

INSPECTION REPORT

CHARLTON HORETHORNE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charlton Horethorne, Sherborne

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123901

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Shaw

Lead inspector: Dr Colin Lee

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 266591

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	57
School address:	Charlton Horethorne Sherborne Dorset
Postcode:	DT9 4NL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Gudgeon
Date of previous inspection:	15 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Charlton Horethorne is a small primary school with 57 pupils on roll. It serves a wide catchment area with pupils attending from several villages in the locality. Very few pupils join or leave the school at times other than the start of a school year so mobility is less than in most schools. The broad mix of housing and backgrounds of pupils results in their socio-economic circumstances being slightly below average. All pupils are of white British heritage with English as their first language. Proportions of pupils with special educational needs are average but none have a statement of special educational needs. The special needs cover a spectrum of general and specific learning and physical difficulties. Attainment on entry is below average, overall, but this varies annually and, in some years, it has been well below average in language and mathematical development. Pupils are taught in three classes. Religious education is inspected by a team from the Diocese.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21854	Dr Colin Lee	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
33735	Mr Stephen Huard	Lay inspector	
32136	Mrs Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Personal, social and health education The Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Charlton Horethorne is a good school that is an important part of the local community. Pupils in most years achieve well and they are making good progress across the curriculum. Good teaching helps pupils to attain standards that are often higher than they could reasonably be expected to achieve. Staff work effectively as a united team and are highly committed to ensuring that all pupils receive a high quality of education that fully meets their needs. The headteacher's good leadership and management have a significant impact in improving the school's overall effectiveness. Being a very small school, funding per pupil is comparatively high, but the school is, nevertheless, providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching and learning help pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils behave very well and have good, positive attitudes to school and all that they do.
- A broad, rich curriculum is provided.
- Lack of assessment in science contrasts with the otherwise good procedures for assessment.
- Standards in reading and information and communication technology are above average in all age groups.
- Pupils' confidence and the standards in the fluency and range of vocabulary used in speaking are not high enough.
- Leadership and management are good, overall, but governors' systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, although satisfactory, are too informal.
- The school's partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are good.

The school was previously inspected in March 1999. At that time a few areas were identified as weaknesses and these have all been satisfactorily addressed. Assessment and curriculum guidelines have been developed well; provision for multi-cultural education has improved, as have the resources provided for children under five. Pupils' standards reflect the characteristics of each small year group but they are, frequently, above those that could reasonably be expected when their low starting point is taken into consideration. Improved standards since the last inspection are most noticeable in reading, information and communication technology and science.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; 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.

A large majority of pupils achieve well, with the sound start in the reception year developing into good achievement during Years 1 to 5, but satisfactory achievement overall in Year 6. Caution is needed when considering data in the above table because numbers of pupils are very small. Nevertheless, the results achieved by pupils in Year 6 who took the national tests in 2003 were very high. Those taking the tests in 2004 were generally of lower ability. The targets set for 2004 were met in mathematics but not in English. The pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain the targets set for them by the end of the year, but their levels of performance at the end of Year 5 suggest that the targets could be higher. By the end of Year 6, pupils are on track to exceed the national average in reading and science and match the standards in writing and in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics and science.

Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology are above what is typically seen in other schools. Standards in swimming exceed national expectations by the end of Year 6, while they are the same as in other schools in other aspects of physical education. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music across the school as a whole. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The good quality of the support from a small group of teaching assistants is a major reason for the good progress these pupils make. Children in the reception year are making satisfactory progress from a below average starting point. They are on track to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in their personal development, and are close to achieving the goals in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. However, they are unlikely to achieve the goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development, which are the two areas of greatest weakness when the children start school.

Pupils develop good personal qualities because the overall quality of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attitudes are good and behaviour is very good. Attendance rates over a year are slightly above the national average, but unsatisfactory in summer terms. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and is the main reason for good achievement by the majority of pupils. The challenging situation of several year groups in each class is met successfully by the good planning of the curriculum. This provides a good range of learning opportunities that is rich and stimulating. Throughout the school, provision is supported well by very competent teaching assistants. Pupils' learning is assessed well, overall, but the lack of regular assessment in science is a weakness.

The school shows good concern for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils and provides them with good support, advice and guidance. There is good quality support for pupils with special educational needs. The school works well with parents, providing good information about their children's education and how parents can help them. There are good links with other schools in the area which are beneficial to both pupils and staff. Similarly, links with the community are good and the school is an important institution within the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's effective leadership and management of the school focus on raising standards through the improved quality of teaching, ensuring good management by all staff, and through a commitment to teamwork involving all members of teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, parents and governors. Improvements are managed well by this teamwork approach. The well-led governing body works hard to ensure that the school has good facilities and advantageous staffing levels. However, governors are aware that their procedures for independent monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress are not sufficiently rigorous. The governors ensure that all statutory requirements are being met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express very good views about the school. They particularly appreciate the high expectations that the school has of its pupils. They are pleased with levels of progress and the good teaching. Pupils are very positive about the school and enjoy their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop and implement procedures for assessment of pupils' learning in science.
- Continue with the current priority placed on raising the standard of pupils' speaking skills.

- Establish more formal systems of monitoring and evaluation to enable the governing body to further improve its understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

A large majority of pupils achieve well, with the sound start in the reception year, developing into good achievement during Years 1 to 5, but satisfactory achievement overall in Year 6. Standards in reading and information and communication technology are above average throughout the school and science is a strength by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in most year groups, but satisfactory overall in the reception year and Year 6.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are above average in reading.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in reading and science and above national expectations in swimming.
- Although average overall, pupils' confidence and their standards in the fluency and range of vocabulary used in speaking are very variable.
- Standards in information and communication technology are above expectations throughout the school.

