

INSPECTION REPORT

BURGHFIELD ST MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burghfield Village, Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109956

Headteacher: Mrs P A Dee

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Baxter

Dates of inspection: 15-17 November 2004

Inspection number: 266529

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 controlled
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 131

School address: Theale Road
Burghfield Village
Reading
Berkshire
Post Code: RG30 3TX

Telephone number: 0118 983 6387
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs Joan Hayes
governors:

Date of previous June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Burghfield St. Mary's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School has 131 pupils aged between 4 and 11 years. The school is located in Burghfield Village, not far from Reading in Berkshire. It is below average in size and serves a wide, generally above average, socio-economic community. Less than 3 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well below the national average. About five per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as a language different from their mother tongue. This is a below average percentage and none are in the early stages of English acquisition and so pupils do not receive specialist language support. Approximately thirty per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, an above average proportion; these include moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural needs and autistic and other needs. Just over one per cent of the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and this is an average percentage. Overall, the attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly average, but this can vary quite significantly. The school holds the 'Investors in People' award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25217	Paul Baxter	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education
19639	Gillian Anderson	Lay inspector	
30457	David Evans	Team inspector	English Science Geography History Music Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Burghfield St. Mary's C of E Primary is a **very good** school. Very effective and innovative leadership and a corporate approach to management continue to ensure improvement despite ongoing long-term illness of staff. In response to very good teaching and support, pupils achieve very well and attain well above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's excellent and inspirational personal leadership emphasises the value placed on individual contributions and underpins the school's ability to sustain improvement.
- Very good teaching enables pupils to achieve very well.
- Good attitudes and behaviour overall represent a significant achievement for several pupils with emotional and behavioural needs, in response to the school's very effective and sensitive promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Almost all areas of provision are very good overall and the development of the pupils' personal qualities, and their subsequent impact on learning, is a significant feature that enables the pupils to succeed.
- Although satisfactory overall, ongoing improvement of the accommodation is needed to develop the library and Reception Year provision to the full.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, especially in raising pupils' achievement from good to very good. Key issues for improvement have been well addressed; for example, assessment is now a strength. Most areas of provision have been improved; the curriculum, teaching and learning and leadership and management have been particularly strengthened by the very effective teamwork of staff and governors. Good provision for children in Reception (Year R) has been introduced successfully.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is very good overall. Children's attainment is broadly average on entry, but at times this can vary significantly. The children achieve well in Reception (Year R) and

in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils, including gifted and talented pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language, achieve very well in Years 3 to 6. Their learning is particularly successful in Year 6, where their personal contribution to their learning strengthens in response to challenging teaching. Children at the end of Year R exceed the expected early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development and reach expected standards in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to attain above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing and in mathematics and music. Standards are well above average in science. These standards match the standards seen in previous years and represent a significant improvement over the 2004 National Curriculum tests, which were undertaken by a group of pupils that included several with special educational needs. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. These standards continue the rising trend in the pupils' test results and the well above average comparison with similar schools shown in the table above. Standards are above average in music and pupils achieve well; no other subjects were inspected in sufficient detail to judge standards or achievement.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good, reflecting, in particular, the very warm and effective support given to pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. Teaching and learning are good in Year R and are very good in Years 1 to 6. Learning strengthens in Year 6 because the teacher encourages the pupils to show more mature responsibility in their work. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics and music and it is good in science. Consistent very good teaching of the children's personal, social and emotional skills and very good use of learning support and other assistants typifies the provision in all classes. Teachers know a great deal about their pupils because they assess the pupils' work very effectively and use its results to plan future teaching and learning. All pupils are included fully in the very good curriculum. Resources are good but the school accommodation, whilst improved, is satisfactory. The indoor accommodation for children in Year R is adequate in the autumn term, but will need extending to accommodate the higher number of children due to enter the school in the spring term. Also, the current lack of space in the library restricts its effectiveness in promoting learning. Partnerships with parents, local schools and the community and provision for the pupils' care, health and welfare are all very good. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides the continuity and the excellent vision and leadership that ensure the ongoing development of the school and the warm ethos of inclusive support given to all the pupils. Leadership and management are strengthened by the close collaboration between the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the chair of governors and other staff and governors. Overall governance is very good and statutory obligations are met in full. Management, including financial control, is very effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very good views of the school. Parents work closely and very supportively with the school and this enriches their children's learning. Pupils are happy and enjoy their work at school. They are particularly pleased that their views and contributions are valued. Inspectors endorse these views fully.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue the improvement of the school's library and Year R accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children achieve well in Year R. Standards are well above average in Year 6 and are above average in Year 2. These standards represent very good achievement for pupils in Year 6 and good achievement for pupils in Year 2 and show that pupils build on their previous learning successfully as they move through the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, showing that most pupils are achieving very well. Standards are above average in music.
- Standards continue to rise in response to an increasing proportion of very good teaching.
- The teachers' strong emphasis on promoting pupils' independence in learning has a particularly beneficial impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and to learn through practical experiences such as investigation and problem-solving, and these activities enrich their learning and achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils and pupils who have English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.

