investigative science work in Years 3 to 6. The more capable pupils now achieve better standards because lessons are more challenging, particularly in reception classes and in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' writing has improved, owing to having more opportunities for writing in different styles. Governors are more involved in monitoring the progress of the school and helping it to improve. Improvements to assessing pupils' work and tracking their progress over time are satisfactory. There is room for further improvement with using assessment information robustly to spot underachievement early and to deal with it quickly.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A*	A	B	B
Mathematics	A*	A	B	A
Science	A*	B	A	A

Key: A - in the top 5 per cent; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

The achievement of girls and boys is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, because almost all the children reach the required early learning goals by the end of the reception year, and some attain the level expected for pupils in Year 1. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, where performance in national tests and teacher assessments in 2003 and 2004 were not as good as they should have been, given pupils' very good start in Year 1. An unsettled staffing situation resulted in small pockets of low achievement that were not always rectified completely by the action taken. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making mainly good progress in lessons, and their work is above average in English and mathematics. Pupils' work is of an average standard in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good overall, and it is often very good in Years 5 and 6, owing to teachers' very high expectations of pupils. Very good achievement in science lessons in Years 3 to 6 and in Year 6 science national tests is the result of improvements in teaching the investigative aspects. Pupils' work by Year 6 is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in all year groups are very good listeners and articulate talkers. They write in many different styles, but handwriting is weaker for too many pupils. Satisfactory achievement in ICT leads to average standards. Pupils are not very competent when using ICT skills as part of their work in other subjects, and the school is trying to put this right. Pupils with special educational needs and the more capable pupils usually achieve as well as other pupils.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and their good attendance are the result of good provision overall for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In several excellent and very good lessons, pupils demonstrated their very good capacity for learning, when they rose to their teachers' very high expectations.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. While overall **good teaching and learning** now enable most pupils to achieve well, very good teaching in the Foundation Stage gives children a flying start to their education. The revised procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking progress have not had time to impact fully on raising their achievement. Pupils do not know much about their targets for improving their work and teachers rarely refer to them in lessons. The good curriculum is very well enriched by activities outside lessons, but some links between subjects are not always planned systematically enough. There is a very good standard of care for the pupils. They receive good support from adults who know them very well. Good links with parents have a positive effect on pupils' learning, and the school seeks and acts upon pupils' views of the school to good effect.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher is a good leader and a good manager who works very hard to get the best from staff and pupils. Very good relationships between governors and staff ensure that everyone pulls together for the good of the pupils. Senior staff are very good role models of teaching and professional leadership. The role of subject co-ordinators is improving. Very committed and supportive governors know the school well, and watch over its progress carefully. Senior staff and governors do not make fullest use of assessment information in order to ensure

consistently high standards across the school, or to make sure that spending represents best value in terms of raising pupils' achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils think highly of the school. Pupils are very happy and have a lot of favourite subjects and activities. Many parents are pleased with most aspects of the work of the school, although some would like more information about how well their children are doing and how best to help them at home. Parents' greatest anxiety is the mixed-age classes. Inspectors found that the school works hard to ensure equality of opportunity no matter which class pupils are assigned to. Greater consistency and better use of assessment information, however, would improve teachers' ability to match pupils' work even more tightly to their prior attainment in all classes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Make fullest use of assessment information and national data in order to match work tightly to pupils' differing capabilities and to raise achievement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Whilst the overall achievement of both girls and boys is good, it is **very good** in the Foundation Stage (reception classes), **satisfactory** in Years 1 to 2 and **good** in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's performance in Year 6 national tests is very good.
- Previous small pockets of underachievement in Years 1 and 2 are still evident by Years 3 and 4.
- Standards in speaking and listening are consistently high or very high across the school.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve very well because of teachers' very high expectations of them.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.
- The standard of pupils' writing is improving, although handwriting is not as good.
- By Year 6, pupils' investigative work in science is of a very high standard.
- Pupils throughout the school are not yet very competent in using ICT skills in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Very good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage prepare children very well for their future work in Year 1. Children of all capabilities achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. As a result of teachers' very high expectations, almost all children are on track to reach the goals set nationally for children by the end of the reception year. Some children are likely to reach the standard expected for Year 1 pupils. This represents well above average attainment and very good progress since children started school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.4 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.1 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.6 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Although many Year 1 and Year 2 pupils achieved well, and sometimes very well, in lessons during the inspection, the school's performance in national tests in 2003 and 2004 was not as good as it should have been, given the very good start that the pupils

had in Year 1. Action to rectify problems associated with teacher absences and changes was insufficient to prevent small pockets of underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics, mainly by pupils of lower capability. This weakness is still impacting on standards in Years 3 and 4, where some pupils struggle to keep up with the rest of their class. By Year 2, pupils' work in English and mathematics is above average, and in science and ICT it is in line with national expectations. This reflects the pupils' satisfactory achievement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (29.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.1 (28.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.5 (29.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Performance in Year 6 national tests in English, mathematics and science has been almost consistently well above the results in similar schools since 2002, reflecting at least good progress since the pupils were tested at the end of Year 2. This very good picture was demonstrated in lessons; for example, pupils achieved very well in Years 5 and 6 owing to the teachers' very high expectations of them. Pupils' work by Year 6 is well above average in English, mathematics and science, and this reflects pupils' good achievement. Satisfactory achievement in ICT is seen in pupils' work, which is about in line with national expectations by Year 6. Pupils throughout the school are not yet very competent at applying ICT skills in other subjects, and the school has plans to address this. Since the previous inspection, pupils' investigative skills in science have improved. Pupils' very good achievement from Years 3 to 6 and the school's very good performance in national tests are a result of pupils' enthusiasm for the interesting and challenging work that teachers provide.
4. A strong focus on improving pupils' writing across the school is paying dividends, and pupils now often achieve well. They write in a wide variety of styles, including more opportunities than before to write as part of work in other subjects. Handwriting is not as good in all year groups, however, and too few pupils reach the standard expected for their ages. The co-ordinator wants to review how handwriting is taught in order to overcome this problem. Teachers are very good at explaining new work, and they constantly encourage pupils to learn and to use new words and phrases in all subjects. As a result, most pupils listen very well to adults and become confident, articulate speakers by Years 2 and 6.
5. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are able, gifted or talented usually achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good quality support that enables them to take a full part in lessons and to make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The more capable pupils often achieve as well as they can, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in mixed-age classes mainly do as well as pupils in single-age classes. Teachers do not always make the fullest use of National Curriculum assessment information, however, in order to take advantage of pupils' very good attitudes and to drive up the standards. Nevertheless, standards overall are higher than they were at the previous inspection, owing to improved teaching. The school is now well placed to continue to raise achievement, and to overcome the setbacks of the past.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **very good**. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes help them to achieve well at school.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's clear expectations of their conduct.
- Very good relationships result in a happy school community where there is mutual respect.
- The school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

