

INSPECTION REPORT

BRACKLEY WAYNFLETE INFANT SCHOOL

Brackley

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121881

Headteacher: Mrs J Gaskill

Lead inspector: Fran Gillam

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th October 2004

Inspection number: 266471

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:	187
School address:	Waynflete Avenue Brackley Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN13 6AF
Telephone number:	01280 702270
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss V Lea

Date of previous 28th September 1998 inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Waynflete Infants is of average size for a primary school. It is situated not far from Brackley town centre. Of the 187 pupils on roll, just over half are boys. Children start in the Reception classes in the September of the year of their fifth birthday. They attend part-time for the first half term and then full-time. The children's attainment on entry is average for their age. There are 57 children in the Reception Year. Nearly three per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. This proportion is below average. Almost all the pupils come from a white British background. There is a lower than average percentage of pupils on the school's special educational needs register. This group of pupils experience some difficulty with reading and writing. The number of pupils moving in and out of the school during Year 2 is high. A long term staff absence has resulted in a teacher with a fixed term contract working in the Reception Year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9189	John Horwood	Lay inspector	
30362	Jacqui Henshaw	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Waynflete Infants School is a good school. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average. Teaching is effective and pupils' learning is good. Pupils enjoy school very much; their behaviour is very good and they enjoy the many exciting activities that the school provides for them. The school is led and managed well and provides good value for money. Extended staff illness has been a significant barrier to some developments, for example religious education and support for teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good; standards are above those expected in most subjects. In religious education standards are not high enough.
- Pupils behave very well and build effective working relationships because the school is successful in developing their personal skills.
- Children are eager to come to school because the range of exciting activities and visits makes learning interesting and fun.
- The school is well led and managed, with a strong focus on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement.
- There is a high level of care for pupils and the school actively involves parents, the community and other schools in its work.
- Records do not always give staff a clear view of what steps in learning need to be taken next or provide a clear overview of the progress of different groups.

The school is now more effective than it was. Standards have risen and pupils are now achieving well. All the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The school focuses effectively on raising standards and improving teaching and learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	B	C	A	C
writing	B	C	A	B
mathematics	C	C	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievements are good. By Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Whilst this is lower than the results in 2003, it represents good achievement for the present group of Year 2 pupils given their starting point. Pupils' speaking and listening skills support their achievement. Pupils listen carefully, consider information and respond clearly in lessons. Writing develops well, especially in English, science, history and geography. This contributes well to the above average standards in these subjects. In science, pupils use their skills of investigation and experimentation effectively to solve scientific problems. In mathematics, pupils' good skills in devising and using strategies to solve problems enable them to calculate quickly and accurately. Achievement has been slower in mathematics in Year

1 because the average attaining pupils have marked time in the first term. This is partly because the information that teachers receive when children move from the Reception classes into Year 1 is not in a format that allows the next stage of learning to be seen clearly. As a result, teachers' planning does not always challenge the average attaining pupils well enough. Pupils' skills in using computers are good; they are developing their use in other subjects satisfactorily. By Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity but their knowledge of Judaism is weak. Children in the Reception classes start school with attainment in line with that expected for children of the same age. Most children will meet the goals expected for their age and their achievement is satisfactory; they do well in developing their personal skills. Pupils with special educational needs do well in meeting their targets for improvement because of the effective support they receive.

Pupils' personal qualities are good; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils really like school; they attend regularly and arrive on time. Adults treat pupils fairly and with respect; as a result pupils feel valued, work hard and behave very well. Relationships are good and support for pupils' personal development is good through initiatives such as the Healthy Schools' Award.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2; it is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Staff in the Reception classes are relatively new to their roles and the school is providing appropriate guidance and support to develop teaching skills further. In Years 1 and 2, most staff challenge pupils to do their best and to think carefully before they answer questions or start their work. This ensures that, in almost all lessons, boys and girls of different abilities and backgrounds are ready and eager to start work, and that they build effectively on what they have learned before. Effective links between a number of subjects bring purpose and meaning to pupils' learning. These, along with the very good range of activities outside normal lessons, provide a rich and varied diet that appeals to pupils of different ages and abilities. The school makes good use of the local community. Its effective links with other schools in the locality provides a good platform for sharing aspects of good teaching and a support network for staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear view of how she wants the school to improve and this is shared by staff, governors and parents. She ensures that developments focus on raising standards and helping pupils to achieve as much as they can. During a time of extended staff illness, the school has been managed successfully and improvements made. The school gathers a good range of information and analyses data about pupils' achievement. However, this is not always recorded in a way that is easily accessible to staff so that they can see the next steps in learning. Nor does it clearly identify any differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They appreciate the support and guidance their children receive and the way the school involves them in its work. Pupils like the many activities the school offers them and find their lessons interesting and fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve pupils' achievement and raise standards in religious education;
- ensure that the information about pupils' progress is better organised to measure their achievement more effectively and to guide the next steps in learning more precisely;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure all required information is included in the governors' annual report to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** and standards **are above average** in most subjects by Year 2. However, in religious education standards are **below** those expected in the local authority's guidance and pupils' achievement should be better. There is **a comparative weakness in the achievement of average attaining pupils in mathematics in Year 1**. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily in most of the areas of learning and standards are in line with those expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. The children's personal development is good and standards are above those expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, art, geography and history; there is some comparatively weaker achievement for average attaining pupils in mathematics in Year 1.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity are good, but their knowledge and understanding of Judaism are insecure.
- Pupils make good use of their speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematical skills to develop their ideas and solve problems.