Commentary

1. On entry to the school, children's attainment is below average overall. In relation to this starting point, their achievement during the reception year is satisfactory. Not all children achieve the early learning goals in their language or mathematical development that are set for the end of the reception year. However, they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. In these areas they are much closer to achieving the relevant early learning goals by the end of the reception year and are in line to exceed the goals set for personal development
2. Upon transfer into Year 1, teachers' good planning of learning activities helps pupils to progress into the National Curriculum when they are ready. Their progress accelerates during Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, their standards are generally in line with the national averages in writing, mathematics and science. Progress is especially good in reading and information and communication technology and standards are above average. These levels of attainment, combined with the fact that the quality of their work in most other subjects is at expected levels, overall, show that pupils' achievement through Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards in music. The one area where progress is slower is in speaking skills. Whilst a few pupils speak fluently and confidently, the majority lack the confidence or range of vocabulary expected by the end of Year 2
3. The school's past results in the national tests, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, show marked fluctuations from year to year. However, the results have generally reflected at least satisfactory progress during the pupils' time at the school, bearing in mind the low starting point of many of them. All test results must be judged with caution due to the very small numbers of pupils involved. The Year 2 test results in 2004 improved on the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics and were in line with predictions based on the pupils' past attainment. This confirms good achievement since those pupils moved from the reception year into Year 1.

4. Pupils continue to achieve well when they are in the lower Key Stage 2¹ class (Years 3 and 4). They maintain good progress in most subjects, but particularly in reading, writing and information and communication technology. Achievement is more variable in the Upper Key Stage 2 class (Years 5 and 6) due to inconsistencies between subjects in the planning of learning activities, the clarity of the learning to be achieved and the expectations of what pupils are capable. As a consequence, pupils in Year 5 generally maintain good achievement, because expectations are high. This is less evident for the pupils in Year 6 and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in reading, science and information and communication technology, above expectations in swimming, but no higher than expected in other subjects. Overall, the achievement of the majority of pupils in Year 6 is satisfactory. For the whole of Key Stage 2, there is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards in art and design. Throughout the key stage, pupils vary in their confidence and ability when speaking out loud in group situations. A few higher-attaining pupils are very articulate, but a significant number in each class make only limited contributions to discussions and these are not generally fluent enough.
5. The school's records of pupils' progress, and results of the national test taken towards the end of Year 6, confirm the slowing down of progress in Year 6. In 2004, the school's results were close to the target set for the pupils in mathematics but were below the target for English. The individual records of these pupils show that they made satisfactory progress in reading during Year 6, but unsatisfactory progress in writing, where three pupils made no significant, measurable progress between the end of Year 5 and the end of Year 6. This should be contrasted with the previous year when, with the same teacher, six out of the ten pupils in the group made more progress than that expected of pupils in a year at Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that teacher expectations are not consistently high enough to ensure that the pupils currently in Year 6 maintain sufficient progress in all subjects from the levels that they were at by the end of Year 5.
6. Information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection, when standards were matching expectations. The previous strengths have been developed further. The good subject leadership, confidence and competence of teachers and teaching assistants, and a very good breadth of learning opportunities for pupils have produced a consistency of good progress throughout the school that was not evident at the time of the last inspection. These developments have successfully raised pupils' standards. Additionally, standards in science by the end of Year 6 and in reading throughout the school are also higher than at the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school focuses on providing an environment in which pupils mature throughout their time in the school. Pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to their work are good. Attendance is satisfactory but there is a particular concern with pupils being taken out of school for annual holidays. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well in class and throughout the school.
- Attendance levels drop significantly in the summer term, due to the number of parents taking pupils out of school for annual holidays.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are attentive in class and work with enthusiasm. Relationships with adults, whether they are staff or voluntary helpers, are positive.

¹ Key Stage 2, sometimes referred to as the juniors, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

8. Within this small village school, the pupils play very well together, whether between boys and girls, or within different age groups. Pupils support each other, with those in Years 5 and 6 showing good concern for the younger ones. The parents and staff are proud of the way the pupils behave on school trips and visits. Pupils mature appropriately and support the view of parents that there is little or no bullying at the school. The school has effective procedures to deal with any isolated incidents. Behaviour and attention in class is very good.
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with particular emphasis on personal development and social skills. There has been good improvement in the area of multi-cultural activities since the last inspection. The school's Christian ethos ensures that pupils' spiritual development is given sufficient attention through assemblies and is illustrated by the high levels of participation events at the village church.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. The whole-year attendance figure for 2003/04 was 95.3 per cent; the same as for 2002/03. Although this is better than the national average, the trend of improvement over the last few years has not been maintained. Actual attendance in the months of June and July prevented a better result being achieved. This was due to the lack of support from some parents who take their children out of school for annual holidays. Despite parents being reminded in the termly newsletter, concern over this issue persists. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education, through good teaching, and a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum. Pastoral care is good and the school's good partnerships with parents, the community and other schools contribute well to pupils' education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is successfully meeting the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in a class in most lessons.
- Teacher expectation of the learning to be achieved by pupils in Year 6 is not consistently high enough.
- Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning through good teaching and thorough knowledge of the pupils with whom they work.
- Procedures for assessment of pupils' learning are good, overall, but day-to-day assessment relies too much on verbal reporting between staff.
- Target-setting is well established and has good impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

11. The particular demands of teaching mixed-age classes are met successfully by teachers. The overall quality of teaching is good and there are specific strengths in each of the three classes. The learning activities planned for children in the reception year dovetail well with the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2. At times, the reception-age children's activities are related to the

general topic of a lesson and this enables them to be very much part of the class and contribute to phases of a lesson such as introductory or concluding discussions. On other occasions, they experience separate activities planned to address very specific aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The thoroughness of the teachers' planning is a strength and it details very specifically the learning to be achieved by the different year groups in each lesson. This aspect of planning is even more refined in the Year 3 and 4 class, where pupils are grouped for literacy and numeracy by ability rather than age. There is a very good match of learning activities to the ability level of each group and this is resulting in good learning, because pupils work at tasks that have just the right level of challenge. The consistency of approach and expectations of the two teachers of this class is another significant factor contributing to pupils' good achievement during Years 3 and 4.