- Staff and parents work together co-operatively to ensure pupils' good attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils' awareness and understanding of the multi-cultural society in which they live, although improving, is a relatively weaker aspect of their personal development.

Commentary

6. Pupils like to come to school. In lessons they are enthusiastic, concentrate hard, show interest in their work and work together co-operatively in pairs or groups. Pupils are happy to take on class responsibilities; every Year 6 pupil has an additional task allocated on a rota basis. Also, some pupils enjoy being prefects, house captains, school councillors or playground buddies. Pupils show consideration for one another, and there is no evidence of bullying or other forms of harassment. The restricted sizes of the dining hall and the outdoor hard play areas mean that older pupils need to consider the safety and needs of younger pupils, and they do so willingly.
7. The school sets a very high standard of pupils' behaviour, and makes very good provision for their moral development. Pupils know well what is expected of them and which types of behaviour are unacceptable. They say that teachers deal with behavioural matters fairly and consistently. Pupils value their rewards for good behaviour and work, and the need for sanctions is rare. Consequently, lesson time is rarely wasted because of behavioural problems. Teachers work hard to develop the confidence and self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs. This helps the pupils to overcome their difficulties and to take a full part in activities and lessons alongside their friends. Many pupils take part in the very good range of extra-curricular activities or get involved in activities, such as fund-raising. Their very positive attitudes make the school a happy community, where both work and play are pleasurable, and where pupils do well in their personal development.
8. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development through strong links with the church, through assemblies and through lessons in subjects, such as English, art and design, music and dance. A school development plan target indicates that the school recognises the potential for even further improvement in this area. Weekly circle times (when the whole class sit in a circle and discuss issues with their teacher) encourage pupils to raise, discuss and resolve any concerns that they have. The involvement of pupils in competitive sport, charitable fund-raising and residential visits develops pupils' ability to work together in teams as either leaders or helpers. This provision, along with very good relationships, contributes well to pupils' very good social development. By Year 6, pupils are very mature, confident, sensible, polite and friendly young people. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture and have opportunities to study a variety of world faiths and beliefs. They learn about the importance of listening to and respecting the views of other people, and the school has links with other parts of the world. Opportunities to become familiar with living in a multi-cultural society are fairly limited, however, and there has not been much change in this since the previous inspection.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance and punctuality are good because teachers make lessons enjoyable and because pupils have good parental guidance and support. The school's attendance statistics are better than the national average for primary schools.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	288	2	
Mixed – White and Asian	5		
Chinese	4		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

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

10. Exclusions are very rare and are dealt with appropriately.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Good teaching and learning ensure good achievement overall, although assessment is a relatively weaker aspect. The good curriculum is very well enriched by activities outside lessons. Support for pupils is good and they are very well cared for. The partnership with parents is good and, although links with the community are satisfactory, links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning, although **good** overall, are **very good** in the reception classes. Assessment is **satisfactory** and improving, but it remains a relatively weaker area of teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection.
- Very good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage enable children to achieve very well.
- Teachers do not always make the fullest use of the assessment information available to them.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond very well.
- Teachers in Years 3 to 6 are good at teaching the investigative aspects of science.
- Pupils' writing is improving owing to teachers' increasing ability to get the best from them.
- Many pupils know little about how to improve their work in order to reach a higher level of the National Curriculum.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (13%)	7 (23%)	10 (33%)	8 (27%)	1 (3%)	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.

11. Teaching and learning are good across the school in English and mathematics and satisfactory in ICT. No science lessons were seen in Years 1 to 2, but teaching in Years 3 to 6 was good. The above sample of lessons confirms that teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when one lesson in six was unsatisfactory. There is now more checking of the quality of teaching, and teachers are much clearer about what they want pupils to learn in lessons. The teaching of writing is improving, owing to staff training and to the strong focus on extending the range of opportunities for pupils to write independently. Teaching in science has improved as a result of efforts to extend pupils' opportunities to learn by investigating. This explains why the school's performance in Year 6 science national tests in 2004 was well above the national average and much better than that in similar schools.
12. Despite changes of teacher, the school has maintained the very good teaching of children in the Foundation Stage. The many strengths of teaching lie in the coordinator's very good knowledge of how to teach younger children, and in her ability to motivate staff and children by planning exciting lessons and activities. As a result of the very good teaching overall, including some excellent lessons, children achieve very well and make a very happy and successful start to their education.
13. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour in most lessons. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together to create a purposeful atmosphere in which pupils want to try their best to complete tasks. Very good relationships and interesting work ensure that pupils of all capabilities achieve well, overall. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is equally good. This is because teachers know their pupils well and often plan work that helps them to reach the targets in their individual education plans. The teaching of the more capable pupils has improved since the previous inspection, when teachers did not challenge their thinking enough. Teachers now often 'stretch' their pupils to reach their full potential, although this strength of teaching was more evident in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 than it was in other year groups. There remain a few occasions when teachers' expectations of their pupils do not reflect pupils' very good attitudes or their true capabilities.
14. Teachers use a wide variety of assessment information in order to group pupils of similar capability in lessons. They set clear targets for the groups of pupils to aim for over time in English and mathematics. When asked, however, even the older pupils rarely know what they have to do to improve their work over time. Also, there were few lessons or work set for groups of pupils that focused specifically on helping pupils to reach their targets. The individual targets set by teachers with their pupils are sometimes too broad or vague to help either teachers or pupils to know what they need to do to achieve them. The recently revised procedures for recording the National Curriculum levels reached by individual pupils and for tracking their progress have not had much time to impact on improving teaching and learning. This partially explains why achievement in Years 1 and 2, and sometimes in Years 3 and 4, has not been as good as in other parts of the school. A main school development priority is,

