

INSPECTION REPORT

**DEDHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dedham near Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115076

Headteacher: Mrs Carolyn Clayton

Lead inspector: Rajinder Harrison

Dates of inspection: 11th - 13th October 2004

Inspection number: 266722

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: 182

School address: Parsons Field
Dedham
Colchester
Essex
Postcode: CO7 6BZ

Telephone number: (01206) 322 242
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Bailey

Date of previous inspection: 15th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dedham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a mixed-sex school for pupils aged 4 to 11 located in the village of Dedham near Colchester. With 182 pupils in 7 classes, it is of average size for a primary school. It serves the local area but many pupils travel from neighbouring villages and currently over a third come from out of the area. The socio-economic indicators for the area are well above average and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (3.0 per cent) is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (8.2 per cent) is below the national average, and two pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Eight of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, including dyslexia, speech and communication problems, visual impairment and have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most pupils are of white origin and three per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has very few pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue and only very occasionally pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition. Last year, seven pupils joined the school and five left other than at usual times, a mobility rate of 6 per cent, which is very low.

The school received two achievement awards, one for 1999/2000 and one for 2001/2002. In 2003 the school achieved 'Investors in People' recognition.

Attainment on entry is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18059	Rajinder Harrison	Lead inspector	English Religious education Geography Art and design Music Personal, social and health education
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector	
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science ICT Physical education
5531	Janet Croft	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school where overall standards are well above average. Teaching and learning are good and as a result, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils' personal development is good. Leadership, management and governance are good overall. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 because the teaching is good.
- The school promotes very positive attitudes to learning and pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, resulting in their good progress.
- The overall curriculum is good and opportunities to enrich learning are very good.
- Pupils are very happy at school and they are cared for well.
- Links with parents and the community are good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but does not match the good provision elsewhere in the school.
- The monitoring of teaching lacks sufficient rigour to ensure even higher expectations of pupils in all lessons.
- Information to parents regarding children's progress and greater involvement of harder-to-reach parents could be further developed.

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection. Teaching in Year 6 is now very good. Procedures for planning and assessment have improved and have had an impact on improving overall teaching. A good quality outdoor area has been provided for the Foundation Stage. Target setting has improved and as a result pupils of all abilities achieve well. The use of photocopied worksheets has reduced and pupils have more opportunities to carry out independent research for homework. Provision for those pupils identified as gifted and talented is developing. Teachers' marking has improved but still remains inconsistent across the school. The Governors' Annual Report to parents now meets requirements, but the quality of end-of-year reports to parents could be further developed. Performance management for all teaching staff is in place appropriately.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

science	A*	B	A*	A*
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Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. A* denotes in the top 5% nationally. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

As a result of overall good teaching, pupils achieve well. Standards in the tests and assessments in 2004 indicate that overall standards are very high at the end of both key stages, an improvement since the last inspection. This Year 6 group was a particularly high-attaining group at the end of its Year 2. The school performs much better than similar schools. The downward trend in mathematics at Key Stage 1, identified over the last few years, has been addressed successfully as a result of careful monitoring and tracking of individual pupils.

The majority of children enter the Foundation Stage with above-average attainment and this standard is maintained. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall, but is good in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. The majority of children attain all the Early Learning Goals expected of children at this age and a significant number attain some of the early targets of Level 1 in English and mathematics and some attaining parts of Level 2 in mathematics. Throughout Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well. For pupils in the current Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and science, and above average in mathematics. For pupils in the current Year 6, standards in English and science are well above average and standards are above average in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and religious education are above those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 because provision is good. The work sampled in other subjects is at least in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well throughout the school. This is because staff plan well in order to meet their assessed needs.

Pupils' personal development is good and is supported effectively by the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school, form very secure relationships and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good. They are caring towards each other and enjoy taking on responsibilities. Attendance is very high and punctuality good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall. Pupils learn effectively and make good progress because teachers provide interesting work and pay good attention to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in all activities. Assessment procedures are good and information about pupils' progress is generally used well to match work to their needs in most lessons. However, opportunities are missed to use the information gathered effectively to plan work that challenges children appropriately in the Foundation Stage. There is also an inconsistency in the marking, to help pupils recognise why their work is good and what they need to do to improve it further. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are used very effectively to support pupils' learning, especially helping those with special educational needs. Higher-attaining pupils are generally well challenged. The curriculum is good overall and it is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Opportunities to enrich the provision through visits and visitors to the school are very good. A well-planned programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development well.