12. Very good teaching has been observed in all three classes, but there is more variability in quality of teaching in the class of Year 5 and 6 pupils. This is due to inconsistencies in planning for different subjects in respect of the learning intentions and the expectations of different pupils. Where intentions are clear in the planning and communication, and expectations are high, the quality of pupils' learning is correspondingly good. This was evident in a very good science lesson, where higher-attaining pupils were challenged to work independently and plan their own practical investigation, while others were given just enough well-timed guidance to ensure that their levels of interest and progress were maintained. The contrast was seen in a literacy lesson, where learning intentions for different groups were not clear enough and too much input by the teacher minimised pupils' involvement in learning activities and reduced significantly the learning achieved.
13. There are significant features of teaching that are consistently good throughout the school. First, the insistence by all staff on high standards of behaviour by all pupils. The consistency of expectations between adults provides clear guidelines for all pupils and they respond well to these. Second, good use is made of teaching assistants. These support staff provide good guidance to the pupils with whom they work, although there are occasions when they require more detail from class teachers about what it is intended that pupils will learn from an activity, rather than just what pupils are to do. The teaching assistants are particularly vital to the progress of the children in the reception year and the pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' encouragement of pupils to help one another, to work independently, to work collaboratively and to show respect has a good impact on pupils' learning. Equality of opportunity is given high priority in all lessons. For example, nearly all the work for the pupils with special educational needs is planned as part of class lessons, enabling the pupils to be fully involved and rarely experiencing withdrawal from the class and the feeling of 'being different' that this might cause.
14. The good procedures for assessment of pupils' learning that were evident at the last inspection have been improved further by consistent practices that ensure that the teachers incorporate the information from assessment in their planning of pupils' future learning. This is now well developed in English, mathematics and information and communication technology throughout the school. However, the lack of assessment in science is a significant weakness in this otherwise good aspect of teachers' work. Teachers constantly and successfully assess pupils' progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy and ensure in future planning that the changing needs of most individuals and groups are being fully catered for in the learning activities being provided. The detailed notes that teachers write on a monthly sample of each pupil's writing are an excellent example of how assessment is identifying the next stage in the pupils' learning. Ongoing assessment of pupils with special educational needs is thorough and the tracking of their progress is aided by the good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants. The good interaction between teachers and teaching assistants or volunteers is a feature of many lessons but, for example, where a group works outside a classroom, feedback to the teacher about pupils' work is usually verbal. There is insufficient written recording, as a form of ongoing day-to-day assessment, of pupils' responses to tasks.
15. Assessment is closely linked to target-setting and this is having a particularly good impact on pupils' learning in writing and information and communication technology. A very good progression in specific, short-term targets for pupils to work towards in their writing enables

teachers to monitor very effectively the pupils' progress in their writing. The information and communication technology log books are an ongoing record of the skills that pupils are acquiring. These are filled in by teachers for younger pupils, but by the pupils themselves as they get older. This gives the pupils a clear understanding of their own learning. Self-assessment by pupils is an increasing influence on their learning as they get older. The pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class have a booklet in which they enter a minimum of two targets per term that they are working towards in each subject. At the end of each term pupils then record how successful they have been. This is an innovative and effective aspect of the good quality of learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	9	8	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

Overall, curriculum provision is good. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn, and consistent approaches to planning for them. Opportunities for enrichment are good. The school's values for inclusion and equality of opportunity are consistently reflected in what the pupils do. The school's accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Annual, termly and weekly planning promotes a good range and progression of learning.
- Teachers make good links between subjects.
- Visits to places of local interest support and enliven the curriculum.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- An on-going programme of building and refurbishment provides an attractive learning environment.

Commentary

16. The school keeps its curriculum under constant and effective review and implements changes well. Curriculum planning and schemes of work have been systematically developed to ensure full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. It meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and satisfactorily implements the guidelines for the Foundation Stage curriculum. Each subject is given an appropriate amount of time. There is satisfactory provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship, including appropriate sex and relationships education and drugs education. Overall, the school ensures that pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators regularly monitor teachers' planning, observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' work.
17. The range of visits and visitors, together with educational visits, give pupils extra chances to learn. The range of clubs offered is good, particularly for such a small school. A number of different options are available each term and a significant proportion of the pupils are involved. Educational visits are regularly planned and enhance the quality of learning. Visitors are invited to school to talk with pupils and share their knowledge and expertise and these have included theatre and music groups. Sport is well represented and benefits from coaching from outside experts, for example, for football and short tennis. There are adequate arrangements for pupils to swim, with regular visits to a local school's pool in autumn and winter and use of the school's own outdoor pool in the summer months. As well as regular school performances, pupils have opportunities to take part in a range of musical events in the wider community. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in team sports and to compete against other schools and groups.

18. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers identify such pupils early and make thorough assessments of their needs. Teachers, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator, then set realistic targets for the pupils to attain. Together with the support staff, they regularly check how well these pupils are doing. They make sure that the work set is relevant and helps pupils to reach their targets, in the context of what the rest of the class are doing. As far as possible, pupils needing extra support receive it in their class, to enable them participate fully. This also ensures that they do not miss the vital parts of any lessons. The support staff provide good support for pupils and teach the additional programmes, such as that for literacy, well.
19. Overall, staffing, accommodation and resources are good. There are strengths in the quality and deployment of the teaching assistants. They support and encourage pupils well, working mainly with those who need further support and with children of reception age. Strengths in the accommodation are the recently developed library and 'internet café' area, and there is an on-going programme of building and refurbishment. The school has the advantage of its own outdoor swimming pool that is used during the summer term. Additionally, pupils use the indoor pool at the local secondary school and this enables swimming instruction to be provided throughout the year for all age groups.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a good, safe and secure environment for pupils with very good induction at reception and for those transferring later. Pupils' good, all-round development owes much to the good levels of pastoral care and support and guidance. Pupils' views are taken into account on all aspects of school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for children starting their reception year, and for those transferring from other schools at later stages, are very good.
- Pupils are happy at school and parents show a high level of satisfaction that pupils make good progress.
- Each pupil is well known and valued by staff throughout their time at school enabling them to be understood and developed appropriately without elaborate monitoring.