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection, standards have improved faster than standards nationally, and pupils' achievement is now better than it was. Over time girls do better than boys in the reading and writing tests for seven year olds. However, this difference in performance reflects the differences in the boys' and girls' attainment when they start school. There is usually a larger group of higher attaining girls compared with boys. Both groups do better than expected in a range of subjects in relation to their starting point. Children settle very quickly into school, largely due to their well-developed personal skills but also because of the good opportunities for them to work on their own and as part of a group. Children's speaking skills develop well and they express themselves clearly. Children's early skills of reading develop satisfactorily. They develop a secure knowledge of letter sounds. By the end of Reception, most can read short phrases and higher attaining children gain clear understanding from what they have read. Whilst there are opportunities for children to develop their ideas through writing, their letters are not accurate in size and form. Mathematical development is satisfactory. Children build soundly on their knowledge of number and shape. For example, by the end of the Reception Year, lower attaining children add and subtract numbers to nine with help, and the higher attaining do so independently.
2. The importance the school places on ensuring that pupils of all abilities do well reflects in the above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In both mathematics and science, there has been an emphasis on developing the use and application of mathematical and scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. This has effectively supported learning in both subjects because pupils use strategies and look for links in their work. For example, once they have mastered a mathematical

strategy, pupils try it out when working with more complex calculations. In science, pupils explain how to ensure that subsequent experiments are fair by drawing on the methods they have used in previous work. This has had a strong impact on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement. However, the rate of achievement for the average attaining pupils differs in mathematics in Year 1. This is partly due to the information passed on from the Reception classes. In its present format, it does not provide a quick and easy overview of pupils' achievements. As a result, some teachers find it more difficult to group pupils and to identify the next steps in learning. This has led to the average attaining pupils completing the same tasks as their lower achieving classmates. Last year they marked time for almost the first term before getting up to speed. This led to this group of pupils achieving satisfactorily overall when the rest of the year group did well. There was also evidence of the same problem arising in the present Year 1.

3. A concerted effort to develop meaningful links between different subjects has been particularly effective in raising standards in science, art, geography and history. As a result, pupils do well. They are eager to learn and they find activities interesting. Pupils have good opportunities to use their skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics effectively to support their work across the curriculum. They understand the purpose of writing when it is used, for example, to record events in history, experiments in science or visits they have made for geography. Reading and recording help to strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding in these subjects as well as to practise writing skills. Good chances to listen to others, to think about what they have heard and to voice their opinions also bring meaning to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are confident and their responses are relevant to what is being discussed. Strategies learned in mathematics help pupils to measure and record accurately, for example in science, and to develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding further. The success of this work reflects in the pupils' lively responses and good recall and quality of previously completed work. The small number of pupils with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well in relation to their targets for improvement.
4. Pupils have good recall of significant events and festivals in Christianity. Visits to churches in the locality, stories and drama have all contributed well to developing pupils' religious understanding. However, the pupils' recall of Judaism, the other major faith they are supposed to learn about, is insecure and in comparison to Christianity it is under-represented in pupils' completed work. As a result, standards are below those expected in the local authority's guidance and pupils could be doing better.
5. Pupils' skills in using computers are developing well because of well-focused teaching sessions. The regular use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects is not yet fully embedded. However, ICT is a whole-school priority and the staff are focusing on the correct areas to raise standards further and speed pupils' achievement.
6. In 2003, the school saw a big jump in standards compared with 2002. This was because this group of pupils included a high number of more able girls. Early analysis of the test results for 2004 and work in pupils' books show that standards are not as high as in 2003 but they are above average and represent good achievement for that group of pupils. Importantly, standards at Waynflete are higher compared with schools in

similar circumstances. This is in spite of the free school meals' data reflecting good socio-economic circumstances when in fact these are average for the school's intake.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Relationships with others are **good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **well above the national average** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well and get on well with others because there is good support for their personal development.
- Throughout the school, pupils show a keen interest in their work; they come to school ready to learn and concentrate well in lessons.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas and learn about other people and places raise their awareness of themselves and others.

Commentary

7. Children start school with well-developed personal skills. These skills are nurtured successfully in the Reception classes and children continue to learn how to work effectively with their friends, on their own and within a large group. As pupils move through the school, they come into contact with many adults who treat them fairly and with respect. This encourages pupils to respond positively and sets a good example for them to follow. Through stories and discussions, pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and recognise that their actions have an impact on others. As a result, whether in lessons, on the playground or in areas where they are expected to manage themselves and be sensible, pupils behave very well with respect and care for others. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.
8. The well above average attendance rate reflects how much the pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents, in the return of questionnaires and at the meeting prior to the inspection, expressed how eager their children are to come to school and how interesting they find lessons and activities. Pupils echo their parents' views; they talk animatedly about aspects of their work and especially enjoy the range of visits that support their learning, for example in history. Younger children, in the Reception classes, are ready to learn. They concentrate for extended periods, sometimes up to half an hour, on activities such as water play, constructing models, and recording stories and events in pictures and mark making. Staff are well tuned to the children's needs and intervene at suitable periods to encourage talk or check how well the children are doing. The children achieve well in their personal development because these interventions

with well-focused activities strengthen the children's skills in sharing, listening to and respecting the views of others. These positive attributes are evident in older year groups and show in the pupils' readiness to learn and their interest in lessons. They also contribute very well to pupils' achievements across a number of subjects and to the above average standards by Year 2.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

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. Pupils develop a sense of their own local traditions and those of other cultures through the effective linking of work in history, geography, art and literacy. For example, stories are used well to enable pupils to compare their own lives with those of others from different places and different times. This helps the pupils to consider the benefits they receive and think about the hardships of others. It develops compassion and understanding and helps pupils to have consideration for those less fortunate than they are. In addition, pupils recognise the positive features of other cultures and this helps them to appreciate what others have to offer them.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll
White – British	126
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1
Any other ethnic group	3

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Pupils enjoy their work; they gain new knowledge and consolidate understanding well because most teaching is good. The lively and interesting curriculum supports teaching and learning effectively. Pupils and parents view the school positively and the level of care for the pupils is high.

Teaching and learning

In Years 1 and 2, pupils are interested in their work and their learning is **good**. They increase their knowledge, skills and understanding successfully as a result of the **good** teaching. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and children's learning are **satisfactory**. Teachers' assessments are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Often pupils develop their ideas effectively and deepen their understanding because teachers place a strong emphasis on developing thinking, speaking and listening skills.
- In most lessons, pupils are challenged to work hard and do their best, but in some lessons, resources and activities do not support and extend pupils' learning well enough.
- Staff manage pupils sensitively and fairly; as a result pupils work at a good rate, concentrate well and build good working relationships.