The school takes good care of its pupils and promotes a positive ethos amongst the entire school community. Partnerships with parents and the community are good and links with other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and the work of the governing body are good. Leadership by the headteacher is good. She encourages and supports staff well and is very well supported by her deputy. The contribution of key staff is good. Governors monitor the school's performance well in order to set priorities for improvement. They ensure all statutory requirements are met and the school continues to improve.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school. The information they receive about their children's work and overall provision to consult with them regarding school matters are satisfactory. A significant minority of parents would like their views to be sought and taken into account more and they request more detailed information about their children's progress. **Pupils** are very happy at school. They feel safe and well looked after.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve provision in the Foundation Stage so that it matches the good provision seen in the rest of the school.
- Monitor teaching more rigorously to ensure teachers have even higher expectations of pupils in all lessons.
- Further improve the information parents receive about their children's progress and seek ways to engage more with parents who currently feel their views are not always taken into account enough.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Overall, pupils' achievement is **good**. Currently, standards in English and science are well above average and they are above average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and science are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Improvements in teaching, assessment and target setting have had an impact on raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- As a result of good provision, pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- The overall trend for improvement in 2004 was below the national level.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. The majority of children enter the Foundation Stage with overall above average attainment. Children achieve well in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. While overall standards in these areas of learning remain above average, a significant number of children attain standards that are well above

average and these children work, with confidence, at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Standards are above average in children's social development and their knowledge and understanding of the world and they maintain the standards they have when they enter the Foundation Stage. Their achievement in these areas is satisfactory. Achievement in their physical and creative development is satisfactory and standards are in line with what is expected of children of this age. Overall achievement is satisfactory. In the first weeks of school, teachers assess children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, and they monitor children's progress regularly. Work planned following these assessments does not always match children's needs accurately enough. This results in some children working at levels that are too difficult or too easy for them, thus impeding their progress and preventing more of them from making even greater gains in their learning.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	19.2 (16.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.8 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (16.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In the national tests and assessments in 2004, standards at the end of Year 2 against schools nationally were very high in reading, writing and science, and well above average in mathematics. Standards were well above average against schools with a similar free school meal number. The school's results indicate that it is at the higher levels of attainment (numbers of pupils achieving the above-average levels in the tests and assessments) that the school does particularly well, especially in reading. However, the trend for improvement overall over the last three years is below the national level. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls because the school ensures any differences in achievement are addressed well through careful planning. However, from the results in 2003, the school recognised that mathematics was a relative weakness and placed greater emphasis on monitoring pupils' progress in all subjects but especially in mathematics.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.2 (28.8)	26.9(26.8)
mathematics	30.2 (27.8)	27.0(26.8)
science	32.0 (29.4)	28.6(28.6)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The results from national tests and assessments in 2004 show that the standards at the end of Year 6 are very high overall when compared with schools nationally. The school's results place it in the top five per cent nationally. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school has also improved against the similar schools' average since that time. The 2004 Year 6 group was a particularly high-achieving year group at the end of their Year 2 and the high standards they achieved at that time have been maintained. Against similar schools and against prior attainment, it is only in mathematics that standards were well above average rather than very high. The school targeted mathematics as an improvement area in 2003 and the impact is beginning to show. However, the overall trend for improvement over the last three years is below the national level.
4. In English, the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 2 are similar to the findings of the previous inspection and in the national tests of 2004 and in Year 6, standards are above those found in the last inspection. Standards are well above average in reading, speaking and listening and writing at the end of Year 2 and in English overall at the end of Year 6. The school has placed significant emphasis on improving teaching and learning in English in the last two years. The school engenders a real enthusiasm for learning throughout the school and a high proportion of pupils attains the higher levels in their language skills. Reading is a strength across the school, and most pupils read regularly. Good attention is paid to developing their comprehension skills and pupils use a very good range of vocabulary to support their speaking and writing skills. Standards in writing and speaking are well above average and the quality of work produced by some of the higher-attaining pupils is of a very good standard. Good teaching ensures pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress because of the very good support they receive. Literacy skills are used effectively across other subjects, which has the impact of raising standards further.
5. In the current Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are working at above-average standards in mathematics and pupils' overall achievement is good. Number skills are taught particularly well and pupils' mental maths strategies are very good. Teachers plan a good range of activities and ensure skills are developed step by step. Pupils with special educational needs are given good individual support to ensure they make good progress. Pupils of higher ability are challenged well and encouraged to work independently to extend confidence in their numeracy skills further. They are provided with very challenging tasks, for example, multi-operational problem solving, and they respond well to these high expectations.
6. Standards in science are well above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 and overall achievement is good. There is very good emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and enquiry skills, and pupils of all abilities gain a firm understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry. Pupils are expected to formulate their hypotheses and record their findings independently. They are also expected to explain their findings to solve problems and this helps them gain confidence in their knowledge and understanding. Because teaching is good and pupils are generally very inquisitive, they learn well. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and this enables them to participate fully and achieve well.