Commentary

20. The school continues to make the care and support of pupils a high priority. Child protection arrangements are in place with the headteacher having designated responsibility. Almost all pupils feel they have an adult at school they can turn to if worried at school. This illustrates well the ethos of the school. Induction arrangements are very good.
21. Health and safety arrangements are good, overall, with regular inspections of all facilities and buildings with appropriate follow up action. The lunch time staff provide good care, and attend to any minor incidents promptly and effectively. The number of such incidents has remained at a constant level over 2003/04.
22. The consultation of pupils by the school is informal at present, as the school is small enough for all staff to get to know pupils very well over their school careers. Current pre-school activities, which involve several afternoon sessions for children during the term prior to starting school, illustrate the caring nature of the staff and forge purposeful links between school and home.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with its parents and local community who value it highly. Close working relationships with the secondary school it feeds, gives many benefits to pupils when they transfer.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are happy with the responsiveness of staff to their concerns. The 'open-door' policy of the headteacher and staff is particularly valued.
- There is a good range of out-of-school activities for such a small school, with resources within the community and partner schools being utilised.
- Parents receive good, informative annual reports on their children's progress.
- Pre-school initiatives have a very positive impact and reach families throughout the area. Recent marketing initiatives have begun to reinforce this.

Commentary

23. The school has a good partnership with parents building on the choice many of them make to send their children to the school rather than more local ones. Parents are very good ambassadors for the school, recommending it to their neighbours and friends. Parents have good views about the school. They are particularly appreciative of the speed with which the school responds to any concerns expressed by parents. The pre-school initiatives have a very positive impact on this and an informative leaflet about the school is delivered throughout the surrounding area during the summer holidays. Termly newsletters and parents' questionnaires are regular, and response rates are high whenever the school seeks parents' views.
24. Parents receive informative reports about their children's progress that highlight their strengths and achievements, but also indicate aspects of learning that need developing. The school relies on informal contact with parents to establish their views on the reports, as there is no formal procedure for a parent to respond.
25. Links with the community are good and result in the provision of an extensive range of out-of-school activities. Good links exist with other schools especially the secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. Arrangements for this transfer are good. The school has derived many benefits from other schools in the local federation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school well. The leadership and management of other key staff are also good while governance of the school is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher combines a significant teaching commitment successfully with her leadership and management responsibilities.
- Key staff are providing good leadership and management of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- Governors are not sufficiently rigorous in their monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.
- The governing body has worked tirelessly to improve the school's accommodation and facilities.

Commentary

26. The headteacher's good leadership of the school is founded on her very good capacity for analysing the issues and priorities for school improvement and involving all members of the school community in decisions about the action to be taken to secure that improvement. Good delegation of responsibilities has resulted in key staff leading the school successfully in raising pupils' levels of achievement and refining the curriculum that is being taught. The headteacher communicates her vision and high aspirations for the school very well to parents, governors

and staff, securing their full involvement in review of achievements and planning of the next year's priorities. This has resulted in the school's effectiveness steadily and satisfactorily improving since the last inspection. However, the school sets itself a very demanding schedule with wide-ranging targets for each year that have to be addressed by a small number of personnel. A consequence is that not all issues are necessarily resolved in the time allocated. The school's priorities last year included a focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills. The inspection evidence is of too wide a range in pupils' standards in speaking, which confirms that this work should be carried forward as a continuing priority in the current school year.

27. There is a manageable delegation of responsibilities for different subjects and the teachers co-ordinating literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology do so well through their good leadership and management. The procedures for evaluating the success of their actions are thorough and, at times, innovative. The literacy co-ordinator's monitoring of pupils' learning and, consequently, the quality of teaching has been by videoing parts of lessons in each class. This has been very successful in promoting whole staff evaluation of teaching and learning and providing informative feedback on issues to be addressed. In information and communication technology, the co-ordinator is establishing a comprehensive portfolio of detailed analysis of samples of pupils' work that exemplifies key skills. This is developing into a valuable resource for assessment, curriculum development and further extension of teachers' subject knowledge. The headteacher has recently assumed responsibility for co-ordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs. This aspect of the school's work has developed into a significant strength, due to the high quality of the work of the previous co-ordinator and the success with which class teachers and teaching assistants have planned appropriate work and helped the pupils to make good progress. Overlying this quality provision is the school's determination to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils while striving to meet the needs of each individual pupil. Parental views on the success of special educational needs work place it as a significant strength and inspectors agree that this total inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school life is very good.
28. The governance of the school is satisfactory, with individual governors demonstrating a high level of commitment to the school's work and direction. The governing body has a clearly-defined structure of committees and individual responsibilities that are carried out conscientiously. The governors ensure that the school fully meets statutory requirements. Many governors bring considerable experience and talent to the governing body and there is a strong collective will to see the school succeed. Several governors visit the school regularly to assist in classes. This role is currently viewed as supportive rather than as one of monitoring and evaluating specific aspects of the school's work. In order to develop its understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, the governing body recognises a need for a more structured approach to monitoring and evaluating what is happening in the school. This recognition stems from the process of self-evaluation that the governing body is introducing into its work. Another initiative has been the establishment of a marketing strategy that has already resulted in good initiatives to heighten the school's profile within the community. The school has benefited from the excellent work of the chairperson of the buildings committee, and his colleagues, in securing the funding for an extensive programme of refurbishment of the premises and extension of the accommodation. The first-class library and hall facilities are very significant improvements to the quality of the learning environment.
29. The school's approach to financial management includes ongoing evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of financial decisions in terms of the educational benefits to pupils. The principles of best value are applied effectively to management and the use of resources through appropriate consultation, comparisons of performance, the school challenging itself and ensuring the best possible service through competition. Through carefully controlled expenditure, the school is currently able to maintain the present good staffing levels and target its funds to secure improvement in the quality of education for pupils. However, to achieve this, expenditure is seeing a gradual erosion of contingency funds and governors are mindful of the importance of a long-term strategy. Nevertheless, the school is doing well to provide good value for this expenditure and this is due to most pupils achieving well as a result of good teaching in a school that is run well.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	219,475
Total expenditure	229,185
Expenditure per pupil	3665