rightly, to improve assessment across the school, so that information, including national test data, is used better in order to raise pupils' achievement. Assessment is still developing in other subjects.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that helps pupils to achieve well. A **very good** range of additional activities enriches pupils' learning. The accommodation is **satisfactory** and **good** resources support the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in reception classes is very good.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well.
- Curriculum planning helps most pupils to achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- Planning for links between ICT and other subjects is not yet systematic, resulting in an inconsistent approach.
- The curriculum is enriched very well by activities outside normal lessons.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is often very good.

Commentary

15. The curriculum for children in reception classes takes very good account of national guidance. Teachers plan a good balance between formal lessons and opportunities for children to learn by playing and talking. Teachers plan exciting work that challenges children to do their best and helps them to achieve as well as they possibly can. Staff work hard to overcome the constraints of the building and resources in their planning of the outdoor curriculum.
16. Pupils with special education needs have full access to the curriculum and usually play an active part in class lessons and in the life of the school. Classroom assistants work closely and productively with teachers in order to meet the differing needs of the pupils. Planning takes account of the needs of all pupils, although occasionally, pupils who are able, gifted and talented can appear isolated.
17. Curriculum planning has improved since the previous inspection. In science, for example, teachers now plan more investigative work, resulting in higher achievement and very good performance in Year 6 national tests. The deputy headteacher has worked hard recently to find a solution to the problems of planning a curriculum that ensures that pupils do not repeat or miss topics of study when they move to and from single-age and mixed-age classes. Teachers often make meaningful links between the subjects they teach. The main current school development priority is for teachers to have an agreed format for planning cross-curricular ICT links, and there is further work to do on this. Another priority is for teachers to explore ways of developing creativity across and within the curriculum, including aspects of physical education, music, art and design and drama. Although there are signs of an increasingly creative approach to planning the curriculum, it is not yet the consistent strength that the school wants it to be.

18. The curriculum is enriched very well by extra-curricular activities, educational visits, visitors, and opportunities to learn to play a range of musical instruments. Many pupils perform by singing, playing music, dancing or reciting poetry at a local music festival. Sport is well represented in the curriculum through football, swimming, rounders, netball, athletics and cross-country running. As a result of very good links with other schools, pupils extend their learning in subjects, such as design and technology and science.
19. Owing to some very good opportunities for personal, social and health education, pupils are polite, very well behaved and willing to accept responsibilities. They are very aware of what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle. Participating in the school council, residential visits and charitable fund-raising all helps pupils to learn how to become thoughtful, caring young people. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including appropriate provision for sex and drugs education.
20. The school's natural surroundings and grounds, along with the well-maintained and attractive indoor accommodation, provide a pleasant place for pupils to learn. A major concern of the governors, staff and parents is the very poor access to the building and the lack of sufficient car parking space. Governors are working hard to resolve this problem, as well as the problem of the shortage of space indoors for administrative purposes and for pupils to work in groups outside their classrooms. Recent improvements in ICT resources are beginning to have a positive impact on achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **good** support and guidance based on the monitoring of their academic and personal development. There are **good** procedures for seeking and acting upon the pupils' views of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships and a very good level of care ensure that pupils work in a happy, safe and secure environment.
- Good support and guidance enable pupils to do well at school.
- Good consultation with pupils ensures that they have an opportunity to influence the life and work of their school.
- The school has, rightly, identified that tracking pupils' academic progress can be improved.

Commentary

21. Provision is good, overall. This is a very caring school, where all pupils are respected and valued equally. Governors and staff work together well to ensure that health, safety and welfare requirements are met. Child protection procedures are fully in place, including ensuring safe access to the Internet. A significant factor in the care and welfare of pupils is the very good relationships that staff have with them. Teaching and support staff work together well to ensure a consistent approach, and this makes pupils feel safe and secure at school, no matter which adult they are

working with. The school pays good attention to matters such as first aid, fire safety, the control of medicines and the safe dispersal of pupils at the end of the school day.

22. Teachers track pupils' academic progress over time, and a revised system has been introduced fairly recently to improve the usefulness of the information collected. The school development plan, rightly, highlights that teachers need to develop further their understanding of pupils who are able, gifted and talented. It also demonstrates a strong commitment to targeting support for pupils with special educational needs even more tightly. Teachers track pupils' personal development informally, and this is assisted by their good knowledge of the pupils as individuals. Pupils with special educational needs have good support from staff and visiting specialists, and this helps them to achieve as well as they can. Pupils respond very well to the care and support they are given, and they approach adults with confidence when they need help or advice.
23. Teachers encourage pupils to become involved in their own learning and progress. They do this very well at the start of lessons, when they explain what pupils are going to be learning about. Teachers also set individual pupils targets to aim for over time, although the pupils are not always very clear about what their targets are and how well their teachers think they are doing. The regular programme of consulting pupils through questionnaires and suggestion boxes, and the school council, give pupils an effective 'voice' in planning improvements. This has resulted in improvements to the toilets and to the erection of outdoor play equipment, along with a commitment from the school to make further improvements to the outdoor play areas. The draft plans, based on pupils' suggestions, are awaiting planning approval.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established **good** links with parents. Links with the community are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and colleges are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Productive links with other schools and colleges help to improve teaching and contribute positively to pupils' achievement.
- The Friends of the School Association makes a valuable contribution to improving the school's resources and facilities.
- Many parents help in school and support pupils' learning at home.
- The school seeks parental views of the school and responds well to them.
- Some parents would like to know more about how best to help their children at home.