- Standards in religious education, physical education and art and design are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. This is because provision for these is good. Pupils learn with enthusiasm, enjoy the subjects and achieve well. Standards have improved in ICT since the last inspection and are now above average expectations as a result of the improved provision. The facilities and hardware have been improved and staff are beginning to use ICT in lessons in other subjects, recognising the need to develop this in order to raise standards further. From the work sampled in other subjects, standards are at least in line with expectations, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because teachers are very mindful of their specific needs and they support these pupils well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and attendance are **very good**. Punctuality is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very caring ethos of the school promotes pupils' good personal development.
- The rules and conventions necessary for harmonious school life are well communicated by staff and this contributes to the very good moral development of pupils.
- Relationships are generally harmonious and pupils' social development is very good.

Commentary

- Pupils' personal development is good. Children start school with positive attitudes to learning, applying themselves to what they are asked to do and working with others co-operatively. Occasionally when work is not carefully structured and matched to children's needs, a few become distracted and seek attention. As pupils move through the school, they develop very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to please and do well. Pupils with special educational needs are equally positive. In all the school's activities, staff encourage pupils to be well mannered and pupils are polite and helpful. Older pupils often see where help is needed without being told. Pupils undertake jobs and responsibilities sensibly and have a mature attitude to such things as looking after younger pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school and show pride in belonging to the school community. They join in with the good range of activities provided at lunchtimes and out-of-school hours enthusiastically. They get on well together and successfully negotiate and co-operate within lessons and at more informal times, such as playtime and lunchtime. Relationships between pupils and staff are relaxed and very good, with general good humour in evidence. Teachers and pupils were seen enjoying a joke together and seeing the funny side of situations. In a few lessons, a small number of pupils occasionally talk over each other's contributions to discussions and this detracts from the overall care they show for each other generally. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection and most pupils and parents said that any such incidents are dealt with quickly and appropriately.

10. The school has established an ethos that promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. The ambience and content of collective worship contribute to pupils' abilities to reflect on what they value and appreciate in life. Well-chosen stories help pupils to distinguish right from wrong in actions and the way people treat each other. Assemblies that welcome parents and the wider community to celebrate pupils' achievements build up pupils' self-confidence and pride in their school.
11. The school's programme for personal, social and health education, together with elements of other subjects, such as religious education and geography, promote pupils' understanding of others and the need to respect differing views well. They successfully identify similarities and differences in their own and other people's cultural traditions, although their understanding of the nature of Britain's multicultural society is limited. Visits to such places as museums, churches and historic houses enhance their appreciation of their cultural heritage. The 'quiet garden' and other facilities and equipment provided by parents help to develop pupils' sense of being part of a community and being cared about.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003 - 4

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.2	School data	0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance rates are very high, with no unauthorised absence. The school's procedure for monitoring attendance is very effective. Most pupils arrive punctually.