Commentary

1. The children's attainment when they enter the school is broadly average, but this can vary quite significantly on occasion. For example, the current Year 3 group contains a substantially higher number of pupils with learning needs than other year groups across the school. The children settle into the school very smoothly and respond successfully to the very warm and effective support for their personal, social and emotional development. Most children achieve well and meet the expected early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. The consistently supportive pastoral care that children receive develops their personal, social and emotional skills to an above average standard. By the time they enter Year 1, children co-operate very effectively in their learning, talk competently about their work, recognise everyday words and a range of letter sounds and most add or subtract numbers to ten accurately.
2. An increasing amount of very effective teaching sustains the pupils' good achievement in Years 1 and 2. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening, and in mathematics, science and music. Pupils do best in the development of their investigative skills and in using a variety of learning aids to find answers through practical work. Inspection shows that the above average standards reached by pupils currently in Year 2 generally match the results of National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments in 2002 and 2003. Except in science,

where pupils scored highly, attainment greatly exceeds the low performance of the current Year 3 group of pupils mentioned earlier in the 2004 Year 2 National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments, and ends a trend of falling standards. In addition to higher levels of pupils' prior attainment, improving provision in Year R, strengthened continuity of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and earlier diagnosis and support for pupils with special educational needs are all raising standards. By Year 2, most pupils speak sensibly about their work, read appropriate texts with enthusiasm and confidence and write meaningful sentences and stories. In mathematics, pupils readily use their own strategies to solve number problems, such as adding numbers up to one hundred or subtracting single-digit numbers from two-digit numbers.

3. In response to very good teaching and provision, that provide very effectively for the pupils' individual learning needs, most pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils achieve as well as their peers, reflecting the strong inclusive ethos of the school. In Year 6, standards are well above average overall and in English, mathematics and science and are above average in music. These findings match the pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests in recent years and continue the trend of standards rising faster than the trend found nationally. Comparisons with the performance of pupils in schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals in the 2004 National Curriculum tests are well above average, and judgements based on comparisons with the pupils' performance when in Year 2 are equally strong. By the time they leave the school, most pupils talk confidently to large groups of people, read a range of texts when researching their topics and write neatly, legibly and imaginatively. In mathematics, pupils have very well developed numeracy and problem-solving skills. In the light of ongoing concerns regarding the long-term absence of staff due to illness and the challenge of improving the accommodation and facilities at the school, the standards represent significant success for the pupils and the school and show good improvement since the last inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (16.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.9 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.8 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (29.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.5 (27.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.7 (29.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Inspection shows that the following factors continue to promote the improving achievement of pupils across the school:

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her innovative and very effective development of the school that promotes the warm team commitment of talented staff, sustains an inclusive ethos which values pupils and their contributions and encourages very effective learning.
 - Very effective teaching and learning strategies that are informed by very accurate assessments of the pupils' progress, ensure optimum challenge for the pupils and ensure very effective achievement for all pupils from the full range of prior attainment.
 - A strong and continued emphasis on promoting the pupils' independence in learning that comes to fruition in a very impressive manner in Year 6, where pupils demonstrate very mature and effective investigative skills which enable them to reach high standards.
5. The school enriches the curriculum to promote creativity and interesting learning opportunities, for example, through using information and communication technology (ICT). Inspection also shows that standards continue to rise as pupils build cumulatively on their previous skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is very good. Pupils' punctuality, attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and their cultural development is good, making personal development very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the school because of the very good ethos and values promoted.
- Inclusion is very good because the school actively encourages the pupils' good relationships and very good racial harmony.
- The children's personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- Attendance is very good, reflects the school's very effective strategies for promoting attendance and has a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.
- Whilst the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is very good, a core minority bring with them significant behavioural problems, which are addressed individually and very effectively.

Commentary

6. Pupils like school, particularly because of their friendships and opportunities to learn. These flourish because of the characteristic spirit and beliefs of the school community that are expressed and taught so successfully in the provision for the spiritual, moral and social development. This was clearly seen in a very good assembly. The very well developed approach to teaching and developing an awareness of the Christian philosophy and the understanding of other religions in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils shows that spiritual, moral, social and cultural education clearly underpins the work of the school. This promotes good relationships and excellent cultural relations, because all members of the school are fully embraced and valued as part of the whole.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.0
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.

- Attendance is very good because pupils want to be in school and the school works hard to discourage holidays in term-time, other than in exceptional compassionate circumstances. As a result, attendance has improved very well over recent years. Pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day and for lessons and this is a positive influence on their attitudes and learning.
- The vast majority of pupils behave very well, but a minority of pupils with emotional needs throughout the school bring with them significant behavioural problems. The school uses initiatives tailored to meet the needs of the individual very well, but is hampered on occasion by problems of access to outside agencies for those who require it. Children in Year R receive very warm and effective support for their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, they behave very well in lessons and enjoy supportive relationships. Exclusions are rare and are only used in extreme circumstances and when absolutely appropriate. They are used with great care to involve parents and give a respite to the class. Break-times and lunchtimes are much appreciated because of the high quality of play facilities to be enjoyed with others and because pupils approve of the catering arrangements. The excellent behaviour of a number of pupils in assisting their peers, for example, older pupils caring for younger pupils, is a noteworthy feature of the school.

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	122	2	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning and all other aspects that contribute to the pupils' achievement are very good; these include: the planned curriculum, the provision for the pupils' health and welfare and the school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning and the teachers' assessment of pupils' work are very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and their assistants promote warm relationships with the pupils and value their contributions. This encourages pupils, lifts their self-esteem and aids learning.
- The teachers assess the pupils' work and progress very carefully and therefore know their pupils very well. They use this knowledge to inform teaching and learning to very good effect.
- The quality of teaching is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6, especially in promoting pupils' independent learning.
- Teachers include and challenge all pupils equally successfully.
- Ongoing long-term staff illness and limited accommodation have constrained the effectiveness of teaching on occasion but the school has been skilful and successful in minimising the impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	15	1	0	0	0

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

lessons.