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	57,772
Balance carried forward to the next	48,062

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning is of good quality and incorporates the Foundation Stage curriculum effectively.
 - Assessment is good overall, but day-to-day procedures are not begun early enough.
 - Early in their school life, children are already learning to work collaboratively and independently.
 - Children's speaking and listening skills are generally fostered effectively through many activities, but need reinforcement.
 - The development of a range of physical skills receives appropriate support through varied activities.
30. Children in the reception year are taught in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. At the time of the inspection, the reception-age children were in their second week at school and priority was being given to helping them to settle into the routines of classroom life. Few extended periods of direct observation of the children took place and much of the first-hand evidence is of the children's personal, social and emotional development. The overall quality of provision in the Foundation Stage was established by scrutiny of teachers' planning and the past records and work samples of the pupils who moved into Year 1 at the start of this term. This shows that the children of reception age receive a sound start to their education. Teaching and learning have many good features and, in particular, the good quality of planning and organisation contributes to the effectiveness of these early years of education. Assessment is good overall, but day-to-day procedures, such as note-taking on the nature of individual children's responses to learning activities, are not begun early enough in the children's time at school. The good level of provision at the time of the last inspection has been successfully maintained.
31. Although standards on entry cover a relatively broad spectrum, the majority of the children are assessed as being below average. During their time in the reception class the children's achievement is satisfactory. However, records show that, by the time they move into Year 1, few of the children attain the Early Learning Goals in the required six areas of learning, or are close to doing so. Judging by current performance, it is likely that most of the current reception-age children will still be at a below average standard by the end of the reception year in their communication, language and literacy development and in their mathematical development. However, most children are on track to exceed the goals set for their personal development and reach the goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. The children already have good attitudes to everything associated with their education, and behave well.
32. The children's **personal, social and emotional development** is suitably promoted and developed and is a strength of the overall curriculum. The majority of the children are developing their confidence and establishing suitable relationships with one another, their class teacher and those who work with them in the classroom. Their behaviour is good and all the staff encourage them to be considerate of others. Children's interest and attention is captured well when adults are enthusiastic, and the use of varied resources generally supports learning effectively. Through a range of tasks and activities, concentration is fostered, and maintained, well. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and those with particular needs are suitably supported. Personal independence is focused on and promoted effectively. Children cope well with toileting and changing for physical education.
33. Suitable opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning. The **communication, language and literacy** skills of some are basic, but the development of these skills is generally promoted satisfactorily through a range of activities in

all areas of the early years' curriculum. Sensitive adult input encourages them to talk about what they are doing, for example talking about their observations, as they play in the water tray with sieves and colanders. Where questioning is used effectively, the staff encourage the children to develop their words and short phrases into sentences. Adults are patient and give the children time to think about what they want to say, and help them to articulate their thoughts. The children enjoy listening to stories and the classroom has a good range of picture fiction and non-fiction books, which are stored where the children have easy access to them. Early writing is encouraged effectively, often through role play. More able children are beginning to attempt to write their own names.

34. The children are making sound progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure, and provision for **mathematical development** is good. Games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number, are available and their use is effectively planned. Their use of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'bigger' or 'smaller' is fostered well.
35. Children make satisfactory progress in their **knowledge and understanding of the world** because they have opportunities to experience a broad range of learning activities in this area. Most children show a curiosity and interest in everything presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. Expeditions around the school, and its grounds, make them aware of the wider world. The children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects. Their interest and curiosity was, for instance, effectively developed by tasting different flavours and recording their findings with collage pictures. The children quickly learn to use computers and are developing suitable control of the mouse.
36. Children have regular, planned sessions in their own fenced outdoor area. However this is not adjacent to their classroom so they do not have constant access. The addition, in 2000, of the school hall with its gymnastics equipment has promoted the children's physical development very effectively. The playground contains attractive wooden adventure equipment further promoting the development of large muscle skills as children climb, crawl and swing. **Physical development** is planned and organised as an integral part of the overall curriculum in a variety of ways. The children also use the school hall for music and movement and dance. Children's dexterity is developed satisfactorily through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus.
37. Planning for children's **creative development** is good, giving children a range of artistic experiences. They use a variety of pencils, paints, chalks and collage to create images. Examples of children's work, such as self-portraits, are on display. They learn and sing a number of songs and rhymes, and have opportunities to listen to music, as well as playing percussion instruments. They have good opportunities to use their imagination, through role-play, and enjoy using the classroom's 'medical centre'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils vary markedly in their confidence and competence when speaking in group situations.
- Standards of reading are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Literacy skills are developed well in other subjects.
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