Exclusions

13. There were no exclusions in the reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum are all **good**. The school takes **good** care of its pupils and provides them with **good** guidance and support. Links with parents and the community are **good** and links with local schools are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** overall. As a result, pupils of all abilities learn effectively and achieve well. Assessment procedures and the overall use of the information gathered are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching occurs throughout the school and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed unlike the situation in the last inspection.

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- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers enrich learning very effectively.
- Pupils with special educational needs are helped to participate fully in all the school provides.
- Procedures for assessment are very good in English and mathematics but not yet fully exploited in other subjects and in the Foundation Stage.
- Marking does not always help pupils recognise what they have done well and why, nor how they might improve their work.

Commentary

14. Teaching is good overall and is particularly strong at the upper end of the school. The previous inspection concluded that there was some unsatisfactory teaching but none occurred during this inspection and this is a clear improvement. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory with some good elements, such as the teaching of key skills in literacy and numeracy, where children achieve well. In this class, there are efficient systems for collecting information about children's attainment and progress, particularly in children's literacy and mathematical development. However, this information is not always used effectively to plan tasks that are more closely matched to children's individual capabilities and potential in all areas of learning. Elsewhere in the school, very good assessment procedures have been developed and these are being used particularly well to monitor and track individual pupils' progress in English and mathematics. In these subjects pupils have targets to achieve and are regularly reminded to reflect on them as they check their work. In other subjects, these very good procedures have yet to be fully embedded by all staff in order to improve pupils' achievement further. But because teachers know their pupils well and use a range of strategies to check pupils' learning, assessment overall is satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (17%)	20 (57%)	9 (26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. The school promotes a keen interest in learning and pupils respond very positively to the interesting range of activities and experiences provided for them. In most lessons, planning is good, with clear objectives, and this ensures pupils build on previous learning effectively. Where the available assessment information is used well, tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and there is a good level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use an interesting range of strategies to encourage pupils to think about what they are learning and take an active part in probing question-and-answer sessions. For example, pupils really enjoy 'talking partners' sessions and respond very enthusiastically to mental starters in numeracy lessons, always confident to have a go, with no fears of being wrong at times.
16. Throughout the school, learning is good because teachers place high expectations on pupils to behave well and try hard. In the best lessons, explanations and instructions

are very clear, work is challenging and fun, and lessons run at a very lively pace. Teachers question pupils' knowledge and understanding skillfully, probing and prompting as necessary to draw explanations from them regarding their views or observations. This enables them to be confident in speaking in front of others when expressing their ideas. Thinking skills and independence in learning are fostered at an early age, so that by the end of Year 6, pupils have few reservations about participating in quite challenging discussions. Occasionally, a few pupils fail to listen closely to what each other has to offer, being too absorbed in their own opinions, and teachers sensitively remind them to be more attentive and respectful towards others.