9. The quality of teaching and learning in the school has improved significantly since the last inspection and it is now very good overall. Teaching in over a third of the lessons seen was very good and teaching in almost all other lessons was good. This high level of consistently effective teaching promotes the pupils' very good achievement cumulatively. Teaching and learning are good in Year R and are very good in Years 1 to 6. Teaching and learning strengthen in Year 6 because the teacher encourages the pupils to show more mature attitudes to their work. As a consequence, their interest is raised and their concentration and learning are sharpened. The quality of teaching is very good in English, mathematics and music and it is good in science. The scope and range of this inspection did not enable judgement of the overall quality of teaching in other subjects, but good and very good lessons were seen in most subjects.

10. Key features of most lessons observed during the inspection and their impact on pupils' learning included:
 - Consistent very good teaching of personal, social and emotional skills and a strengthening emphasis on developing the pupils' independent learning skills, which focuses the pupils' concentration, sustains their effort and gives very good impetus to their achievement. This was seen with very good effect in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, where the pupils' ability to solve problems was increased. In addition, pupils are increasingly involved in marking and evaluating their own work and this further develops the personal responsibility and ownership that enrich their learning.
 - The teachers use and deploy learning support assistants, such as the nursery nurse and other adult helpers, very effectively. The close support given to the pupils lifts their confidence and self-esteem and enables them to confront new challenges with enthusiasm. This was evident in all classes and was seen to good effect in a physical education/drama lesson in Year R, where the nursery nurse and learning support assistant collaborated warmly in the value they gave to children's ideas and the ensuing positive impact on their learning.
 - Teachers know a great deal about their pupils because they assess the pupils' work very effectively and use this to inform teaching and learning. Assessment, including marking of work and evaluating pupils' responses, is an integral part of the lessons across the school. This enables teachers to challenge the pupils to an optimum level through careful, focused questioning and thereby promotes very good learning. This was evident in most English and mathematics lessons seen and underpins the pupils' very good achievements in these subjects.
 - All teachers promote practical approaches to pupils' learning very successfully. The use of counting apparatus in mathematics, the use of ICT for research purposes and the investigative opportunities offered in all science lessons, for example, reflect the strong and consistent approach given to this learning strategy. Outdoor learning resources, including for example, playground markings, climbing frames, quiet study areas, garden areas and the secure outdoor partially covered area for children in Year R, all represent significant ongoing improvements and developments designed to support the pupils' practical work.

11. The quality of teaching and learning in Year R is developing well and there is an increasing and beneficial development of children learning, with close adult support, by following their own ideas. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are strengthened by the close co-operation

between teachers and by their well-planned efforts to address pupils' needs. Teaching and learning in Years 4 to 6 are supported by the teaching of English and mathematics to pupils organised in ability groups; this helps teachers to challenge the pupils closely. Very occasionally pupils become over-excited at the beginning of lessons, for example in science, and need more support in preparing themselves for their lessons in order to focus their attention more closely.

12. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved well since the last inspection. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, works closely with pupils, all staff and with outside agencies and parents. As a consequence, the teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils' needs very well. This enables them to ensure, through carefully considered individual educational plans, that targets for improvement are achieved and that pupils build very effectively on their previous learning. Gifted and talented pupils are supported with equal effectiveness and receive well-planned and very challenging support for their particular needs. The support given by the headteacher in mathematics and by the chair of governors in English are examples of this very good assistance.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good broad and balanced curriculum. It is enriched very effectively by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very good at ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good and makes a substantial contribution to pupils' learning.
- Preparation for the next stage of learning between Year 6 and the receiving secondary school is very good.
- Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The accommodation for the library and Year R, although satisfactory, has limited space.

Commentary

13. The curriculum has been improved well since the last inspection. It is broad and balanced to meet all statutory requirements. It caters very well for the needs of the pupils. The curriculum for children in Year R (The Foundation Stage) has been introduced since the last inspection and it is developing well. Learning opportunities for children in Year R are appropriately based on the required areas of learning and planning is good. In Years 1 to 6, all subjects are taught in full accordance with the National Curriculum and schemes of work for each subject ensure that overall planning is very effective. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for English and mathematics. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus and collective worship is monitored carefully to ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations. Very effective links are made between subjects and this is done creatively, often through a series of topics.
14. All pupils have very good quality access to the curriculum and the school welcomes pupils with a wide range of educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils have their needs considered and met very effectively.

Very good assessment procedures ensure that work is set at an appropriate level and enable pupils to progress in a systematic way. All staff are committed to ensuring that pupils perform as well as they are able and they provide sensitive support for pupils in their lessons and in the warm and caring ambience of the school community. Preparations for the transfer from the school to secondary education at the end of Year 6 are very good. Key members of staff at the secondary school visit pupils in their school and very effective links are established for teaching of science and modern foreign languages.