Commentary

10. As at the time of the last inspection, teaching is good overall. Teaching and learning are now better in science but not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection in the Foundation Stage. The main improvements in science relate to better opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments and investigations. This has led to pupils making relevant connections that help them to use their knowledge and understanding effectively to predict what might happen, and to ensure that they carry out experiments fairly. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes nationally to how the Foundation Stage is organised, taught and managed. The school has kept abreast of these changes. Staff are relatively new to teaching the Foundation Stage, as is the key stage manager. This has been recognised by the senior managers. Teachers and support assistants are attending courses to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching children from age four to six years. Visiting other placements is also helping to raise their awareness of what is considered good practice. Presently, teaching and learning in the Reception classes are satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (13%)	15 (50%)	8 (27%)	3 (10%)	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. The school is not complacent about the above average test results in Year 2. The staff and governors have invested a good deal of time and effort into investigating how pupils learn and how to develop teaching to support this. The Primary Effective Early Learning Programme (PEEL) has opened up new ways to improve pupils' learning. Following this investigation, staff have looked more closely at the circumstances in which girls and boys learn best and adapted aspects of their work to take this into account. Teachers provide thinking time for pupils, supported by well-focused listening and talking sessions. This often leads to pupils:
- sharing and sounding out their ideas with a partner or the whole class;
 - organising their ideas effectively; and
 - recording or presenting their findings in an organised way.
- In almost all lessons, this provided a good starting point and enabled pupils to focus on the things that mattered and so settle to their work confidently and quickly. As a result, most pupils consolidate their understanding well and extend their knowledge and skills successfully.
12. In almost all lessons, effective questioning and careful assessment of how well pupils are doing ensure that different groups of pupils take part fully in lessons and that the work provided supports and challenges pupils to do their best. Timely help by learning support assistants enables the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to succeed. For the higher and average attaining pupils, teachers ensure that they tackle the work at a level suitable to their needs. This is effective because it focuses on making sure that these pupils work as hard as they can, whilst ensuring that the activities are realistic and pupils do not struggle with the work. As a result, pupils acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Where assessment was not as effective, it led, for example in mathematics, to some average attaining pupils in Year 1 marking time. Other weaknesses in learning stem from the lack of resources, or poor choice of resources, to aid learning. For example, children in the Foundation Stage had very few visual clues to develop their ideas and support their early attempts at writing such as word banks or alphabet posters. As a result, they found it difficult to make use of the letter sounds they knew and to form letters correctly.
13. The school has an extensive range of information charting pupils' achievements. In its present form, it is not easy to see the next steps in pupils' learning. This does not aid teachers' planning and the result of this could be seen in last year's work in Year 1. During the first term, too much of the work in mathematics for the average attaining pupils was similar to that of the lower attaining pupils. As a result, the average attaining pupils' achievement was satisfactory whereas for the rest of the class achievement was good. This slower start is more evident in mathematics. This is because the activities related to recording calculations allow few if any opportunities for average attaining pupils to extend their learning, for example by using larger numbers or by introducing other ways of tackling the task. Teachers' planning identifies challenge for the higher

attaining pupils and for the lower attaining it builds in support to complete the same tasks as the average attaining pupils. It is less clear about how average attaining pupils may be extended. In other subjects, the impact is less evident because pupils include their own vocabulary or express their ideas through discussions which allow greater opportunities for them to develop their ideas and extend their skills.

14. Pupils build good working relationships because staff are sensitive to their needs and value the pupils' efforts. This gives pupils confidence, builds their self-esteem and encourages them to try things out for themselves. The pupils want to do well; their eagerness to learn shows in the way they pay attention, settle to their work and concentrate for extended periods. All the pupils who were talked to during the inspection, spoke warmly of their teachers and other adults who work with them. They feel they are treated fairly and listened to. Pupils new to the school say they have been made to feel welcome and that they find the staff helpful and friendly.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a **good** range of opportunities to meet the needs and interests of all pupils. **A very good** range of visits and activities during and outside the school day enriches the pupils' learning. The accommodation and range of resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of activities to support their learning.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure there are good links between subjects that give purpose and meaning to pupils' learning.
- The guidance for religious education is not being covered in enough depth.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good guidance and support.

Commentary

15. Pupils benefit from some very good opportunities to take part in activities that enrich and build on the work they do in class. These activities include a choir, art club, cooking club and a variety of sporting events. In addition, the school works with external providers to offer football training, a modern foreign language and violin tuition. Along with visitors and visits to places of interest, these activities help to develop skills further and bring learning to life. This is because they provide insight into the pupils' own and other cultures and help them to appreciate what the world has to offer. For example, a visit by pupils in Year 2 to the 'Living Rainforest' in Newbury not only extended their scientific knowledge but resulted in good quality work in art and design. The children remember these experiences with excitement. They consolidate learning and, as a result, pupils talk confidently about what they have learned and achieve well.
16. The curriculum has evolved well since the previous inspection. Schemes of work are now sufficiently detailed to guide work in history, geography and ICT, and most planning takes greater account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. There is better balance within the curriculum, and a clear emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This has an impact on standards overall and, with the greater emphasis that is being given to exploring links between subjects, it brings

meaning and purpose to pupils' learning. There are many examples of teachers successfully combining skills and knowledge in one subject to develop better understanding in another. For example, when pupils in Year 2 combined science with design and technology, they used their knowledge of joining materials and their making skills to construct a boat that needed to float and could carry a cargo. This supported their scientific understanding of the properties of different materials. It was very effective because skills developed in one subject supported the rapid learning in another. Similarly, during some of the school's 'themed curriculum weeks', good links are made between subjects. For example, in Year 1, pupils used India as a stimulus for cross-curricular work in geography and art and design. They produced some good quality artwork based on sari designs, native masks and model making.

17. The school uses the local authority's guidance for religious education. This requires the pupils to learn about two major faiths, Christianity and Judaism. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' knowledge of Christianity. Here stories and visits to churches play a significant part in developing pupils' understanding. By comparison, the work on Judaism has not had the same level of attention. Links with other aspects of the pupils' work, such as art and food technology, have failed to secure the expected learning in areas such as understanding the significance of the Torah and the festival of Shabbat. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding are insecure, and their achievement and standards are lower than expected.
18. Pupils with special educational needs receive good guidance and support in lessons. This is because they are included fully in practical activities, and teachers' questioning and adult support ensure that they play a full part in discussions. Support is focused well but also tempered with the need for these pupils to try things for themselves. Small steps of success and well-organised resources to aid learning ensure that the pupils are challenged, yet do not struggle with their work. This builds their self-esteem successfully.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety is **good**. The provision for support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for; they feel safe and secure because of the very good relationships they have with the staff.
- Records of pupils' achievements are not kept in a way that enables teachers to plan easily the next steps in learning and chart the progress of different groups.
- At present, there are very few formal ways of seeking and acting upon pupils' views.