17. Resources and support materials are generally carefully designed to match the needs of pupils of all abilities. There has been satisfactory improvement in the use of ICT to support teaching and learning since the last inspection, but teachers recognise the need to incorporate more such activities in their planning, especially as the resources and hardware improve. Visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences further and pupils talk enthusiastically of such events. For example, pupils in Year 2 talk excitedly about the various trips they have been on and pupils in Year 3 recall visits to museums and art galleries where they have learnt about local artists and historians. Pupils of all abilities learn effectively from such experiences.
18. Pupils of all ages manage themselves confidently and are generally very prompt to settle to independent activities. Relationships are very good, and pupils are encouraged to turn to each other for help if no adults are immediately available. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged to organise and prepare their presentations independently, and the few that are reluctant to take part are sensitively drawn in through individual attention from supporting adults. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants give very effective and caring support to pupils with special educational needs and to other lower-attaining pupils. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and specific, with clear, achievable targets that are agreed with parents or carers. Their progress is assessed carefully and the information is used to set further relevant targets. As result of this additional help, these pupils often make very good gains in lessons. Similarly, this individual care and attention is given to supporting pupils who have English as an additional language so their achievement matches that of their classmates.
19. Occasionally, teaching lacks pace, teachers' presentations are too long, or planning is not thorough enough to ensure the appropriate materials are available for pupils to work with. In these lessons, judged to be satisfactory, a few pupils are unsure as to what is required of them in their independent work. This results in these pupils being slow in getting started. One or two teachers occasionally miss opportunities to round lessons off with sufficient time for summing up what pupils have learnt and this does not help pupils recognise what they have achieved. The same is true of teachers' marking of pupils' work, which is still inconsistent, although the policy has been reviewed and revised since the last inspection. In the best marking, seen in Year 6, comments are very constructive and guide pupils into making the required improvements to achieve further success. But in one or two of the other classes, marking is minimal and does not help the pupils recognise what is good or unsatisfactory about their work. Pupils work hard to present work that is generally very neat and tidy, and where teachers' comments have been constructive, pupils have responded positively.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**, with **very good** opportunities for enrichment that extend beyond the school day. There is a **satisfactory** match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an extensive range of educational visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning.
- Pupils' personal development is good.
- Activities in the Foundation Stage are not always focused or challenging enough for children to achieve well.
- Opportunities for pupils to practice their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are good.
- The school's long term planning identifies the skills and information pupils' need to learn at any one stage but there is insufficient cross referencing by all teachers to pupils' previous work to ensure new skills build on previous learning more accurately.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve well.

Commentary

20. In the Foundation Stage, children are provided with many interesting and practical activities but these are not always sufficiently focused or challenging to enable them to achieve as well as they should. All six areas of learning are included in an appropriate balance and the curriculum is satisfactory overall.
21. There is good curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6, which is well linked to their experiences outside school as well as what they learn in lessons. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy 'mental maths' and challenges set for them to test their number skills. Discussions and lively question-and-answer sessions help pupils explore their knowledge and understanding well. These good opportunities make a positive contribution to the good achievement that pupils show in English and mathematics. In science, pupils take part in well-structured, practical investigations and teachers encourage pupils to work independently in order to promote their thinking skills. The new ICT suite allows half a class at a time to develop their basic skills in the subject, and pupils make good progress in attaining these. While the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects has improved and is satisfactory, planned opportunities for them to practice and further develop these skills aspect need developing to raise standards further. While the school has established long and medium term plans for each year group and each subject, in some lesson planning insufficient attention is given to check what pupils have learned previously to base new learning on. As a consequence, there are occasions where there is unnecessary repetition of work pupils have already covered or some pupils working on skills they have not fully grasped previously. The school is to review its planning procedures to improve this and also to better develop cross-curricular links, thus enabling pupils to transfer skills learned in one subject to support their work in other subjects.

22. The curriculum is well designed to encourage pupils' creative talents as well as their academic ones. Consequently, they take part in a variety of interesting experiences in art, drama and music. Good use is made of visitors, such as artists and musicians, who work with the pupils to develop a variety of skills to broaden their experiences. The school gives all pupils opportunity to take part in an extensive range of visits, which enrich the curriculum by providing further interesting learning experiences. Pupils have very good opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including art, computer and football clubs. Currently, there is no timetabled teaching time for a modern foreign language, although Spanish is being offered as an extra-curricular activity this term. The headteacher indicates that the introduction of time for modern languages is under consideration, as a means of adding further interest and variety to the curriculum.
23. There is good provision for pupils' personal development. The programme of work for pupils' personal, social, citizenship and health education is thorough, with timetabled slots to enable pupils to develop this important aspect of their education. For instance, each class has weekly 'circle time' activities in which they discuss a range of topical issues and any worries or concerns they might have. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, with their individual educational plans having specific and manageable targets. This enables them to make good progress and achieve well. As they pass through school, all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, are prepared well for the next stages of their education.
24. The resources for teaching and learning are good. The school has a satisfactory number of teachers and teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. The accommodation is good, having been much improved since the previous inspection. An ICT suite has been created, new classrooms built and old ones remodelled. Children in the Foundation Stage now have a secure outside area to enable them to develop their learning through outdoor activity. The school provides a pleasant setting in which to learn.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is **good**. The support, advice and guidance they receive are also **good**. The school involves pupils effectively in its decisions about improvements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures, including risk assessment, are very good and are implemented very effectively.
- Procedures for child protection and for sickness and emergencies are good.
- Effective arrangements are in place to take account of pupils' views and concerns.
- Good induction arrangements help the youngest children settle quickly into school and make a good start to their education.
- Each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in school.