15. One of the school's strengths is its very good provision of extra-curricular activities, which makes a substantial contribution to pupils' good attitudes to learning and to their good standards of behaviour. The provision is very well organised, with a wide range of sporting and musical activities and opportunities for learning outside the school day. Music is a particular strength, with large numbers of pupils enrolling to attend the school choir and to undertake instrumental tuition. A very strong feature of the school's learning programme is the teaching of several modern foreign languages.
16. The planned curriculum for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. There is a detailed scheme of work that supports the school's careful planning for this area of the curriculum. Sex education and drugs awareness are addressed through the personal, health and social education programme and science curriculum and they are taught in the context of a healthy lifestyle.
17. Overall, the match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants with a very good range of qualifications to support pupils of a primary age. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school knows that, as the number of children seeking entry to the school increases, the Year R area will need to be increased to accommodate them. The school is also aware of the need to relocate the library provision closer to the classrooms to make it more accessible. Classroom displays are attractive and cheerful and outdoor provision is very good. Resources are good, but storage space is limited.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety very well. It provides pupils with very good support, advice and guidance and involves them very well in its work and development. The school has very good procedures to take pupils' views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care of pupils is very good reflects the school's work and motivation to the benefit of learning.
- The pastoral and academic support for pupils is very good because it is carefully recorded and tailored to the needs of individuals.
- Pupils are engaged in the work of the school very well through a very effective school council.

Commentary

18. The provision for the care, guidance and support given to the pupils has improved well since the previous inspection. The care of individual pupils is central to the work of the school, so that all pupils are very well known by staff, enabling them to address pupils' needs in a focused and appropriate way that benefits their learning. Pupils are very positive about the school because they feel very well supported and cared for. Comprehensive and very effective arrangements for child protection are in place and health and safety arrangements are well thought through and promoted. The school, parents and other agencies, when available, work together very effectively. However, the very limited access to an educational psychologist and the mental health team for a small number of needy pupils is a concern. The school works very hard to ensure the needs of all pupils are addressed and is very imaginative and effective in addressing them. Bullying is not an issue because pupils and parents are confident in the very effective way it is handled.
19. Teachers have a comprehensive understanding of pupils' achievements and how to promote them because of the very good pastoral and academic support for pupils. Very good recording and promoting of these ensures that specific needs are considered and met very well, so that learning is enhanced. Children in Year R are well supported by very good induction arrangements. Close links throughout the school and with other schools ensure smooth transitions through and from the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Children's needs are identified very early and are helped by carefully and very effectively constructed individual educational plans. All staff, including a very good number of learning support assistants, give warm and very beneficial support that enables pupils to be fully included.
20. Pupils are given very good opportunities to put forward their views through the school council, an elected group of pupils that is a very effective discussion forum. Pupils express their views thoughtfully and responsibly because they know that even their most ambitious ideas are taken seriously. Pupils learn much through being fully involved in the outstanding research and outcomes of some of these ideas and the excellent school play facilities are a tribute to this and the strong working partnership the school maintains with pupils. This makes a very effective contribution to their personal development and this is clearly seen as they progress through the school to become very socially responsible and mature young people.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community, and other schools and colleges are all very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are very good because the school works hard to involve them fully as partners in their child's learning.
- Links with the community, other schools and colleges are very good and they make a very valuable contribution to the work of the school in helping pupils' learning.

Commentary

21. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community have improved well since the last inspection. Parents are very appreciative of the work of the school and value their partnership with it. Because of the high quality of the information they receive and the approachability of the school, all parents who are able support their child's learning well and contribute to higher standards. Parents feel a strong sense of partnership because of mutual respect, trust and confidence in the school. Parents are very supportive of the school and value its work, particularly the high standard of care they know their child receives. Parents value the excellent inclusion for children who had previously experienced unhappy schooling elsewhere, and now feel so valued.
22. Very good business links are very helpful in supporting the work of the school and its management. From the provision of soccer coaches to facilitating science fairs, local organisations provide highly productive links that enrich learning.
23. The school has very productive links with local schools and colleges and these have a reciprocal and beneficial impact on pupils' learning in all the schools involved. There are Year 11 referees from the local secondary schools, and the local grammar school gave valuable support for extension mathematics for one pupil and Latin for another. Co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science have link meetings and share resources to mutual benefit, enhancing the range of learning opportunities for pupils and enabling staff to share and extend their expertise with others. Care is taken to share information with schools about pupils and their needs to support a very successful transition.
24. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully consulted and work in harmony with the staff of the school and this has a very supportive impact on the pupils' learning. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, plays a very effective role in raising the confidence of parents and pupils and promotes the very effective partnerships that lift the pupils' aspirations.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The personal leadership of the headteacher is excellent. There is a strong sense of teamwork between staff and governors and a clear focus on standards. Leadership of other key staff and governance are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership.
- Knowledgeable staff work unstintingly for the school.
- There is a very clear vision shared by all for the continuing development of the school.
- Under the wise counsel of a vastly experienced Chair of Governors, the governing body fulfils its responsibilities very effectively.
- Financial management and control are very good.
- The school has comprehensive and regular self-evaluation procedures, which it puts to very good use.