Commentary

19. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils are safe and that they feel happy and secure in school. Since the last inspection the school has improved the methods it uses to follow up problems with attendance. As a result, parents keep the school well informed about their children's absences; the rate of unauthorised absence has fallen,

and the attendance rate has improved. This reflects well in the pupils' keenness to attend school and their enjoyment of lessons. Pupils say they feel cared for and this is largely because relationships are positive and friendly, and the school is a happy place for them to learn in. Parents feel that their children settle quickly in the Foundation Stage, that they benefit from the links made prior to starting school, and that they are made to feel very welcome. Adults develop very good, trusting relationships with all pupils. They know the children well and treat them fairly.

20. The school collects a great deal of data on pupils' performance through regular assessments. However, in its present format this information does not quickly show similarities and differences in achievement between boys and girls and pupils of different abilities. This has a particular impact at the beginning of the year when staff are getting to know their new pupils and preparing work to meet their needs. For example, some average attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily over the year while their classmates are doing better than this. The information shows the value being added for each pupil but not for the different groups. Opportunities are missed to precisely chart the progress of different groups, to note peaks and troughs, and to set targets for the end of the year whereby checks can be made against curriculum provision and the quality of teaching.
21. Seeking the views of pupils is presently limited. Some takes place in class discussions that are often related to lessons promoting pupils' personal skills. At these times, individual staff respond to pupils' views, suggestions or concerns as they arise. However, there is no mechanism to draw these views, suggestions or concerns together to check if they are more wide ranging than within a class. In the past, the school has consulted the pupils about aspects of their learning through its involvement in the PEEL Programme. This provides a useful model on which future consultations could take place.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good** and the school **works well** within the local and wider community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good communications with parents ensure that they are fully consulted, are clear about how well their children are doing and are aware of the school's expectations.
- Pupils benefit from the good and improving relationships with other schools and with the community.
- There are minor omissions in the governors' annual report to parents, although it is a well-produced and useful document.

Commentary

22. Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They receive very good information in the well-presented prospectus, the governors' annual report and a series of regular newsletters. They also have access to the school's informative website. Information for parents about how well their children are doing is clear and is complemented by at least one opportunity each term to talk to the class teacher. In

addition, they have regular opportunities to come into school to see their children's work and to attend events. As a result, parents are clear about the school's expectations for areas such as behaviour and attendance, and they are aware of how they can support and be involved in their children's education. Parents are consulted informally through direct dialogue or through the PTFA (Parents' Association) and more formally through surveys about specific school initiatives. Parents welcome these opportunities because they feel involved and that their views are valued. Courses for parents provide clear examples about how they can help their children at home, and parental support in classrooms is good. The PTFA is very active and raises significant funds during the year to benefit the children's education.

23. Partnerships with other local schools are good and improving. The school works well with the junior school and with other schools in the local cluster to develop ideas and share good practice. For example, the adjacent secondary school is providing support to help to improve the ICT facilities in the school. Effective links with the local community support work in subjects such as religious education, ICT, history and geography. This includes visits to local churches and local shops and the pupils' involvement in the carnival and the music festival. Pupils engage with the wider community through its charity work, and local industry supports the school by donating prizes for events and working with pupils on environmental projects such as recycling.
24. There are minor omissions in the governors' annual report. It gives no information about school security, and too little detail about the special educational needs policy and the provision for disabled pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff and governors have a shared vision for the school and the headteacher ensures that this is focused on raising standards and improving achievement.
- Well-focused support for staff successfully develops teaching and subject management.
- The governing body is knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- There is lack of a simple system to track pupils' achievement over time.

Commentary

25. The enthusiastic headteacher has a very good sense of purpose and high aspirations. Over the past two years, she has dealt well with the effects of some prolonged staff absence caused by illness; maintained a 50 per cent teaching commitment, and managed several subjects. During this time, and to date, she has kept the staff and governors motivated and inspired; promoted effective teamwork, and successfully introduced initiatives and agreed ways of working. This is particularly noticeable following the work on the PEEL Programme. After careful observation of pupils' involvement in their learning, teachers introduced a range of teaching styles intended to stimulate pupils' interest and speed their learning. These are working well in most instances and the strong emphasis on developing pupils' thinking skills is enabling pupils to be coherent in their responses and organised in how they tackle their work. At

the root of this work has been the determination to improve pupils' achievements and raise standards.

26. There is effective support for the professional and personal development of staff. A key feature of this is the time given for staff to read and become informed and ready for staff discussions. This is particularly important when documents are received that are likely to have a significant impact on how the school operates. By doing this the headteacher underlines the need for all staff and governors to move forward together. Staff attend courses linked to their subject management, their classroom work and their personal development. The success of this support and its impact on teaching and learning are seen in a number of areas that have improved since the last inspection, such as guidance in history, geography and ICT, and the links made between subjects to give learning meaning and purpose. The school has identified the need for further professional development and guidance in the Foundation Stage. Suitable support is being provided to support staff in the Reception classes. Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science provide good support for colleagues and manage developments well. This is as a result of a clear focus on improvement and on achieving agreed ways of working. Several other subject leaders are new to their roles because of staff changes. Some staff have taken on new responsibilities in a wish to extend their own personal development. The headteacher's high teaching commitment a year ago resulted in weaker coverage of the religious education curriculum, and gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding were not identified.
27. Governors share the vision of the headteacher and staff. They are knowledgeable and committed members of the same team. They have a good understanding of the school's policies and how these work in practice. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensure that resources are focused on improving teaching and learning. The school administration manager is part of the senior management team and provides very good support and financial administration.
28. The school collects a great deal of data to assess pupils' attainments in all subjects. Senior managers have not ensured that this information is easily accessible to help staff plan effectively for the different groups. In addition, it does not provide a quick overview of how different groups of pupils are doing or of any differences in achievement from one year group to another. This is particularly noticeable when children move from Reception to Year 1, because detailed assessments do not give a simple and effective picture of what the children can and cannot do. This has the greatest impact on the achievement in mathematics of average attaining pupils in Year 1.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	448,633
Total expenditure	491,222
Expenditure per pupil	2,425