Commentary

25. There are very good procedures to identify and control health and safety risks to ensure that the premises, equipment and working practices are safe. Risk assessment is monitored very effectively and the procedures ensure that any concerns are identified early and properly recorded, and that appropriate action is taken.
26. The school takes good care of all pupils and procedures for child protection are good. Where staff need training to deal with specific medical conditions, this is provided appropriately. The school keeps very detailed records of pupils' medical conditions, and photographs of pupils and action to be taken are shown on the staff notice board. This ensures prompt and effective action should an emergency occur.
27. The school has established a good school council that involves pupils in decision-making effectively. Council representatives take ideas and suggested improvements from their classes to the council and feedback decisions to classmates. Effective action often follows realistic requests, for example, choosing the colours for refurbishing the cloakroom facilities, purchase of plastic football goalposts and flowers for a quiet garden.
28. Parents agree that children new to the school benefit from a welcoming induction package that ensures their smooth and secure settling in. Children and their parents have good opportunities to meet staff and learn about the routines of the reception class before they start school. Pupils soon develop a good and trusting relationship with at least one member of staff and know there is always someone to turn to if needed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships with parents are good.
- A significant number of parents would like more information about the progress that their children make.
- There are good mutually beneficial links between the local church, the surrounding community and the school.
- An active parent group supports the school well with fundraising and resources.
- Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and involved.
- A significant number of parents feel their views are not sought or taken into consideration by the school.

Commentary

29. The partnership with parents is good. Teachers go out to meet parents and children and parents are made welcome in the classroom. Parents support homework well and this helps pupils attain high standards in reading, writing and number work. Parents of pupils with special needs are fully involved in decisions that are made about their children. Regular reviews are held and the school encourages parents' input into the development of pupils' individual educational plans, and subsequent

support in working at home support the targets set. A significant number of parents feel their views are not always taken into consideration and governors and the school are considering further ways to engage with these parents.

30. The majority of parents express positive views about the school. They are especially pleased with the academic standards achieved. However, an analysis of the parents' questionnaire shows a substantial number of parents feel the need to be kept better informed, particularly on their children's progress. The school is considering how to improve the way it circulates information to meet the expectations of some parents. Of particular merit is the school's informative and well-produced website. Information shown includes examples of work produced by pupils both in class and after school, together with the school's latest news.
31. Links with the local church and community, educational visits and visitors in school add another important dimension to pupils' learning as well as enhancing their social and personal development. For example, the school supports a range of village events and equally, the community sees the school as a focal point for social activities. Beneficial reciprocal visits with local nursery settings take place and members of the local community, such as police officers and nurses, add interest and relevance to the overall curriculum. While links with other schools are satisfactory, the school recognises the need to develop stronger relationships with other schools, for example, to promote curriculum links.
32. The work of an active parents group and separate friends group provides valuable support for the school. They have raised over £30,000 towards a seed challenge initiated for building work, and regularly organise a range of social and fundraising events, which are well supported by parents. This makes a highly valued contribution to school resources, which benefit all pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are **good**. Governance is also **good**, with governors ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is led well by the headteacher.
- Governors play a full part in helping to take the school forward.
- The arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- Financial management is good.
- There are thorough procedures for checking the performance of the school.