Commentary

24. The school plays a very active part in sharing a broad range of 'best practice' with other local schools, for example through joint staff training sessions and through a link with a 'beacon' school. Links with secondary schools, including staff exchanges, make the transfer of pupils to Year 7 smoother. The achievement of Year 5 pupils is enhanced well by their enjoyable visits to a local grammar school to undertake work in science, ICT and mathematics. As a result of strong links with local colleges and a university, both staff and pupils draw benefit from the additional help and from the

presence of visitors. Pupils become accustomed to talking to people from outside the school, and this increases their confidence and raises their self-esteem.

25. An unusually large group of parents are members of the Friends of the School Association. About 30 parents are very regular attenders at meetings and events. The group has been exceptionally active in raising a considerable sum of money over the past year or so, and this has paid for the new outdoor play equipment. Parents plan to continue fund-raising in order to bring further improvements to the pupils' outdoor environment. About 20 parents, grandparents and volunteers help regularly in classrooms, including a member of the police force and a fire fighter. A teacher oversees this provision to ensure that the school makes effective use of the valued additional resource.
26. The school is responsive to parental concerns and encourages parents to make suggestions about how the school can improve. Returns to the biennial questionnaire are sufficient to enable the school to gauge parental satisfaction with the school. The inspection questionnaire and the school's own most recent questionnaire indicate generally good support. The school is acting upon parental views about the outdoor environment, and has already responded to requests in relation to school finishing times, curriculum newsletters and reports for parents on the progress of their children.
27. Parental concerns about inconsistencies between classes in relation to the homework policy are sometimes justified. Parents are keen to help their children at home, and would like more frequent information about what their children need to learn next in order to improve. Some are unsure about the school's approach towards teaching subjects, and would like to know more.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Good leadership, management and governance ensure a good quality of education for the pupils. The approach to tackling small pockets of underachievement does not always guarantee the required results.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a good leader who earns the confidence, trust and respect of governors, parents and staff.
- Efforts to deal with small pockets of underachievement are not always robust enough.
- The deputy headteacher plays a leading role with taking the school forward.
- Governance has improved, and relationships between governors and staff are very good.
- Leadership of the Foundation Stage is inspirational and drives up standards.
- Strong leadership in English and science has resulted in higher standards by Year 6.

Commentary

28. The headteacher has ensured good improvement since the previous inspection, especially in teaching. He does not have a timetable for teaching, but he keeps in touch with teachers and pupils by his 'hands on' approach, and by the very good relationships he forges with everyone. The headteacher communicates his vision for

the school through his caring and sensitive dealings with staff, pupils and parents, and through the positive role model that he provides. He works very closely with the deputy headteacher and together they make a strong team, committed to improving provision. The deputy headteacher carries out his duties and responsibilities with commitment and enthusiasm, thus giving a very good professional lead to other staff.

29. In 1999, the monitoring of teaching and learning was not well developed. There has been a good amount of improvement since then, although there is room for even greater analysis and rigour in monitoring standards. The headteacher delegates responsibilities thoughtfully in order to get the best from staff. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage, for example, is very well placed to lead and manage provision for children in reception classes and pupils in Years 1 and 2. She provides an excellent role model of teaching, and works hard to ensure that changes of teacher do not restrict children's achievement. She has maintained very good provision since the previous inspection, at the same time as introducing several significant national initiatives very successfully. Strong leadership in English and science has secured good improvements in the standard of pupils' writing and science investigative work. The effectiveness of other subject co-ordinators in raising achievement is improving.
30. Very supportive and committed governors meet their responsibilities well. Governors have confidence in the headteacher; as one parent governor said, "This is a school that we know will keep moving forward." Governance has improved since the previous inspection, when governors were insufficiently involved in checking the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. There has been a recent reconstitution of the governing body, and new governors are already taking their training seriously and getting involved in finding out how well the school is doing. Governors are confident to challenge the headteacher if necessary, and the very good relationships mean that governors and senior staff work together for the good of the pupils. The inspection questionnaire and the meeting with parents demonstrate that parents also have confidence in the headteacher to ensure a good education for their children.
31. Owing to absences and changes of teachers over a fairly long period, Year 2 national test results and teachers' assessments were not as good as they should have been in 2003 and 2004. Although the school took decisive action once problems were identified, this was insufficient to lift performance sufficiently. The pupils tested are now in Years 3 and 4, where there remain some examples of underachievement. School development planning has improved greatly since the previous inspection. However, the plan for the current year does not reflect a robust and measurable approach to improving performance in Year 2 tests and teacher assessments, or determined efforts to tackle remaining underachievement in Years 3 and 4.
32. Governors set priorities and allocate funds appropriately. They oversee progress well, but are not always specific about what they expect to see in terms of standards achieved as a result of spending, for example clear and measurable targets for the school's improved performance in the 2005 Year 2 tests. Best value principles are satisfactory.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	635,567
Total expenditure	615,664
Expenditure per pupil	2,052

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44,401
Balance carried forward to the next	64,304

33. Since the above figures were calculated, governors have reduced the balance carried forward to next year to about five per cent of the total budget.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. When they start school, children's attainment is broadly typical for their age in English and mathematics. As a result of very good teaching and learning in all the areas reported fully below, children, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. Most children are on track to meet the national goals for children at the end of the reception year, and many are likely to reach the standard expected for pupils in Year 1. The school has maintained very good provision since the previous inspection, along with responding well to several national initiatives and changes in order to continue to improve teaching, children's learning and the curriculum. Very good provision gives children a flying start to their education and makes a significant contribution to the good quality of education that the school provides. The "YOU CAN DO" approach to children's learning enables them to achieve their full potential, so that they start work in Year 1 with well above average attainment.
35. At the time of the previous inspection, the lack of an outdoor play area was a weakness. The school has started to address this, and the erection of good quality large equipment is a positive move forward. Owing to the lack of storage space for other resources and easy access to the outdoors, however, the outdoor curriculum remains a relatively weaker area of otherwise very good provision. Teachers plan many very good opportunities for children to learn from their outdoor environment, but children do not yet have regular planned opportunities to choose to work either indoors or outdoors.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children very quickly settle into the routines and expectations of school life.
- Staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour and of other aspects of their personal development.
- Children's very good achievement helps them to do very well in other areas of learning.
- Children do not learn much about the multi-cultural nature of society.
- Children do not have regular opportunities to choose to work either indoors or outdoors.