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	65,942
Balance carried forward to the next	23,353

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The children start school with standards that are typical for children of the same age, although their personal development is above that expected. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most attain the goals children of their age are expected to reach, and their achievement is satisfactory overall. At the time of the inspection, children were attending for half a day and had been in school for three weeks. This led to a reduced amount of time for inspecting the Foundation Stage. As a result, only three out of the six areas of learning were seen in depth. While the children are attending part-time, the staff in the Reception classes are given the opportunity to attend courses to support their professional development, and to visit other schools to observe good practice. This complements the support that staff receives from the local authority and senior managers. It is addressing the need to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff in the Foundation Stage, where teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are effective in personal, social and emotional development. Children's achievement in this area of learning is good due to the effective way in which staff settle them into school and consistently encourage them to work hard and be sensible.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children come to school ready to learn; they behave well and build good relationships with others.
- Children work well independently or with a partner because staff organise activities that encourage sharing and that spark the children's interest.

Commentary

29. Children come from a range of placements within the Brackley area. Some children have attended nursery full time, others have attended local playgroups. Most of the children have well-developed social skills. Many are well used to following classroom routines and they have settled very quickly and confidently into school. Staff have formed good relationships with the children. They explain clearly their expectations for behaviour and encourage children to be aware of their actions and the impact this has on others. During play and when working with others, staff encourage the children to share equipment and to take turns when talking and working. This helps children who find it more difficult to work with others to share, take turns and behave well. Other children respond well because the adults provide good reasons why they need to respect and listen to the views of others. Stories are chosen carefully to help children understand the behaviour of others and to explore their feelings. Often the children can relate to the characters in the stories and this helps them to develop a sense of empathy.

30. The positive way in which children have settled into the Reception classes is built on effectively because the challenge to work independently or with a partner is extended well; teaching is effective. The mixture of directed activities and those that children choose themselves provides a balance that allows particular skills such as sharing and taking turns to be supported. Children concentrate well, largely due to their well-developed personal skills, but also because the activities spark, in almost all instances, the children's interest.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities encourage children to talk and listen carefully.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and encourages children to express their ideas through talk, pictures and writing.
- There is not enough emphasis on helping children to form their letters properly to aid their writing.
- Children's learning slows when resources are not helpful in developing understanding.

Commentary

31. Children enjoy talking. Almost all the children recognise that there are times when they need to listen and times when they can put forward their ideas. Lower attaining children are reminded of what is expected and, along with other children, staff encourage them to think before they answer. This enables these and children of average and higher attainment to make relevant and coherent responses. Higher attaining children often relate their answers to their own experiences. Well-focused questioning gives all children the chance to participate, and ensures that it is not only the higher attaining or more talkative children who take part. Good questioning also encourages the children to think about what they have heard or to guess what they think might happen next when they listen to stories. This supports the early skills of reading effectively by encouraging children to draw conclusions and develop ideas based on the text. When working with smaller groups, pairs or individuals, staff help children to deepen their understanding by giving clear explanations or asking children to expand on their answers.
32. The children experience a rich and varied diet over the course of the year. Themed activities, with good links made between the different areas of learning, provide meaning and purpose to the children's work. Children are motivated to talk, draw pictures and make early attempts at writing. This is because stories or rhymes are told expressively, capturing the children's interest. By the end of the year, higher attaining children write short phrases independently and the average attaining with help. Lower attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them write and with adult support record some of their ideas in words. Good opportunities for the children to engage in role-play help them to understand the plot of the story and develop a greater understanding of the new words they have met. This supports the children's learning and the higher attaining, in particular, readily make attempts at recording their own accounts. Sometimes this work is not supported as well as it might be. This occurs when aids that help children to identify the correct letter sounds are not available to help them to attempt their own writing. In addition, there is not enough emphasis on helping all children to form their letters correctly. By the end of the Reception year most children are not starting and finishing letters in the correct places. This develops problems in later years when pupils begin to join letters to make their writing more fluid and to record more accurately.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff questioning extends children's recall of numbers successfully, and activities excite and interest them.
- There is not enough emphasis on helping children to form numerals correctly.
- Sometimes children's excitement and interest in what they are doing are not handled as well as they could be.

Commentary

33. A good range of activities enables children to experience and explore working with numbers. Number language is used in a variety of situations to develop children's understanding further, for example in rhymes and play. Chances for children to recite number names, to use them in ordering items or, for example, as a prompt to movement, help children to use numbers in everyday situations. Higher attaining children already count up to and sometimes beyond 20. Teaching takes this into account as these children are taught to recognise the numerals past ten, whilst their classmates concentrate on numbers up to ten. Staff encourage the children to count as they are doing things and to use numbers naturally in both their work and play. As a result, children are confident to count by moving or touching objects, as well as counting things that cannot be touched such as steps or jumps. During sessions, children are interested and sometimes excitable. In almost all instances this is handled carefully but just occasionally some children's natural exuberance and excitement are stifled rather than channelled. At these times, teaching does not focus enough on the positive aspects of most children's behaviour as an example for others to follow.
34. As in communication, language and literacy, not enough emphasis is placed on ensuring children form numerals correctly to aid quick and accurate recording of calculations.

The following areas of learning were not observed in enough depth to make firm judgements about the provision.

35. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** are developed effectively by a good range of visits and visitors into school. These help to bring the children's learning to life and strengthen their understanding of the world in which they live. A mixture of well-planned indoors and outdoor-play provides enjoyment and builds in challenge for the children. Meaningful links with the other areas of learning help children to develop their ideas soundly. For example, the theme of 'Mary, Mary Quite Contrary' is not only used to motivate learning in talking, writing and number work but also to prompt children to look carefully at bulbs and learn about how plants grow. Linking the work helps to consolidate the children's language, whilst giving them greater knowledge about plants. Children successfully use technology to support their learning. Most are adept at using the programs on the computer and can use the mouse correctly to move objects on the screen or click on the correct answer to a question. They enjoy using the tape recorder to listen to stories and most understand how to turn the equipment on and off.
36. Children's **physical development** is promoted soundly through opportunities for play indoors and outdoors. Indoors, the range of activities ensures that children practise

small hand and eye movements, such as threading beads, counting and moving objects, and using tools to make models and pictures. Most handle tools confidently but they are not always guided to hold them correctly. For some, this results in poor pencil or paintbrush control. Outdoors, the range of equipment provides suitable opportunities for large movements because children can draw on chalk boards, handle footballs or dig in the soil. The children run, jump and move confidently and safely. Opportunities to use the hall for gymnastics and games also help to develop the children's sense of space and their ability to move sensibly.