Commentary

33. The headteacher gives a clear sense of direction for the school. She has helped the school to deal successfully with the key issues from the previous inspection and to overcome the difficulties posed by the extensive building work in recent months. In so doing, she has delegated responsibilities wisely, so that effective teams have been developed. Of particular note is the work of the very able deputy headteacher, which has made a significant improvement to the school's assessment procedures. As a result, the work that is given to pupils, for example, in English and mathematics, is better matched to their ability than during the previous inspection. Members of the senior management team provide good role models

for other staff, who respond well to the support and responsibility given to them. However, the checking of teaching and learning lacks sufficient rigour and does not provide teachers with enough information on how they might improve the quality of their teaching. Consequently, there is inconsistency as the quality of teaching and learning varies from satisfactory to very good. Although the leadership of subjects has improved, some subject co-ordinators are not aware of the standards that pupils achieve because they have limited opportunities for monitoring across the school. This makes it difficult for them to suggest how provision can be improved.

34. There is a good management structure, with key staff having clear roles that are carried out well. Performance management is well linked to school improvement priorities. All staff take part in a good range of training to promote their professional development. The management of the provision for special educational needs has been much improved since the previous inspection and is now good. As a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well. The arrangements for checking and evaluating the school's work are good. The school's improvement plan is a thorough document, which contains criteria against which the school measures its success in achieving its targets. Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science are monitored well, with the information gained being used effectively to help them improve their performance. This has enabled the school to identify the downward trend in standards in mathematics for pupils in Key Stage 1 over the last three years and to set in motion a variety of strategies to improve provision in this subject.
35. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and in the school development planning process and, in so doing, help to shape the direction of the school. They have high expectations of the school's performance and, as well as being very supportive, are also willing to challenge the proposals of the senior management team. For instance, they question budget proposals in relation to what they wish to achieve. Governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and carry out their statutory duties well. They take a lively interest and participate in all school led activities.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	489,008	Balance from previous year	55,874
Total expenditure	509,982	Balance carried forward to the next year	34,900
Expenditure per pupil	2,576		

36. The school has under gone a major extension and refurbishment programme and money has been allocated appropriately to complete the work. The finance committee ensures that principles of best value are carefully applied to all budgetary considerations. However, in light of parents' comments that they would like to be consulted more, have their views taken into account and receive more detailed information, there is work to be done to improve in this area. The work of the office manager is of a high quality, allowing the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The school budget is managed well, with efficient systems in place to ensure that the finances are carefully controlled and expenditure regularly reviewed. The school provides good value for money, an improvement since the previous inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children are cared for well and they are safe, happy and secure. Because the school takes children in at the start of the autumn and spring terms, this allows small groups to settle quickly and gain confidence with the day-to day-routines of school. The new outdoor area, an improvement on the previous inspection, is of good quality, and provides extra opportunities for learning in many areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. The management and co-ordination of work in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and day-to-day routines run efficiently. Training and advisory opportunities are maximised by the co-ordinator, but these are not used as effectively as they might be in developing the provision.
38. The majority of children enter the reception class with above-average attainment and this standard is maintained. Overall achievement is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are in place to monitor children from the start in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. However, work planned following these assessments does not always match children's needs accurately enough, resulting in some children working at levels that are too difficult or too easy for them, and this impedes their progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children remain above the expected level for children of their age, and exceed the expected Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning. A significant number work confidently at Level 1 in English and mathematics and some attain parts of Level 2 in mathematics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Care and support enable children to develop independence and adapt to school life.
- Occasionally children behave inappropriately and are not corrected consistently.

COMMENTARY

39. Most children start school with good behaviour and positive attitudes to school, and this is maintained at the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children follow instructions, pay attention and show interest in their work. They are sufficiently confident to try out new activities and speak in front of others. The majority learn to work as part of a group or class quickly and follow such conventions as staying in their places and putting up their hand to gain a teacher's attention. At times, this convention is not sufficiently insisted upon by a teacher and children gain her attention by getting out of their places and shouting out. At other times, over dominant children are insufficiently corrected. On the whole, children have a good understanding of what is right and wrong and why they are commended or corrected. They successfully learn to share, take turns and consider the needs of others. Such activities as making class pictures and joining other classes for assembly foster feelings of being part of a community. Helping with things like taking registers to the school secretary, giving out and tidying up, successfully develop attitudes of responsibility. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are above the national expectations.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiasm for reading is very well fostered.
- The linking of sounds and letters is very well taught.
- Parents are well supported in reinforcing reading and writing skills at home.