Commentary

36. Children achieve very well because of the consistently very high expectations that all staff have of them. Staff work very well together as a team with a common purpose, and this means that children are secure and happy to come to school. When a teacher worked outdoors with half of one class, other children worked inside with support staff on the work set for them. Children's behaviour continued to be very good, and they carried on learning about mathematical shapes as well as if the teacher had been there. Children become confident to try out new activities and to learn new things because of the very good relationships they have with staff. They go to the hall for

assemblies and physical education lessons and take part in educational visits with no sign of anxiety. Children follow daily class routines and enjoy working as a whole class, in groups or individually. The interest and excitement of the classroom and lessons make children eager to take part in activities and to show interest and enthusiasm in all areas of learning. Children learn by following the very good role models that adults provide, and they quickly gain a positive self-image. Throughout the school year, teachers provide several good opportunities for children to learn about people from cultures around the world. There are very few day-to-day opportunities, however, for them to appreciate and explore the cultural similarities and differences represented in our society. Teachers miss good opportunities to promote positive attitudes towards other cultures through their choice of learning resources and toys.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very high expectations of children help them to achieve very well.
- Staff give very good attention to developing children's listening and talking skills across all areas of learning.
- Children make a very good start with learning to read and write.
- Some of the books used for getting children started with reading do little to stimulate a love of books or a keen desire to read independently.
- Children do not have regular opportunities to choose to learn either indoors or outdoors.

Commentary

37. Teachers are constantly aware of the importance of promoting children's listening and talking skills. They make lessons and activities interesting and exciting, so that children want to listen in order to learn. Staff introduce children to new words at every possible opportunity, and children take a delight in remembering them and using them in clear and extended speech. This was seen when a child commented "...this is opaque and not transparent". Children listen very well in order to find out new things and so that they can answer increasingly difficult questions. They have many very good opportunities to talk about what they are doing, such as when they pretend to be Bob the Builder or the characters in a series of stories. Teachers have very high expectations of the children, and they quickly learn to recognise individual letters of the alphabet and to read simple words by themselves. Teachers ensure that there are a lot of opportunities for children to see print being used for a purpose, and books are a very regular and important part of children's day-to-day experiences. Some of the books used for children's earliest experiences of learning to read are very dated. They are unlikely to motivate children to become book lovers, and do not reflect society as it is today. These books are inconsistent with the range of good quality books that teachers often use very well to encourage higher achievement in reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very high expectations of children help them to achieve very well.
- Staff give excellent attention to developing children's ability to talk about mathematics using correct vocabulary with understanding.
- Children do not have regular opportunities to choose to learn either indoors or outdoors.

Commentary

38. Teachers are very skilled at teaching mathematics in ways that excite and motivate children. This was seen in both classes when children made very good progress with learning to count, recognising numbers, telling the time and recognising and naming geometrical shapes. Children in Class 1 all tried very hard when the teacher challenged them to find a shape with four sides that were not straight, to find the number 16 and to say what time a clock was telling. The children used the terms 'half full', 'half empty' and 'two-digit number' correctly, and some could say which number comes before or after 17. In Class 2, children used very advanced terminology correctly when looking for shapes in the playground. They recognised and named spheres, cylinders, ovals and many more – one child spotted that a nearby roof was "...like a triangular prism". Support staff reinforce this level of language very well, so that children are constantly immersed in the words and terms associated with mathematics and understand what they are learning about. As a result, children very quickly reach the national goals and are very well prepared for their future work in Year 1 and beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

39. Teachers' planning and children's previous work in displays, in photographs and on a CD disk, together suggest that provision is good. During the inspection, children visited the local library and related their visit to a map of their village. Children are very confident to try out new technology, for example when they use computers as part of their work in literacy and mathematics and when they use the interactive board to respond to teachers' questioning. Opportunities to take part in excellent role-play, for example working in the pretend builders' yard, encourage children to think about how and why things happen. The breadth of children's cultural experience, however, is not well represented in resources, including in their day-to-day surroundings, toys and opportunities for role-play. Nevertheless, as a result of both formal learning and challenging play activities, teachers prepare children very well for future work in subjects such as design and technology, geography and history. The emphasis on enjoyment in learning makes a considerable contribution to the children's achievement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

40. Children are confident to climb on the fixed outdoor equipment and to move around the large hall in their physical education lessons. They move safely around their classrooms with a very good awareness of other children and equipment. Children handle a wide variety of toys, equipment and materials to increase their physical skills, and some were seen cutting with scissors very competently. They learn to control

writing tools, such as pencils and drawing pens, although some find writing letters correctly very difficult at this stage of the school year. The lack of a regular outdoor curriculum means that challenges to children's physical confidence are confined to specific times. Nevertheless, teachers' planning suggests that children have good opportunities to achieve their potential.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

41. Teachers provide a stimulating environment where children's own creativity is valued. This enables the children to learn to explore colour, shape, texture and form in different ways, such as when they make models of houses using a variety of materials to express their ideas. Children use their imaginations well when they make up stories during role-play, and the challenging interactions with adults enable them to talk about their feelings and describe their actions. Staff support children well with making choices, but this does not include making choices outdoors regularly. Materials and resources used on a regular basis give children a limited range of opportunities to explore and respond to the cultural similarities and differences in society.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Efforts to raise achievement in writing are proving to be successful over time.
- The school does not make fullest use of assessment information in order to tackle small pockets of underachievement.
- Performance in Year 6 national tests is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well when they work with teachers reading and discussing books in groups.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are very high.
- Standards in speaking and listening are high, and they are very high in Years 5 and 6.
- Handwriting is a weaker area of pupils' work in all classes.