37. Children's **creative development** is promoted soundly through useful links with the other areas of learning. The theme of 'Mary, Mary' has captured the children's interest. As a result, they eagerly draw, sing and use their imaginations to develop their ideas and explore their feelings. Children have satisfactory opportunities to mix colours, work with different materials and begin to make choices. This enables the children to gain confidence in expressing themselves in a variety of ways, for example through paint, collage, music and role-play. Staff talk with children to help them develop their ideas and increase their vocabulary and this ensures that the children build up a bank of specific words related to work across the areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do well in English; their speaking and listening skills are promoted particularly well.
- Teachers' questioning is effective; it helps to deepen pupils' understanding and to ensure that pupils of different abilities are fully involved in lessons.
- Language and literacy are promoted well across the curriculum.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.

Commentary

38. Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are above expectations by the end of Year 2. This is lower than the test results in 2003. Pupils who took the test in that year were a higher attaining group who entered school with standards above those expected for their age. The present group of Year 2 pupils entered school with standards similar to those expected for their age. Over time, pupils of different abilities do well – an improvement since the last inspection. Improvements are due in part to the way that the school responds to differences in pupils' performance from one year to the next both in the national tests and in teachers' assessments. They are also due to positive aspects of teaching and learning. For example, the school's focus on developing thinking skills has had a profound impact on how pupils express themselves and listen to others. Teachers used drama effectively to arouse interest, to motivate pupils and to focus their speaking and listening skills. Experiences such as a visit the 'Living Rainforest' give pupils opportunities to discuss their ideas. They also provide the opportunity to introduce a wealth of vocabulary and put the pupils' learning in context.

39. The school has acknowledged that test data shows a relative weakness in reading. As a result, guided reading has been given a high priority. This is having a positive impact on developing comprehension skills. Pupils are more interested in reading. They use strategies such as reading to the end of a passage to help them understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word, and use picture clues to help them gain meaning from the text. There is a wider gap between boys' and girls' attainment than is usually found. The school is beginning to address this issue through the choice of books for group reading, activities during World Book Day and opportunities to read and write different types of text for different reasons. Even so, sometimes boys show less interest in reading and are occasionally unable to talk about the kinds of books they like or to name any favourites.
40. Effective teaching ensures that lessons contain varied activities and tasks to stimulate interest and to match work to pupils' differing abilities. This challenges pupils of different abilities to do their best. For example, in one lesson, higher attaining pupils in Year 1 were expected to write their own sentences, using words they had discussed earlier. The average attaining pupils worked with an adult, using their knowledge of letter sounds to make good attempts at writing on their own and they had suitable resources to aid their spelling. Lower attaining pupils listened to letter sounds and recorded their attempts. All these activities followed on from a well-focused introduction and the pupils worked hard and achieved well. Pupils with special educational needs have well-focused support. Adults work well with them during whole-class discussions, encouraging them to think their answers through and to form their responses. This allows them to take a full part in discussions. Work relates closely to the targets set for their improvement and this builds in small steps of success and speeds their progress. Relationships are mostly good; pupils respond well in lessons and their behaviour is very good. Most teachers used questioning skills well to extend pupils' understanding and to develop their thinking and speaking skills. They ensure that questions vary in difficulty so that the different groups within the class are able to take part.
41. Although the school has begun to use a new marking system, this is not used consistently and has not yet had a strong impact on helping pupils to understand how to improve their work. Sometimes, teachers' own handwriting, in comments and corrections, is not a good model for young pupils and can be difficult to read.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their language and literacy skills across other subjects. Visits and visitors provide interest and opportunities for writing, reading and speaking and listening. Pupils write information texts and accounts, sequence events or use labelling in geography, history and religious education. Events such as their Victorian Day or a visit to the 'Living Rainforest' stimulate discussion as pupils research and reinforce their knowledge of other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, pupils' achievement and learning are good because they are supported by mainly effective teaching.
- Pupils use their mathematical skills well.
- The information passed on from class to class about pupils' achievement is not easily accessible to guide teaching and learning.

Commentary

43. Pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding develop well and by Year 2 standards are above average. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils are now doing better than they were. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils have a good grasp of number and that they have effective opportunities to use and apply what they know to solve problems. This makes learning fun and gives meaning to what the pupils are doing. The pupils say how much they enjoy working in practical situations. Here they have the chance to explore, for example, number patterns or investigate the properties of shapes.
44. The pace of learning in most lessons is brisk. Teachers introduce new work systematically and at a level that challenges the pupils to do their best. In a very effective lesson in Year 2, pupils of different abilities made rapid gains in their mathematical understanding and their ability to apply strategies to solve more complex calculations. These pupils eagerly answered questions because these were posed in such a way that higher attaining pupils were expected to take their thinking further. For example, the teacher wanted to know what strategy they had used and if they could think of another way of doing the same calculations. Average attaining pupils were challenged by increasingly larger numbers to work with, whilst the lower attaining pupils were given time to think their answers through. This resulted in full involvement and pupils of different abilities doing well. In almost all instances, teachers use resources well to support pupils' learning. Learning support assistants make a useful contribution to pupils' learning. They provide support when pupils struggle, but ensure that their intervention is timely so that pupils try things out for themselves first.
45. Boys and girls both say how much they enjoy mathematics and they do equally well. Pupils work hard and concentrate well. Opportunities to work with partners are effective because pupils share their ideas and formulate views quickly. In addition, the less confident gain strength from their partner. This confidence is a significant factor in the way that pupils use and apply their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding. The good grounding the pupils receive in mathematics, the practical activities and the effective teaching of strategies to solve problems all contribute successfully to how well pupils use their mathematical skills.
46. A great deal of information is passed on when children move from the Reception class into Year 1. This information provides a profile of each individual child but it is not easily usable in its present form to group pupils by ability, gender or ethnicity. This is not helpful when staff come to group pupils at the beginning of the year or indeed to track any peaks or troughs in pupils' achievement. In one lesson, average attaining pupils marked time because they covered work they had already mastered. This was also evident in the average attaining pupils' completed work during their first term last year. This has led to a slower rate of achievement at the beginning of the year for the average attaining pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. Mathematics successfully supports some of the work pupils do in other subjects. This includes measuring, sometimes by direct comparison, in design and technology. For example, pupils in Year 1 test the size of the home they have made for a wild animal by estimating how many more layers of bricks they need to complete the walls. Charts and tables in geography and science record measurements, for example of temperature. In ICT, pupils collect and enter data to construct graphs. The pupils interpret the graphs correctly to answer questions related to “How many?”, “Which have the most?” and “Which have the least?”.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well; their scientific knowledge and understanding are developed successfully through practical activities.
- Teachers make good links with other subjects to give pupils’ learning relevance and purpose.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good, but developments made to assessment and marking in science are yet to have a positive impact.