Commentary

25. The team approach to leadership and management has led to good improvement since the last inspection. The leadership shown by the headteacher is outstanding; she is totally committed to the school. She displays a crystal-clear vision and a sensitive awareness of purpose for raising standards. She leads by example in all respects, including her class teaching responsibilities. Her leadership is principled, well established and focused on ensuring equality of opportunity for all. The headteacher and other key staff, including the assistant headteacher, are aware of the barriers to learning that exist for many pupils and there is a very strong commitment to removing these barriers so that all pupils can achieve their full potential. For example, the school's approach to managing ongoing long-term illness of staff has not only bridged any gaps, but has also led to the innovative use of ICT to enrich pupils' learning. The partially covered outdoor area for children in Year R is another example of this innovative approach to solving problems in order to widen children's learning opportunities.
26. The school is very successful in its endeavours. This positive climate for improvement has come about through fitting leadership, modelled on the headteacher, who inspires confidence. The headteacher receives strong support from the assistant headteacher and staff are supported and challenged very effectively, so that morale is high. As a result, teamwork and leadership at every level are very good. This is illustrated by the very good co-ordination of the provision for children in Year R and by the strong and developing co-ordination of subjects. The headteacher is equally successful in her co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Furthermore, the staff demonstrate enthusiasm for teaching, are ambitious for their pupils and take pride in the pupils' consequent achievements.
27. The school has very good management systems in place. The senior management team meets regularly to consider emerging issues and to monitor the progress of the school improvement plan. The improvement plan is very clearly focused on raising standards, based on an analysis of performance and the needs of the school. It is a very well prepared document that clearly identifies planned areas for improvement, those responsible, resource implications, time-spans and success criteria. There is regular and productive monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher. Performance management procedures are very well established. The school is successfully used as a placement for trainee teachers. The school rigorously compares its performance with those of other, similar schools. Standards of attainment and

progress made by pupils are closely monitored and evaluated. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in leadership and management.

28. Governance is very good and has improved well since the last inspection. Led very well by a wise Chair, governors support and work very effectively with the staff and fulfil their statutory obligations very effectively. They have been particularly effective in helping the headteacher in promoting the inclusive ethos of the school and in sustaining racial harmony. The governing body has played a supportive role in developing the school. The work of their sub-committees, for example, finance, and their thoughtful involvement in sustaining capable staff, have sustained improvement through significant periods of instability due to ongoing long-term sickness of staff. Governors are very well informed and involved and have a secure knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They use this information very effectively to seek ongoing improvement, for example, in enriching the accommodation and facilities at the school. The developing and already effective provision, including innovative outdoor facilities for pupils in Year R, is a particularly good example of this ongoing improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	361,402	Balance from previous year	17,700
Total expenditure	354,582	Balance carried forward to the next	23,520
Expenditure per pupil	2,540		

29. Systems of financial management exhibit very good budgetary control and also reflect the accuracy of the school's educational priorities. The school applies the principles of best value and uses its resources very effectively. The school's very precise management of finances related to long term staff illness demonstrates this very clearly. Overall, the pupils' very good achievement in response to the school's strong provision represents very good value for money and is another improvement since the last inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30. Provision for children in Year R, the Foundation Stage, is good. The designated outdoor areas are spacious and very well equipped. The recent addition of a 'tented' structure is a beneficial improvement that enables children to make good use of the area during inclement weather. It is also very useful in compensating for the limited indoor space that becomes less suitable when the second intake of children takes place in the spring term. This reflects the innovative and very effective leadership and management of this area of learning. Currently, children in Year R are taught with pupils in Year 1, but the teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistants ensure that children are taught an appropriate curriculum. The provision for children in Year R has been much improved in recent years and continues to be developed well by the co-ordinator. Children are introduced to the school carefully and settle quickly into the school routines. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average, but very occasionally this can vary substantially. Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well and, by the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, most children are reaching the early learning goals in their communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical and physical development. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development is above average and reflects the warm and very effective support given to this area of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy school and learn well, because adults give very warm assistance and children are taught to respect each other's contributions.
- The children achieve very well and reach above average standards for their age in this area of learning by the end of Year R, because of the strong and consistent emphasis given to this area of the curriculum.

Commentary

31. The very good teaching and close attention given to the children in this area of learning reflect the strong caring and inclusive ethos of the school. As a consequence, the children achieve very well and develop skills that are above those normally expected of this age. For example, the children enjoy and respect each other's contributions in discussions, share ideas readily and co-operate warmly during work and play. When their turn on the large wheeled toys comes to an end, most children happily allow others to have their turn and when they need support, as children with emotional and behavioural needs do, caring adults explain the reasons in a meaningful way that enables the children to understand. Within this inclusive ethos of learning, the children feel valued and welcomed; as a result, they enjoy coming to school and are happy and successful in their learning. This was clearly evident when children

were 'constructing' 'Noah's Ark' in the covered area. All adults present very good role models and the children learn from their example. Such consistent and very effective development of the children's skills in this area of the curriculum has an increasingly beneficial impact on their future learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and all adults have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children and use these well to develop their skills.
- Children achieve well; most reach the expected learning outcomes by the time they enter Year 1 and several exceed this level of attainment.
- Teachers are skilful in developing cross-curricular links and in making close connections with children's previous learning, thus helping their achievement.
- Occasionally there is scope to emphasise the development of the children's speaking skills more effectively.