38. The school's performance in national tests varies from year to year because there are only a few pupils in each year group and, in some years the proportion of pupils with special educational needs relating to learning difficulties is often high. When compared with their prior attainment, pupils throughout much of the school are achieving well. On average, the attainment of each year group on entry to the school is below that found in most schools and this is generally most apparent in communication, language and literacy skills. Pupils who have joined the school at times other than the start of the reception year have generally been of average or below average ability. There is some variation in pupils' achievement between year groups. It is best in Years 3, 4 and 5 because teachers' expectations are high.
39. Pupils' standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Years 2 and 6, although there is significant variation between individual pupils in the confidence and quality of their oral contributions to lessons. The higher attaining pupils speak clearly and confidently. The vocabulary used by lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, is more limited and hesitant with, for example, answers to adults' questions being restricted to single words or very short phrases. By Year 6, pupils are good listeners but there is marked variation in the confidence of their speech. Overall, standards are average and this is due to teachers working very hard at encouraging pupils to think about the vocabulary they are using. This is most evident in subjects other than English when pupils are expected to use subject-specific language to show their understanding of technical terms. Staff are aware of the need for more focus on pupils' speaking and listening because, overall, too many pupils lack the confidence to speak in front of class groups and strategies to improve this confidence are not successful enough.
40. Pupils achieve well in reading and standards are above average throughout the school. The pupils in Year 2 read fluently and have a number of ways of tackling new words. The carefully graded reading scheme is used well. It ensures that pupils have regular support and practice both in school and through a successful home reading scheme, which results from a good partnership with parents. All pupils use non-fiction books competently, knowing the purpose of contents and index pages and knowing that the latter is arranged in alphabetical order. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop positive attitudes to books and, in Year 6, pupils read smoothly with expression, talking knowledgeably about different authors and using research skills successfully to access information. Pupils use the school's well-stocked library regularly and the freedom to take both fiction and non-fiction books home promotes the positive attitudes still further. The weekly library club run by a teaching assistant and pupil librarians is supported very well by pupils. Where reading is adversely affected by specific learning difficulties, pupils' good progress is nevertheless maintained as a result of teachers' good understanding of how best to assist pupils in order to ensure systematic development of reading skills and keep confidence levels high.
41. Standards in writing are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school is working hard and successfully to raise standards of writing and, with good guidance from the co-ordinator, these efforts have begun to have a positive impact on standards in the junior class. The excellent progression of short-term targets for pupils to work towards in their writing is enabling pupils to develop their ideas thoroughly and extend the quantity and quality of their writing successfully. Teachers work hard to develop basic skills in writing, so that all but the least able pupils in Year 2 write clear sentences, beginning with capital letters and ending in full stops. Higher attaining pupils use correct punctuation for direct speech. By Year 6, writing is organised clearly into paragraphs and the full range of punctuation is used correctly. Pupils are also provided with a wide range of opportunities to produce different types of writing and to write stories of a significant length. Their writing is given real purpose when, for example, in Years 5 and 6 they present arguments for or against an issue such as school uniform, and produce booklets on topics like the very successful bird watching, through a web cam installed in a nesting box.
42. Good teaching is resulting in good learning. Tasks are planned for different age and ability groups and generally match different pupils' needs successfully. This planning is particularly thorough in the Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 classes where lesson plans state different objectives, tasks and outcomes for each of the groups within a class. Teaching assistants are used well and they have good impact on pupils' learning because they know the pupils and

their targets well. The good achievement of pupils with special educational needs is due very largely to the very effective work of the teaching assistants. Lessons are interesting and challenging and pupils concentrate well and work hard. Ongoing assessment through marking has a positive effect on pupils' learning because it identifies how pupils can improve their work. The detail of teachers' analysis of a piece of writing by each pupil in 'First of the Month' books is impressive and provides a very good means of tracking pupils' progress towards their targets. The main learning intentions of lessons are usually introduced to pupils at the start of lessons but when pupils move to different learning activities in groups the specific purpose of the activity is not always explained clearly enough to each group. This is most evident in the upper Key Stage 2 class, where expectations are not always challenging enough because they haven't been thought through sufficiently at the planning stage.

43. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has a firm grasp of standards across the school and is supported well by colleagues. The monitoring of how all aspects of English are taught is thorough and results in a clear picture of strengths and development needs in the subject. The school has developed a detailed progress tracking system, which is used well to gain a good understanding of standards and achievement of all pupils. This information is then used to alter lesson planning in order to give pupils better chances of continuing to make progress in their learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Reading and writing skills are developed very effectively in other subjects, particularly when recording information in topic books. Information and communication technology is used well to aid literacy and pupils' writing is enhanced by the good application of word-processing skills. The overall standard of writing in work produced in different subjects is often higher than that achieved by the same pupils in annual tests. Tasks, such as that in geography in the Years 3 and 4 class requiring map reading skills to be applied to writing directions for a trip from the school to Dorchester, produce well-structured instructions reflecting above average writing skills. The same is true of the detail and range of vocabulary used by pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class in their work on the Dam Busters in the Second World War.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of good quality overall.
- A high level of practical work engages pupils' interest and attention.
- Pupils' attitudes are good.
- Assessment is well developed and pupils' progress is carefully tracked.
- The subject is well co-ordinated.

Commentary

45. The inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in mathematics are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good achievement by pupils in Years 1 and 2, which continues in Years 3, 4 and 5, but reverts to satisfactory achievement in Year 6. Achievement, including that by pupils with special educational needs, is, therefore, good overall. The overall provision is similar to the picture found at the last inspection, but the lack of focus on challenging the oldest pupils is restricting the school's success in effecting further improvement.
46. By the end of Year 2, many pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers to at least 20, although some have difficulty in mentally recalling number bonds. In a Year 2 lesson, for instance, pupils were observed handling money calculations practically with confidence. With good encouragement, most pupils attempt mental calculations and benefit from the structured

introductory sessions in their numeracy lessons. They enjoy playing games using dice, making simple calculations.

47. A study of the work of the pupils in Year 6 last year shows that, by the end of the year, most pupils understand place value to three digits and higher-attaining pupils are confident when making calculations. In a very good lesson seen in the upper juniors, pupils tackled mental and oral problems which focused on their knowledge of various multiplication tables. The use of the interactive whiteboard enhanced their learning and more able pupils were able to point out discrepancies in the task displayed and attempt solutions. Pupils know how to collect and organise data and can, for example, produce bar charts, line graphs and pie charts to illustrate their findings.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and there are many opportunities for pupils to work in practical contexts. For example, older pupils focus on the use of measurement and co-ordinates when completing a 'Dam Busters Raid' topic. Such topics engage and enthuse pupils. Lessons are suitably planned and cater well for all abilities, although more able pupils in Year 6 are not always sufficiently challenged. Where teaching is at its best, questions are used well to evaluate pupils' understanding and to advance their learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work in mathematics. Presentation is not always as good as it could be and inaccurate recording sometimes leads to confusion when less able pupils are required to record their calculations. This is particularly true in the infant class where pupils do not have 'squared' pages to enable them to lay out their work accurately.
49. The subject is led well and monitoring and tracking of pupils' achievement takes place regularly. All staff are strongly committed to raising standards. The teaching is routinely monitored and pupils' work scrutinised. Plans for future monitoring, featured in the school improvement plan, show that observation of the discussion sessions at the end of lessons is intended to be one of the focuses for the coming year. Good assessment procedures are in place and assessment is used well to track pupils' progress and to inform planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Basic numeracy skills are taught well, and pupils' mathematical skills are suitably promoted and extended in their work in other subjects. For example, in the juniors pupils used their mathematical and scientific skills, combined with design and technology, to produce three-dimensional Tudor houses and galleons. Information and communication technology is used well as a tool to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no formal assessment system in place.
- The strong practical element of the majority of lessons captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm.
- Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 generally achieve well and standards are above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Well-planned cross-curricular links ensure that pupils' literacy skills are used and developed effectively in science.