Commentary

48. The school uses the strengths of teachers well by deploying one person to teach all the Year 1 science, and another all the Year 2. This arrangement works well because it ensures consistency in teaching and learning across the year groups. Both teachers use methods in which pupils learn through investigation. Pupils like the practical aspect of science because it allows them to try things out for themselves, and it also sets the scientific knowledge in context and consolidates their understanding. This was particularly evident in Year 1. The teacher challenged pupils to assemble an electrical circuit to light two bulbs, when previously they had successfully lit one. The pupils set to work enthusiastically, drawing on what they already knew and experimenting until they achieved success. There was real excitement as first one group succeeded, and others quickly followed. By the end of the lesson, all pupils achieved well because they used prior knowledge as the starting point for informing further investigations. Opportunities such as this are evident when looking at pupils’ past work. It is a significant reason why pupils achieve well and why scientific knowledge and understanding are secure. It results in above average standards by Year 2 and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
49. As part of the school’s desire to teach a more innovative curriculum, teachers are making better links between subjects. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils were required to use cutting and joining skills, developed in design and technology, first of all to create a boat that would float, and secondly, to use it to carry a given load. During a lively whole-class discussion and focused paired discussions, pupils drew upon scientific skills well to help them decide which materials to use, and technology skills to decide how to join them. By the end of the lesson all but one of the

boats had remained afloat, demonstrating the pupils' good scientific knowledge of waterproof materials and their well-developed technology skills. A productive discussion ended the lesson, with teacher and pupils establishing what had worked well, and what they would improve next time. Work of this quality reflects the good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.

50. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school has focused on identifying different learning styles recently, and on planning lessons that promote the development of pupils' thinking skills. As a result, teachers have updated planning documents to accommodate different learning styles. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in lessons, on the quality of work in their books and on their ability to demonstrate scientific knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 2 have a very clear understanding of how to conduct a scientific investigation. They spoke confidently about making a prediction before starting, and the steps they would take to ensure it was a fair test. The assessment and marking policies were updated recently, but they have not had sufficient impact yet. For example, teachers mark pupils' work with a comment that celebrates their work, but it does not identify which aspects of the work pupils have done well, or what they need to do to improve. Similarly, assessment is not used sufficiently on a day-to-day basis to inform future lesson planning. Instead it tends to be undertaken at the end of a topic to record what pupils can do, but does not inform the next steps in planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills in using computers are developing well.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how ICT can help their work at school and in the wider world.
- Using ICT as a tool to support pupils' work across the curriculum is developing but is not yet fully embedded in all subjects.

Commentary

51. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with expectations and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils have benefited from the systematic teaching of computer skills with the result that, by Year 2, they can competently open, save and print documents. They know how to alter text, move it on the screen and insert pictures to illustrate their work. Throughout the school, the emphasis on developing computer skills is leading to pupils being confident in their use and eager to learn more. Most pupils have access to some type of computer technology at home. The pupils complement what they learn in school with the knowledge they acquire at home. This enables them to weigh up the benefits of ICT to them in school and how it benefits the wider world of work. Higher attaining pupils quickly recognise the value of being able to edit their work and to present it neatly. Lower attaining pupils realise that it helps them to practise, for example, spellings and letter sounds and they like the success this gives them. Visits to the supermarket have allowed the pupils to see at first hand how bar codes are scanned and shopping totals calculated. Higher attaining pupils have a grasp of the way that computers can support

communication and some pupils have used the Internet to find things out for themselves. The pupils are less sure about the use of other technology such as scanners, fax machines and those used to record events such as video cameras and tape recorders. They are aware that there is a digital camera in the school but have not used it to record their own efforts, although staff do make good use of it to record examples of pupils working, special events and classroom displays.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

52. Planning is well underway to fully integrate ICT into the pupils' daily class work. ICT is a priority for further development and the school is well aware that there is still some way to go before pupils use ICT as a regular tool. Whilst the teaching of computer skills is good and pupils' learning is effective, the benefits are not yet fully realised and teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Links with other subjects are often made to teach an ICT strand such as reviewing, modifying and evaluating, rather than to support learning in a particular subject. This is useful to ensure that the range of ICT work is covered, but is not as effective in developing knowledge and understanding, for example in history or geography.

HUMANITIES

During the three days of the inspection, only two lessons of religious education were being taught – both by the same teacher and in the same year group – one geography lesson and no history lessons. As a result, a firm judgement about the overall provision in each subject cannot be made. Pupils' past work was analysed and discussions took place with pupils in Years 1 and 2 to gauge their achievement and the standards reached.