Commentary

32. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well to reach the early learning goals expected for this aspect of the curriculum. The teacher and assistants use praise effectively to encourage the children and develop their ideas well through careful questioning. Children are given close support in extending their knowledge of letter sounds, for example, when using the newly created 'alphabet snake' painted on the playground. Adults use musical rhymes well to focus the children's attention and to develop their speech. Planned activities are used effectively to develop the children's speaking and listening skills, for example when role playing the making of 'Noah's Ark' in the covered area. Children are encouraged to work together and to share and communicate their ideas through role-play, as in the pretend 'Fire Station'. There is scope, at times, however, to use activities chosen by the children themselves as starting points to develop speech even more successfully.
33. The children's early writing skills are developed well by using whiteboards and by encouraging children to make lists, for example of the things they did at the weekend. As with promoting speech, however, the creation of lists from sources initiated by the children themselves, for example, the tools used when making their pretend 'Noah's Ark', would make learning more relevant to the children. The children's listening skills are developed consistently and well. Adults make good use of 'Big Books' such as 'The Story of Noah's Ark' and listening skills are supported strongly by the very good development of the children's personal, social and emotional skills. By the time they leave Year R, most children recognise initial sounds, use an appropriate range of words in their vocabulary and read short sentences. The children enjoy telling their own stories and retelling favourite tales. Children's writing shows that their formation of letters is developing effectively with some children writing meaningful sentences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning enable the children to achieve well.
- The teacher and assistants use assessment very effectively to plan suitable activities to meet the needs of the children and this aids their learning.
- Teachers and assistants are diligent in ensuring that the children's learning is strengthened by many and varied opportunities to learn through practical activities.

Commentary

34. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well to reach the expected early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Learning is firmly and effectively rooted in learning through first-hand experience, for example, using and counting the pairs of model animals as they enter 'Noah's Ark'. The teachers and assistants encourage the children to explain how they counted objects and use whiteboards effectively to develop the children's understanding of place value. All adults working with the children are careful to use and emphasise appropriate mathematical terms such as 'more than' and 'less than' and this aids the children's understanding. Numeracy skills are also encouraged effectively through counting rhymes and the planned use of mathematical games, such as snakes and ladders and number jigsaws. These frequent opportunities to count, to play with shapes and to measure using practical play equipment are successful in developing the children's skills. The children's learning is also enriched by the teachers' consistent and carefully planned use of ICT.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning lead to good achievement for all children.
- Innovative and well-organised facilities present a wide range of opportunities that enrich the children's learning.

Commentary

35. The good teaching and learning seen in this area of the curriculum are enriched by the very good range of resources available to the children and by the innovatively developed areas and accommodation provided. As a consequence, achievement is good and children reach the expected goals, with several exceeding them in this area of the curriculum by the time they leave Year R. The children use a good range of large wheeled toys enthusiastically as they pedal around the imaginatively created 'race track' on the playground. The children demonstrate the expected skills of balance, co-ordination and agility as they enjoy this activity. When using play saws, drills and hammers in the outdoor role-play 'ship-building' area, the children show similar levels of fine motor manipulative skills. These are also developed well when using computer keyboards and scissors, and when cooking. The children's drama and dance skills are developed well by a skilful nursery nurse when they visit the school hall. The space available in the hall is advantageous at this time of year when there is a small number of Year R children, but more restricted in the spring term when more children are admitted. Overall, this is much improved area of learning that is impacting with increasing success on children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The scope of this inspection did not enable the making of overall judgements of the provision or standards in these areas of learning.

36. In **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**, the children make good use of a wide range of resources to aid their learning. Computers are used frequently to assist topic work. The children are encouraged to explore the school environment and to develop their musical and drama ideas by using a good range of percussion instruments. All adults working with the children have very good levels of knowledge and experience and use these well to enrich the children's learning, for example when cooking. The teacher makes good links with whole-school assemblies to develop the children's cultural and religious awareness. Science is given a strong focus and learning is developed through practical activity. The children often work closely with Year 1 pupils, for example when investigating pushing and pulling.
37. In **Creative Development**, children experience a broad range of well-planned activities. These include cookery and singing musical rhymes to develop their numeracy skills and to focus their attention when changing activities. The children are encouraged to dress up in costumes to enrich their role-play learning, for example by wearing firemen's uniforms and helmets. The children's creativity is also developed by plentiful opportunities to draw and paint pictures of favourite storybook characters such as 'Elmer the Elephant' or by using 'painting' software on the computer.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management support good teamwork and consistency of approach, resulting in very good achievement.
- Provision has improved well since the previous inspection.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and to work.
- The location and space available for the library constrain its impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

38. After a couple of years of above average standards, results in the most recent National Curriculum tests showed that attainment by the end of Year 2 had fallen to below average. This was largely associated with the significant special educational needs of an atypical year group of pupils. Inspection findings show that pupils currently in Year 2 are now on course to attain above average standards. By Year 6, standards of attainment in listening, speaking, reading and writing are well above average, and they have improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. The school sets itself challenging targets and is meeting these through high expectations, very good quality management and the very good teamwork of the teachers.

39. High standards and very good achievement stem from very good curricular planning, improved systems for tracking and promoting each pupil's progress, and successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The main reason, however, relates to the very good teaching at the school. Very good liaison between the teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the subject co-ordinator results in appropriately challenging work that is planned for all levels of ability. In particular, there is very good support planned for those pupils whose attainment, by the school's standards, is a little below average, enabling them to achieve very well. Standards in writing are already improving as a result of the school assessing this aspect's relative weakness and putting in place appropriate strategies for improvement.
40. One of the particular strengths of the very good teaching is the way that teachers use high quality questioning to challenge the pupils and encourage them to think deeply. This impacts very well on the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Lessons are carefully planned and methods include a good range of activities that proceed at a good pace, maintaining pupils' interest. The pupils, for their part, want to succeed and strive to please their teachers. Group tasks are usually well matched to the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported by their teachers and by skilled learning support staff. Special provision is made for more able pupils through teaching in smaller groups. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and, consequently, pupils behave well and show good attitudes to their work. Very good relationships help especially to give pupils confidence when they speak and to concentrate and question responsively.
41. The subject is very well co-ordinated by the headteacher. Assessment strategies and their use are very good and the school is currently developing these even further. There is good use of information and communications technology to support the development of pupils' literacy, through the use of word-processing programs and 'PowerPoint' presentations.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. The school places a good emphasis on literacy across the curriculum, and there are opportunities in several subjects to write in different forms. However, there is less extended and reflective writing than normally expected in most years. Opportunities are not always grasped to promote literacy skills to the full in some subject areas, for example in religious education, where pupils could reflect more in their writing about how religious belief can influence people's lives.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 6 and achievement is very good.
- Standards are above average in Year 2, where achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are very good.