Commentary

42. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, representing good achievement overall. Although pupils' work is above average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6, pupils started Year 1 with above or well above average attainment. Consequently, performance in the Year 2 national tests and teacher assessments in 2003, and then again in 2004, should have been better, especially in writing. The school anticipates improved performance in 2005, but no clear overall targets have been set to make certain that previous small pockets of underachievement are tackled in a determined, systematic and measurable way. Performance in Year 6 national tests from 2002 to 2004 reflects very good progress since the same pupils were tested in Year 2. The school anticipates good results again in 2005. There are no significant differences in the achievement of girls and of boys. Pupils with special educational needs and the more capable pupils usually achieve as well as other pupils in their classes.

43. Owing to good teaching and learning overall in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6, the teaching of writing is improving. The school's special focus on extending the range of pupils' writing has resulted in improvements, especially in Years 5 and 6. In these three classes, teachers' expectations are very high, and pupils have many opportunities to demonstrate the very good achievement that they are capable of. Teachers planned very interesting and challenging work – currently focusing on reading and writing poetry. As a result, pupils responded very well, showing how well they understood advanced terminology, such as 'metaphors', 'alliteration' and 'personification'.
44. Pupils in all classes usually listen very well, and all teachers are skilled at asking questions. In a lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, the teacher asked pupils to listen carefully to a famous poem, and then asked them a series of thought-provoking questions including "What effect did the poet want to create?" This level of questioning stretched pupils' thinking to capacity, and the lesson demonstrated how well pupils can listen and how well they can explain their own ideas in speech when required to. Similarly, pupils in Years 1 and 2 listened very well when their teachers gave full and very clear explanations. This sometimes meant that they listened for too long, however, leaving less time for talking and writing in a real context.
45. Although standards are improving in writing content as a result of staff training and the very good influence of the subject co-ordinator, handwriting is a relatively weaker area. The school teaches a joined style of handwriting from an early stage, and many pupils struggle to make the necessary joins correctly at the speed at which they can think of ideas. This slows their writing down. Also, some pupils continue to hold pencils and pens clumsily, and too few produce the quality of handwriting expected by Years 2 and 6. Presentation of work, however, is otherwise careful and tidy. The teaching of reading is good, especially when teachers read with groups of pupils during literacy lessons. The co-ordinator demonstrated this when he selected a book very carefully in order to help pupils in Years 1 and 2 to make very good progress towards the target he had set for them to improve their reading over time.
46. Teachers have individual methods of setting targets for groups of pupils to aim for. When asked, however, very few pupils knew what their targets were, and lessons and marking rarely made specific reference to them. The school has made a positive start with linking assessments, tracking pupils' progress over time and setting targets to inform planning. So far, however, this has not always resulted in rapid enough improvement, and there is a lack of clarity and consistency between classes about how pupils will reach the next level of the National Curriculum; this compounds the difficulties of matching work accurately to the differing needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. In view of the pockets of underachievement indicated by the Year 2 national test results, the school development plan is insufficiently specific about expected improvements this year. Nevertheless, leadership, management and improvement since the previous inspection are good because of the way that teachers have adapted their teaching to the National Literacy Strategy, often with good or very good results.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Provision is good. The recent focus on improving writing has extended opportunities for writing in other subjects. Pupils read texts as part of their work in many subjects. They have opportunities to write using ICT, with some promising results beginning to show. It is in speaking and listening where teaching, learning and achievement are seen at their best in other subjects. Teachers put a lot of emphasis on teaching technical vocabulary across the subjects, and pupils do well with learning to understand and use it in their speech and writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's performance in Year 6 national tests is very good.
- Pupils' very good attitudes are the result of knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- The focus to raise the achievement of less capable pupils now in Years 3 and 4 has not had enough effect.
- Teachers' use of assessment information is inconsistent and insufficiently formalised.

Commentary

48. Performance in Year 2 national tests for the last three years has been in line with the national average and about the same as that in schools in similar circumstances. Standards in lessons now are showing clear signs of improvement. When taking account of pupils' very high attainment when they start in Year 1 and of their capabilities, standards of achievement are satisfactory. Performance in Year 6 national tests in the last three years has been well above the national average overall. When taking account of pupils' attainment when they were tested in Year 2, as well as their progress and capabilities, standards of achievement are good. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and that of boys. The school anticipates an improvement in test results in 2005, although staff and governors have not set any challenging targets to aim for in Year 2.
49. Pupils' work by Year 2 is above average. Most pupils have a good understanding of basic addition, subtraction and multiplication, and they know their multiplication tables well. Some of the more capable pupils are beginning to formulate and solve their own problems and they recognise number patterns. Pupils have a clear understanding of the properties of geometric shapes. Pupils of all capabilities make good use of number squares to aid their calculations. They accurately give change in money, estimate and measure length and tell the time. Pupils' work by Year 6 is well above average. Pupils are confident to work with fractions, decimals and percentages, and most have an excellent understanding of ratio and proportion. They calculate area and perimeter accurately, and handling and interpreting mathematical data are strong features of their work.