Religious education

53. Standards in religious education are below those expected in the local authority's agreed syllabus because the pupils do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of Judaism. Judaism is the other major faith they should study as well as Christianity. Pupils are very knowledgeable about Christianity. They explain about events in the Church calendar such as Easter and Christmas clearly. They also understand the significance of festivals and celebrations such as weddings, Christingle, Harvest Festival and baptisms. They understand that the vicar carries out certain rituals and that he or she plays an important part in church festivals and celebrations. Pupils talk about the Bible; they recognise its importance to Christians and understand the messages portrayed in stories such as the 'Lost Sheep'. A visit to the local church brings their learning to life and helps them to understand that churches are special places for Christians. They are also beginning to relate religious understanding to their own lives through discussion about their feelings, which encourages them to develop positive attitudes towards others.
54. Pupils have been taught about aspects of Judaism. For example, they have talked about and made a Torah scroll as well as finding out about Shabbat. However, they have a very hazy recollection of this work and any other significant aspects of the Jewish faith. Recorded assessments in religious education show that the pupils' understanding is not yet secured. The coverage of this area is weak and this leads to standards being lower than they should be and pupils not achieving as much as they should. Long-term

staff absence last year has meant that the coverage of the subject was not checked as rigorously as it ought to have been.

History and geography

55. Pupils' work from last year shows that standards in both subjects are above those expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills to write sequenced accounts of the Great Fire of London and to construct charts and tables in geography. Pupils' interest and understanding are developed through first-hand experiences. For example, they spoke excitedly about the Victorian Day held in school when they all dressed up. Pupils talked confidently about differences in school life then and now. The recent visit to the 'Living Rainforest' incorporated learning across the curriculum and has given pupils an insight into different environments.
56. Discussion with pupils demonstrated good observational skills. They know the locality in which they live and had walked around the town to identify features. Pupils in Year 2 are able to use a grid to give square references for places on the map. Pupils from Year 1 were able to clearly explain the time-line of their own lives. Different information sources are presented to the pupils so that they can ask and answer questions about the past and about geography. The pupils organise their work well and communicate through drawings, writing, discussion and some use of ICT.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

As only two lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology and music, and one in physical education, no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning, or provision overall in these subjects. Discussions with pupils and analyses of pupils' past work were used to gauge pupils' achievements and the standards they reach.

Art and design

57. Pupils achieve well and standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2. High quality displays of art, and examples of past work, reflect the emphasis placed on developing pupils' artistic skills and ensuring they have the opportunity to explore and use a wide variety of tools, materials and resources. There is a good focus on developing pupils' observational skills so that they carefully note the size, shape and texture of objects. Teachers' planning identifies the key skills pupils need to be taught, and the key points that would need to be brought out in discussion, so that pupils think about, for example, the sequence of drawing and the size of the object they are reproducing. This results in high quality observational drawings, as were seen in a Year 1 lesson.
58. Good links are made between art and design and other subjects. During the school's art week, earlier in the year, pupils successfully increased their understanding of African, Indian and Chinese cultures. This was achieved because the pupils engaged in designing items, or painting events from stories such as the Willow Pattern Tale, and designing saris. When pupils in Year 2 visited the ballet they used literacy skills to write up an account of their visit, and art and design skills to recreate some of the characters. The co-ordinator is keen to develop these links between subjects, and to make greater use of 'artists in residence' to enrich the art and design curriculum further.

Design and technology

59. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils by the end of Year 2; pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Work on display shows that pupils in Year 2 go through the full process of planning and designing, reviewing and amending, before assembling their designs. For example, when designing and making a beach bag, they first looked at a variety of bags and containers and disassembled them to see how they were made. Secondly, they completed planning sheets to help them think about the materials they would use and processes they would follow. Following completion of the task, the pupils carried out a brief evaluation of their finished product to decide what had worked well, and what they would improve next time. All pupils were fully involved because the lower attaining and those pupils with special educational needs had their findings recorded by adults. The process of planning and designing is less effective in Year 1 because more emphasis has been placed on finishing the model than working out the best ways to tackle, for example, making an enclosure for a wild animal. This results in pupils being unsure about the steps they would need to take, or the most appropriate materials to use.

Music

60. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards overall as much of the work in music seen during the inspection focused on singing. Pupils in Year 2 talk about their love of music. They talk enthusiastically about how much they have enjoyed working together on small-group compositions. In lessons, assemblies and whole-school singing sessions, pupils' very positive attitudes enabled them to achieve well in singing. Pupils particularly enjoy singing the 'Circle of Friends' and hold hands as they think carefully about the very important words in the song. Their singing is tuneful and the words are clear. Pupils also sing well during whole-school singing practices. For example, in 'Leaves are Falling Down' they follow the teacher's guidance well as they gradually reduce the volume on the words, 'down', 'down', 'down'. This is very effective. The music co-ordinator is a confident and capable musician who supports these sessions well. Pupils take part willingly. For example, in a singing game where they selected an instrument, when the music stopped they described the sound they believed the instrument made and the correct way of playing it. By the end of the lesson, most pupils were able to name the instruments, some by hearing the sound only.
61. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in additional musical activities, such as choir, recorder and violin. The curriculum is enriched through visits and visitors. For example, Year 2 pupils went to see *The Nutcracker Ballet*, and linked this to literacy and art work.

Physical education

62. It is evident from talking with pupils and looking at planning that the full range of physical activity is taught, including swimming. However, it is not possible to make a firm judgement on standards and pupils' achievement because not all the strands of physical education were inspected. The pupils enjoy physical education; they talk enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to develop their sporting skills not only during the school day but in the extensive range of activities outside normal lessons. The range of activities includes football, Kwik cricket, short tennis, rugby and gymnastics. These support and extend the curriculum on offer and provide opportunities for pupils of different talents and abilities to take part in sport. Pupils engage in practising a suitable range of gymnastic, dance and games skills. During the lesson seen in games, the

pupils took part enthusiastically and behaved well. Opportunities were provided for pupils to work with others and to develop simple rules for a game. This was effective in supporting their personal development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

63. The school is keen to promote good health through its work in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Teachers devise activities to raise pupils' awareness of healthy living. During the day, pupils are encouraged to drink water and 'cool milk', and eat fruit to aid their concentration and support good health. The importance the school attaches to promoting good health has recently been rewarded with a Healthy Schools Bronze Award. PSHCE times are also used to provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on how well they relate to others. Teaching assistants work successfully with pupils who find mixing and socialising difficult by supporting their personal and social development. The behaviour of pupils, overall, is very good, and there is no evidence now of the severe behavioural difficulties mentioned at the time of the previous inspection.

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	2
Attendance	2
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
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	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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