Commentary

51. The small number of pupils in each year group affects results in national tests, from year to year, but the usual picture is of standards in line with national averages. However, the results of last year's optional tests at the end of Year 5, together with the pupils' prior attainment, indicate that the pupils currently in Year 6 are in line to have above average results by the end of the year. Good quality teaching, particularly in the junior classes, has enabled pupils to develop a good understanding of scientific enquiry through a consistent 'hands-on' approach. In all science lessons seen, pupils were involved in exploration, experiments and challenges which encouraged their thinking and evaluation skills.
52. All groups of pupils, regardless of background, ability or gender, are achieving well because the teaching is good overall. Teachers prepare resources carefully, use teaching assistants effectively, and constantly challenge their pupils to draw scientific conclusions. Pupils frequently work in small groups and, as their interest is constantly sustained by the challenges, their behaviour and personal development is often good. They are encouraged to design their own experiments and older, more able pupils have creative ideas and devise interesting experimental solutions to problems. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, challenged to design practical methods of seed dispersal, had interesting and varied ideas on how it could be done. The teacher constantly challenged and developed their scientific thinking. In the lessons observed, pupils concentrated fully on the task in hand, determined to learn. The contribution of science to the development of pupils' literacy skills is generally consistent and well developed.
53. Two co-ordinators manage the subject, focusing on each key stage. A full review of the policy and scheme of work has recently taken place, and resources audited and supplemented as necessary. However, the school has yet to develop an assessment system for the subject. This means that shortcomings in teaching and learning in the various units of study are not identified or acted upon. Nor is challenge for more able, or underachieving, pupils identified and focused upon.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and their competence in information and communication technology is above national expectations throughout the school.
- Pupils' acquisition of skills is planned well and good learning is achieved, particularly through cross-curricular activities.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

54. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Standards exceed those in schools nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is the result of good teaching of a stimulating variety of learning activities that not only develop pupils' skills and knowledge well, but also offer pupils wide-ranging opportunities to apply their knowledge across many subjects. This good provision is co-ordinated well by the teacher responsible. These factors have a significant impact on the learning of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
55. Pupils across all areas of the school display confidence in their use of computers and other hardware, such as cassette recorders, digital cameras and sensors that measure environmental conditions. They are keen to try out new software. As pupils move through the school, their development of skills is systematic and carefully planned. When working in pairs, they discuss and resolve problems and use appropriate vocabulary. Pupils persevere, concentrate well and show interest. They listen attentively to their teachers and are enthusiastic, behave well, work hard and are pleased with what they achieve. In Year 2, for

example, pupils showed all these qualities in a literacy lesson on writing instructions, working independently of adult support.

56. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are planned very effectively and organised well so that maximum use is made of the limited number of computers in each class. These qualities were evident in a very well taught lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pupils were developing their knowledge of the procedures for entering a series of instructions to determine the movement of either a programmable toy or a 'turtle' on a computer screen. Those pupils not at computers had the tasks of writing the instructions that could later be tested at the computer. Others planned the commands that would navigate the toy around a large map. Within groups, pupils of different abilities were catered for very effectively, either by the challenge of the task set or by resources such as prompt cards to guide their learning. The independence of some pupils, the co-operation of others, the high levels of interest and the application of mathematical knowledge and literacy skills were all features of the very good learning that took place.
57. The leadership and management of the subject are highly effective. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the curriculum and the procedures for assessment of pupils' learning. She is creating a very good, detailed portfolio of examples of pupils' work in each topic within the information and communication technology curriculum. This serves as an excellent model of how pupils' work can be assessed and illustrates the qualities that place a piece of work at a particular level within the National Curriculum continuum that exists for grading pupils' work. Further good features of assessment include the log book for each pupil that records the progressive acquisition of skills. Curriculum planning includes a wide range of information and communication technology learning activities in other subjects, including literacy, numeracy, science and music. This is an improved aspect of provision since the last inspection. The other main change since that time is in the standards now being achieved by pupils. This improvement is a consequence of the good development of the subject overall.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. This is a strength of the school. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology as a tool to develop pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 not only use multimedia programs to produce sophisticated multimedia presentations on their work in, for example, history or science, but also practise their word-processing skills through written descriptions of how the presentations are created. Pupils' good ability to integrate varied sources of information is evident in literacy tasks, such as the production of illustrated holiday destination guides and the use of spreadsheets for holiday budgeting.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient work was seen during the inspection for inspectors to form an overall judgement about provision in **history and geography**. As well as the observation of a small number of lessons, pupils' work and teachers' planning were scrutinised, teachers interviewed and the content of classroom displays noted.

59. An examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning in **history** indicates that pupils study an appropriate range of time periods. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know details of the life and times of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and are developing an adequate understanding of time, as they notice how toys and homes have changed over the years. Topics in Years 3 to 6 have been taught to a good depth. For example, in their work on the Tudors, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have considered the impact of explorations, famous Tudor ships and the lifestyle of people in those times. Other periods studied include the Ancient Greeks, the Ancient Egyptians and Victorian Britain.
60. Across the school, teachers develop pupils' reasoning and deduction skills well, which contributes to their overall personal and social development. Teachers provide some good

opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in this subject, as they write diaries and letters from the perspective of Tudor people from all walks of life. The oldest pupils have their independent learning and historical research skills fostered well through the provision of topic booklets, differentiated for different abilities and skills. These show well-developed links with other subjects, such as science, design and technology, literacy and mathematics. The provision of a good bank of resources promotes further pupils' independent learning. Parts of two lessons were observed and teaching was good in both.