50. Good teaching and learning overall between Years 1 and 6 ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Pupils enjoy lessons because teachers make their work fun. The enthusiasm of many teachers is reflected in the pupils' high level of interest in the subject. Teachers have a good level of expertise, and this makes them confident to teach the subject in a manner that promotes very good attitudes and encourages pupils to work together amicably. Teachers develop pupils' listening and concentration skills very well in most classes. By teaching pupils a range of strategies for calculating and checking findings, teachers deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding from an early age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and demonstrate good achievement over time. This is because they have good access to the curriculum and because their work is matched well to their needs. There were some excellent lessons during the inspection where pupils in Years 1 and 2 and pupils in Year 6 were all challenged to capacity. The achievement of pupils with particularly high capability is very good, owing to lesson planning that takes account of their needs.
51. Teachers often have high expectations of their pupils, and many pupils respond well to the challenging and interesting work. A significant minority of pupils in Years 3 and 4, however, lack basic mathematical understanding, and did not respond well to being 'stretched' – because their work was too difficult for them. The pupils were often those who under-performed in Year 2 national tests, owing to absences and changes of teacher when they were younger. The use of ICT as part of learning in mathematics is an improving area, in terms of both reinforcing and extending pupils' learning.
52. Improvement since the previous inspection is good overall, because teaching and the curriculum are now much better. The co-ordinator is new to this responsibility, however, and leadership is currently satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a revised recording system to track pupils' attainment and progress over time, but teachers do not use information consistently enough in order to identify areas of weakness quickly, or to plan future work. This is a relative weakness, as it was at the previous inspection. Booster classes are helpful in raising the achievement of younger pupils, and as additional lessons for older pupils prior to the national tests. Teachers set and review targets for improvement, but they do not always involve pupils sufficiently in their own progress over time. There are also variations in how well teachers' marking helps pupils to know how they need to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Provision is good. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills as part of work in other subjects, particularly science. Pupils record data in bar graphs and tally charts, for example, when learning about fish, plants and mini-beasts, and they make pictograms to record the results of surveys about eye colour. In history pupils sequence events using time lines, and in geography they become proficient at using grid references. Pupils extend their understanding of ICT by preparing spreadsheets and by creating body shapes or measuring their performances in physical education tasks.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum successfully challenges pupils' thinking so that standards achieved by Year 6 are high.
- The subject co-ordinator has a very good influence on raising achievement.
- Teachers place a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry and the use of technical vocabulary.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons result in enjoyable lessons.
- The school does not make fullest use of assessment information in order to pinpoint where improvements are most needed.

Commentary

54. As no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning were not judged. Other judgements take account of pupils' previous work and of the 2003 and 2004 teachers' assessments for pupils now in Years 3 and 4. The standard of pupils' work is average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory from Year 1 to 2. It is very good between Years 3 and 6, including for pupils with special educational needs, because teachers plan interesting lessons and emphasise an investigative approach. This explains why the Year 6 national test results have been consistently high or very high for the last few years, and why the pupils tested had made very good progress since they were in Year 2. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and that of boys.
55. While teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6, there are some very good features. The strong emphasis on developing pupils' scientific knowledge and technical vocabulary enables pupils to discuss and explain their observations very well. Year 1 pupils, for example, explained that "...when the sun shines on our part of the Earth, it is day, but when it is night, our part of the Earth is not facing the sun". By Year 2, pupils describe confidently what plants need to grow, the importance of light and how roots get food from the soil. With this investigative approach, by Year 6 pupils can make predictions based on scientific knowledge. They understand the term 'fair test' and the need to control the variables when setting up scientific investigations. They explain the need to repeat experiments in order to check measurements before drawing conclusions.
56. Teachers prepare resources for lessons well, with activities to match pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils find lessons enjoyable, interesting and challenging, and this encourages them to have very good attitudes towards learning in science. In a good Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils used a range of apparatus sensibly in their investigation of insulators. They used magnifying glasses to examine and describe the texture of materials, stopwatches to time the cooling period of liquids and thermometers to measure temperature. Teachers plan lessons well so that each lesson enables pupils to build on their prior learning. This helps pupils to use what they have already learned in order to explain what they see. In a good lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, the teacher encouraged pupils to explain the difference between reversible and irreversible changes. They explained that, because effervescence indicates escaping gases, the process could not be reversed through evaporation.

Teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to practise their English and mathematical skills in science, although the unnecessary use of sheets to provide a framework for writing limits opportunities for pupils to write extended reports independently.

57. Leadership and management are very good. This is because appropriate action has resulted in good improvement since the previous inspection, when there was not enough investigative work and teaching was not always good enough. The subject co-ordinator leads by her good example of teaching. Her good knowledge of strengths and areas for further improvement has enabled her to identify a need to find more opportunities for pupils to apply ICT skills in science lessons. There is further work to do, however, in using information collected about pupils' attainment and progress in the National Curriculum in order to plan future work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers develop pupils' basic computing skills well.
- Resources for teaching ICT are improving.
- Recent improvements in assessing pupils' progress have yet to impact fully on achievement.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise and use their ICT skills in other subjects are not yet planned systematically.

Commentary

58. By Years 2 and 6, pupils' work is in line with the expected levels for pupils of the same age. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection, and represents satisfactory standards of achievement across the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school. Teachers use resources well to develop pupils' basic skills in ICT lessons. Where classrooms have interactive boards, teachers are learning to use them to demonstrate and explain basic skills. In a lesson for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, for example, the teacher used the interactive board successfully to help pupils to learn the difference between running text and text with line breaks. This linked very well with improving pupils' ability to write recipes and instructions. Similarly, in a Year 3 lesson, the teacher used a desktop computer to demonstrate how to modify the colour, size and font of text. The emphasis on teaching word-processing skills, linked with work on graphics, ensures that by Year 6, pupils can create *PowerPoint* presentations by formatting pages, importing text and illustrations and adding sound animation. Their knowledge and understanding of how ICT is used in control, remote sensing and their everyday lives are less well developed.
59. Satisfactory leadership and management have ensured improved resources, with the acquisition of interactive boards and a move towards providing laptop computers for pupils. The interactive boards are not in place in all classes, however, and some teachers are in the early stages of recognising their potential and using them to fullest benefit to pupils. Consequently, these initiatives have yet to impact on pupils'