- The subject is co-ordinated very effectively.
- A strong emphasis on problem-solving and learning through practical work enriches learning.
- Pupils develop their independent learning skills well as they move through the school and by Year 6 their ability to question and learn independently enables them to achieve high standards.

Commentary

43. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and has improved well since the last inspection. Teachers are very knowledgeable and confident in teaching the subject and are particularly skilled in ensuring that pupils are challenged at an optimum level to promote ongoing achievement. Standards and provision have been improved well since the last inspection. Standards are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Pupils have consistently attained standards that are well above the national average in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in recent years and these have also been well above the average found in similar schools. The below average standards reached by Year 2 pupils in the 2004 National Curriculum tests reflect the performance of a year group of pupils that contains a significantly greater number of pupils with learning needs than is normally found in the school. The above average performance of pupils currently in Year 2 reflects good achievement and a return to the standards seen in National Curriculum tests in 2002 and 2003. Overall, inspection findings show that pupils achieve well in Year 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is especially strong in Year 6, where consistent, very effective teaching and the pupils' own application of their improved problem-solving and independent learning skills enrich their learning.
44. Teaching has an increasingly successful impact on pupils' learning as they move through the school for the following reasons:
- Very good questioning develops new learning from the pupils' current knowledge and understanding and helps to ensure a good pace to work in lessons.
 - Very effective day-to-day assessments of the pupils and their responses are used by teachers to present an achievable level of challenge and to build on pupils' knowledge and skills systematically.
 - Carefully planned and well-resourced learning opportunities promote practical learning through problem-solving and investigative approaches.
 - All adults working with the pupils promote warm relationships, value the pupils and their efforts and encourage pupils to develop independence and confidence in their learning.
 - Very effective use is made of ICT to strengthen the pupils' numeracy and data-handling and independent learning skills.
45. These aspects were seen to good effect in most lessons seen. For example, in Year 1 pupils were challenged with warmth and rigour when developing their number bonds to an above average standard by using mathematics games. Pupils' knowledge was advanced by singing number rhymes, using ICT software and by counting numbers obtained by using dice. The end-of-lesson 'plenary session' seen in Year 2 illustrated how the teacher used strong questioning to challenge the pupils in developing their own strategies to solve addition problems with confidence and to an above average

standard. The teacher in Year 3 promoted a quick pace when teaching multiplication strategies and this kept a significant number of pupils with learning needs closely and productively engaged in their work. The good practice of challenging and encouraging pupils to develop their own problem-solving strategies was also seen to good effect in lessons in Years 4 and 5, where the sharing of learning objectives with the pupils was an additional effective aid to learning. All these successful aspects of teaching and learning were used to full effect in Year 6, for example, when identifying the work of 'function machines' and how they developed number patterns. Here, most pupils showed well above average numeracy skills. The teacher's careful and precise matching of work to the pupils' ability was another strong feature, as was the very effective use of ICT to develop opportunities for pupils to learn independently. In order to build on this very good progress, there is now scope for pupils to seek solutions to problems they have identified themselves.

46. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils are supported with equal effectiveness. The headteacher and chair of governors also make strong contributions to supporting gifted and talented pupils. Assessments are informed well by the teachers' careful marking; and pupils' learning is enriched by the useful information, often linked to identified targets, that is given to pupils. The assistant headteacher as co-ordinator leads the development of the subject very effectively. She is a talented teacher and gives very good support and advice to colleagues. She has been instrumental in developing the consistent quality of teaching throughout the school that underpins pupils' achievement. Resources for supporting pupils with special needs, especially ICT resources, are very good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. Pupils are using and developing their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, in science lessons in Years 5 and 6, pupils measure angles and distances when investigating how eyes function. Numeracy skills are used and practised in music lessons when helping pupils to count out the beat in order to develop rhythm. Numeracy and other mathematical skills are used well when pupils work at computers, especially when handling data and constructing graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Science is highly regarded and enjoyed by both pupils and teachers and this enriches learning.
- Practical activities underpin learning, so that the lessons make sense to pupils.
- Teaching methods are imaginative and stimulate pupils' interest.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good and there has been a good improvement in provision since the last inspection.