61. In **geography**, there are suitable curricular plans that outline which themes pupils are to explore from class to class. They set out the skills to be developed in each class. The curriculum is sufficiently detailed and identifies how literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills can be taught through the subject. One lesson was observed, in which the teaching was good. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are studying how their school has developed and expanded over the years with good use of plans, maps and aerial photographs. The curricular plans show that work on local environmental change will lead to studies of how the environment could be improved. The village and sites further afield are used well as a resource.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

As there was only one lesson in each of **art and design, design and technology and music** during the inspection, no judgements have been made about provision. However, the evidence of pupils' past work, teachers' planning and the guidelines used for the range of learning activities provided for pupils shows several strengths within these subjects.

62. In **art and design**, although the sample of work provided by the school was limited, it was sufficient to indicate that, by the end of Year 2, the work of pupils including those with special educational needs is at least matching the standards typically found in other schools. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate a strong sense of pattern, good control of line and colour in sketches and paintings, and a well-developed ability to create imaginative artwork with different materials. This is evident in work recently completed on portraits in the style of Picasso, and was observed in a very well taught lesson on line and form. Here, skilful teaching very successfully balanced teacher guidance on technique with creating opportunities for pupils to experiment. By teaching pupils the key principles of the skills of observation, the teacher's focus was on pupils learning a process, but such was the depth of this learning that the actual products; self-portraits, were of a good standard that pleased the pupils enormously. The range of media used for art-making broadens as pupils get older and they are successfully learning painting techniques, such as colour wash, a variety of methods of printing and a good range of experiences of working in three dimensions. Most learning activities are related to class topics. However, the school does not maintain any form of recording of pupils' progress and is not assessing pupils' learning with sufficient rigour.
63. In **design and technology**, pupils apply their art and design techniques to good effect to make and decorate products to a good standard. However, while the finished products often exceed expected standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in other aspects of the subject are not as high. There is very limited evidence of pupils having enough experience of evaluating their work to decide what works well and what might be improved. One innovative example of evaluations by pupils in Years 3 and 4 is the tape recorded interview of individual pupils by the teacher. The teacher's questioning leads pupils to comment on easy and difficult processes and what they might change if doing the task, which was making torches, again. Teaching and learning, in the one lesson observed, were satisfactory. However, although the learning to be achieved was explained clearly, materials had been pre-selected and prepared by the teacher, leaving little opportunity for decision-making and choice by the pupils themselves, as they strengthened girders that are to be used in models of Tudor houses. Past work provides evidence of a good breadth of learning opportunities in Years 1 and 2. These include use of mechanisms in vehicles, construction of structures, such as a Victorian kitchen and working drawbridges in models of castles. Pupils are acquiring appropriate knowledge of technical aspects, for example, different methods of joining materials when making hats. They plan tasks by listing materials and the stages in making things. Evidence of learning by older pupils

is very limited, and they are not keeping permanent records of planning or evaluating. This limits pupils' opportunities to assess the extent of their own learning and, similarly, teachers are not assessing pupils with sufficient rigour.

64. One **music** lesson was observed, in the Years 3 and 4 class, but there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about pupils' standards and achievement overall. The satisfactory teaching and learning observed provided appropriate opportunities for pupils to explore the musical elements of tempo and timbre. Several tape recorded performances of pupils playing their own compositions illustrated that they are interpreting themes creatively and with good performance skills. Good use is made of computer programs that help pupils to interpret their compositions through electronic sound. The standard of singing matches that found in most schools. However, the school choir performs to a high standard. The choir's performances are a significant feature of school and village life.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in swimming exceed national expectations.
- A broad school curriculum is supplemented by a good range of additional opportunities.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of health-related exercise.

Commentary

65. The school promotes physical education strongly. In its attempts to compensate for its physical isolation from other schools, and its small number of pupils, every effort is made to extend learning opportunities by developing initiatives with other schools and ensuring that there is good involvement in tournaments and other competitions in a wide variety of sports. The lessons taught during the inspection covered gymnastics at Key Stage 1, where expected standards are reached, and swimming at Key Stage 2, in which standards exceed expectations by the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is consistently good and incorporates thorough planning, good levels of subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' behaviour, attitudes and levels of performance. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the principles of health-related exercise is good because teachers regularly question pupils about the effects of exercise.
66. Teachers' planning indicates a well-structured programme and the provision of good learning opportunities in all areas of activity. The external facilities of a good-sized playground area and the school field enable a wide games programme to be taught. Pupils also make good use of the playground for self-initiated games and skill practice at lunchtimes.
67. To further extend pupils' appreciation of the benefits of exercise, a broad programme of extra-curricular activities is provided and levels of attendance at clubs are good. The breadth of learning opportunities now provided, and the raised status of physical education and sport, indicate a good improvement in provision since the last inspection. The new hall is a significant factor in this improved provision as it enables the full National Curriculum programmes of study for dance and gymnastics to be taught. All pupils, including the children in the reception year, are taught at the local secondary school's swimming pool during autumn and spring terms. Those in the early stages of learning, also swim in the school's own pool during the summer term. This is a very good level of provision compared with most schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

No lessons occurred in **personal, social and health education** during the inspection, therefore, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision.

68. Curriculum guidelines have been in development since the school received the 'Healthy Schools' award in September 2002. These are building on a detailed audit of what was being taught at that time. Most learning activities are incorporated into other subjects, with only pupils in Years 5 and 6 having lessons that deal specifically with personal, social and health education topics in isolation. Recent guidelines for teachers on aspects of citizenship to be taught in primary schools are being integrated into the range of learning opportunities being taught. The school has a good range of resources for this area of learning.
69. Learning activities are linked successfully to topics in literacy, science, religious education, design and technology and geography. Through activities, such as charity work, conservation, the study club, and studies of other countries and cultures, pupils are gaining a secure knowledge and understanding of factors that influence their personal development. This is raising their awareness successfully and helping them to become responsible citizens.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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