achievement and the standard of their work in any measurable way. A new procedure for assessing pupils, however, along with plans for further staff training and improvements to the curriculum, means that the school is now in a position to improve teaching and raise achievement further. A major focus in the school development plan is to develop the provision and use of ICT by improving resources still further, by increasing staff expertise and by using ICT as a tool to enhance pupils' learning. Governors have agreed to allocate considerable funds to ICT, but they have not set this against clear and measurable targets for raising achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. Provision is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is inconsistent between classes in respect of how well it identifies opportunities for pupils to practise ICT skills across other subjects – a relative weakness at the time of the previous inspection. This is because decisions are left to teachers' individual choice, rather than being planned systematically at each stage of curriculum and lesson planning. Pupils often use ICT well for word processing, and this makes a growing contribution to raising achievement in writing. In mathematics and science, pupils construct databases and graphs using ICT. The use of graphics programs enhances pupils' learning in art and design, and pupils research using the Internet as part of their work in English, geography, history and religious education.

HUMANITIES

61. Owing to inspection priorities, there was too little evidence to make overall judgements in geography or history. One lesson was seen in history and none in geography. Teachers' planning and pupils' previous work were looked at, and a discussion was held with Year 6 pupils.
62. In **geography**, there was a satisfactory range of work available. By Year 2 pupils can match types of clothing to weather conditions. The pupils followed the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' with interest when the toy bear visited Dublin. Pupils make clear comparisons between living in a city and living in a village. Teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills through work in geography by providing a mix of worksheets and opportunities for writing independently. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the water cycle. They work with maps confidently when learning about lakes and rivers. There is currently little evidence of the use of the locality as a significant source for geographical studies, or the study of a completely contrasting area of another country. The current school development plan does not include a focus on geography. A previous plan, however, indicates that the school wants to increase opportunities for pupils to use ICT in geography lessons, as well as improving arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress.
63. While the one **history** lesson seen had shortcomings, pupils' previous work suggests that they make good progress over time between Years 1 and 6. Teachers cover the National Curriculum well, including good opportunities for pupils to research and to write about their ideas as they focus on looking for clues about the past. Year 6 pupils recall a lot about the topics they have studied throughout their time at school. They find history fascinating, particularly when learning about events in the not too distant

past, such as rationing and evacuation during World War 2. There is evidence that teachers use resources well to raise pupils' achievement. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 5 had an opportunity to find out more about Victorian times by observing and discussing an interesting artefact brought in by the teacher. The school development plan indicates that teachers want to improve the resources available for teaching history, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The school has identified a need to increase opportunities for pupils to practise ICT skills as part of their learning in history.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64. Owing to inspection priorities, there was too little evidence to make overall judgements in any of the subjects reported below. Only one lesson was seen in physical education, and none were seen in art and design, design and technology or music. Discussions with Year 6 pupils took place.
65. In **art and design**, by Year 2 pupils have had opportunities to work with a variety of media. Their self-portraits and pictures of sunflowers show that they have practised blending colours together. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to show appreciation of tone and texture in their work, for example when they combine art materials to make collages on a theme of Bonfire Night. They draw on what they have learned about the work of famous artists, as seen when they designed and created stamps and clay sculptures. By Year 6, pupils' art and design skills have been developed to include using computer graphics programs to represent their ideas. They create their own designs, based on the work of a famous designer, and teachers develop their understanding of composition well by working on multimedia presentations. Meaningful links with other subjects provide inspiration, as when designing mosaics and jewellery as part of studies of Roman and Celtic history. The monitoring of the success of a recent school development focus to ensure that all the National Curriculum is covered is to continue.
66. The main evidence for **design and technology** was drawn from the subject co-ordinator's portfolio of pupils' previous work; it is being compiled as a school development plan priority. This suggests that, since the previous inspection, the school has ensured that pupils have more opportunities to learn about the whole design process. Previous work includes generating ideas as a result of evaluating commercially produced products, adapting and developing plans, and evaluating materials used and the finished products. Pupils have opportunities to explore joining techniques, such as ties, gluing and sewing, and to use different joints when creating structures. Design projects have included making puppets, fruit salads (food technology), shelters, purses and slippers.
67. In **music**, the school offers all pupils an opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. About a third of the pupils learn to play instruments, including guitar, stringed instruments, woodwind, brass and recorders. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have an opportunity to attend the extra-curricular music club, where they listen to music and compose and perform their own. In assemblies and hymn practices, pupils sang to the standard expected by Years 2 and 6. In a discussion with Year 6 pupils, they demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of musical styles and of music from other eras. They recalled lessons when they composed their own music

using percussion instruments, and used musical terms, such as 'rhythm' and 'tempo', correctly. The school development plan indicates that teachers want to increase their own musical expertise, and the co-ordinator is currently working to improve arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress over time. Pupils have few opportunities to practise ICT skills through work in music, and governors have set funds aside to improve resources for them to learn to do so.

68. In the Year 6 **physical education** lesson, pupils achieved very well, and showed that they are competent gymnasts. The very good teaching and learning ensured that pupils handled apparatus confidently and safely. This lesson, along with extra-curricular activities, indicates that pupils can make knowledgeable judgements about their own performances and the performances of others. Pupils learn to share apparatus well, showing care and concern for one another. They take part in adventurous activities during a residential visit to the Isle of Man, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to swim. The school development plan indicates that some teachers want to increase their confidence to teach physical education, especially dance and gymnastics. It identifies too that teachers want to ensure that they develop pupils' potential and performance further, and to improve arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

69. The school attaches importance to pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship, and this contributes to the pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers thread provision through work in other subjects and through their day-to-day pastoral care of pupils. The school council raises pupils' awareness of how democracy works, and circle times encourage pupils to listen to the views of others. As part of their introduction to citizenship, older pupils learn to express their own concerns and needs. The school development plan suggests an intention to continue to increase pupils' confidence and their understanding of 'fair play'. Teachers miss good opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society, however, and this limits preparation for participating actively in the wider community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	3
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	3
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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