Commentary

48. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average. Year 6 National Curriculum test results in recent years have been well above average, because many Year 6 pupils have significantly exceeded the expected levels. Pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. The good start made in Years 1 and 2 has a positive effect on these results. As pupils move up the school they are increasingly aware of the features of fair tests and become more competent at making predictions and recording outcomes.
49. Pupils enjoy science because their teachers present them with interesting, stimulating activities. For example, in Year 2, pupils studying electricity were eager to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of circuits to visitors. Pupils in Year 6 were actively and unobtrusively engaged in a variety of research activities related to their studies of the human eye. A number quietly researched intensively at their computers as they assembled further details, while others worked equally independently in their study groups. Pupils were not afraid to present their findings to the class and to challenge the teacher's opinions when appropriate. They readily share their findings with visitors and collaborate very well with their teachers and with each other in these challenging, scientific workshops. This stimulating approach to teaching and learning is typical of the methods used throughout the school to make learning in science relevant and interesting to pupils.
50. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned and the methods employed are varied, interesting and promote practical investigation. Teachers understand the elements of the subject they are teaching very well. Pupil management is usually good and, as a result, pupils are fully involved in the subject and are enthusiastic about it. The pupils mostly behave well in their lessons and have very good levels of concentration. On rare occasions when the teachers' management slips, pupils' learning is distracted. Probing questions from the teachers extend the pupils' thinking effectively. Support staff are used effectively during lessons. Teachers' marking and assessment are good and assessment procedures have developed well.
51. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader knows her subject very well and provides very good support for her colleagues. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Resources are generally good. ICT skills are promoted well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT was sampled because it was not possible to observe sufficient whole-class lessons to judge provision across the school.

52. The subject is led very enthusiastically and effectively. Development of the subject has been limited at times in the past due to long-term staff illness, but thoughtful planning and innovative leadership have led to an increased use of computers throughout the school. Pupils' learning in several subjects, notably mathematics, science and history, is now supported effectively by the use of ICT. In particular, pupils' individual skills in pursuing their own research and investigations are significantly strengthened, most

notably in Year 6. A good example of this beneficial learning was seen in the Years 5 and 6 class, where pupils were researching Internet websites and preparing for multi-media 'PowerPoint' presentations of the Tudor period.

53. Although it was not possible to observe sufficient whole-class lessons, several other examples of the good use of ICT were seen. These included pupils in Years 1 and 2 using computers to help learn their spellings. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 used computers to investigate the nets of three-dimensional shapes and pupils in Years 5 and 6 also used computers to study the reflection of light in science. In other classes across the school, individuals and groups of pupils were seen being supported by learning support assistants, for example when using ICT to develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills. During these sessions, pupils worked with enthusiasm, and teachers and assistants showed good ICT skills, encouraged warm relationships and developed the pupils' confidence when using computers. Overall resources for learning are good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

54. ICT is used to good effect across the curriculum. The pupils' studies in mathematics and science are enriched well by the use of ICT, especially in encouraging the pupils' independent investigation and problem-solving skills. Examples of the use of computers include researching about eyes and investigating three-dimensional shapes. Computers are used well in other subjects, for example in English when creating newspaper articles and in history when producing multi-media presentations of work on the Tudors. There is an increasing and beneficial use of ICT through the school to assist pupils' learning.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was sampled because no lessons could be seen during the inspection. Geography and history were not inspected.

55. The **religious education** curriculum is soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus and there are good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, including during whole-school and class assemblies. Books and displays show that pupils are developing their skills systematically as they move through the school. By Year 2, pupils recognise religious symbols and identify some religious beliefs. In Year 6, evidence revealed that pupils had discussed many aspects of religion and their views on deeper questions of existence were well expressed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music was inspected in full and is reported below. Art and design, design and technology and physical education were not inspected.

Music

The school's provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- The subject is very well taught and pupils learn very well and enjoy their music lessons.
- There is a good range of peripatetic instrumental tuition available for pupils.
- There is considerable enhancement of the curriculum in music through performances.

Commentary

56. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good and continues to improve. Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection and show that previous issues of concern about provision in music have now been overcome successfully. This has been achieved largely by obtaining specialist teaching throughout the school, carrying out extensive monitoring of planning, standards and teaching and significantly increasing the profile of the subject in the school.
57. The quality of teaching seen was very good. This was because the specialist teacher used her very good subject knowledge to help pupils compose pieces of music and to promote their confidence in performance. In one lesson the teacher introduced pupils to Tudor music and encouraged them to recreate the style of the period in their lively performances. As the teacher recapped previous learning, the pupils showed good understanding and were eager to practise their pieces of music. Most were very well motivated and thoroughly engrossed in their lesson. Methods of teaching in the lessons seen were stimulating and there was a very good level of challenge to the activities provided. Expectations of behaviour were high throughout the lessons. There was a good choice of instruments and different types of practical activity. As a result, the pupils were enthusiastic about the tasks and applied themselves to them cheerfully.
58. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is a skilled musician who has successfully captured the respect and support of pupils throughout the school. She has developed strong links with other areas of the curriculum, particularly history and literacy. The musical links with the local community are strong and the school choir frequently performs for groups in the area and in Reading. These visits and performances greatly enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assessment procedures are effective and are developing appropriately. Resources for learning are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship were sampled.

59. This area of the curriculum is supported very strongly across the school by the warm adult help given to all pupils, whatever their individual needs and backgrounds. The inclusive ethos of the school underpins the quality of support given to each pupil. The planned curriculum for the pupils' personal, social and health education is supported by a detailed scheme of work. Sex education and drugs awareness are addressed through the personal, health and social education programme and science curriculum, and they are taught in the context of a healthy lifestyle. Assembly themes such as 'courage', the contribution of the school council (an elected group of representative

pupils) and discussions in classrooms provide plentiful opportunities for the pupils to express their views and develop their understanding further. The school's ongoing development of a broad curriculum, examined through a series of cross-curricular topics and achieved by the promotion of the pupils' independent research skills, continues to enrich this part of curricular learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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