COMMENTARY

40. The majority of children enter the reception year with above-average attainment in this area of learning. As a result of regular and systematic practice, and good teaching of basic skills, children make good progress and achieve well. Planning in this area of learning is thorough. The teacher stimulates interest in reading very well, reading to children expressively and asking good questions that focus children's attention on characters and events. She chooses stories that children enjoy, can join in with and retell. Parents are well involved in supporting and developing their children's skills in reading and this is beneficial. There are good opportunities for children to attempt writing, for example, in the 'Writing Corner' and 'Post Office', and many children choose to draw and write. Children speak clearly, initiating conversation, negotiating play and responding to others. Good questioning is used to probe children's understanding and develop their ability to explain what they are thinking. Most children listen attentively and make responses that show that they understand and are thinking about what they hear. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children exceed the goals that are expected of them and a significantly high number are working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum for English. Standards are often well above expectations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from regular and systematic practice in counting, recognising numerals and making simple calculations.
- Activities across the curriculum are well used to develop children's understanding of space, shape and measures.

COMMENTARY

41. On entry to the reception year, most children's knowledge of numbers to 10 is above that of many children of this age. Good teaching, through regular and systematic practice in counting, recognising, writing and performing simple calculations with numbers to 10 results in the majority attaining Level 1 and some attaining parts of Level 2 in this element of the National Curriculum for mathematics. Overall achievement is good and most children attain standards that are above expectations. Children develop their understanding and skills mainly in practical activities. For example, they count the number of children present and work out the total number of

packed and hot lunches; they calculate how many of 10 plastic bears are left buried in the sand after they have found some. Various activities are used well to reinforce mathematical ideas about shape, space and measures. For example, in a craft activity, children try to describe the shapes of boxes before they use them to make model vehicles; in a role-play activity, they use a cash register and coins to work out simple money sums and give accurate change. On entry to school some children are already proficient at counting well beyond 10 and do simple calculations in their heads. These children are sometimes insufficiently challenged in some of the mathematics tasks they are set.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT provision is very good.
- Insufficient interaction with teachers results in missed opportunities for learning.

COMMENTARY

42. Children's achievement is satisfactory and the above-average attainment that they enter the school with is maintained. Children are encouraged to observe closely changes in the seasons and weather and notice details about trees, plants, birds and small animals on their nature walks in the school grounds. They use various materials to build and construct, confidently using plastic and wooden bricks and discarded materials. They use paper, card and textiles to make things like cards and model vehicles, thus developing their understanding of properties of materials suitable for the task. They use the computer competently, successfully operating equipment and completing programs that support aspects of their learning. Special events in their lives and their experiences on holidays are used to develop their understanding of the past and other places. Participating in religious festivals, such as Christmas, and looking at things like clothes worn by people from other cultures, enlarges their understanding of various cultures and beliefs. At times, children are insufficiently extended, for example, adults provide pre-cut teddy bears, leaves and acorns, when children could do this for themselves. At other times, adults do not sufficiently support activities and intervene sufficiently with questions to check children's understanding. For example, a child at the computer deleted and repeated his writing letter by letter several times because he had made a mistake at the beginning of the line and no adult visited him and taught him how to use the 'Home' and 'End' keys. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area and hall provide good space for movement.
- Various activities provide good opportunities for children to develop hand-eye co-ordination

COMMENTARY

43. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve standards that are in line with expectations and overall achievement is satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children learn to increase control of their movements and improve

co-ordination, for example, as they travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment. They avoid collisions as they run around and play with such things as hoops, balls and 'push and pedal' toys. They have good opportunities to develop hand-eye co-ordination as they confidently use tools such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue spreaders, or undertake such tasks as assembling, interlocking and shaping with their hands.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Various opportunities to explore media and materials.
- Children's work is valued through colourful displays and this helps to build confidence and self-esteem.
- Some over-direction of activities reduces creative opportunities.

COMMENTARY

44. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are as expected of children of this age and overall achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to paint, draw, construct and shape with their hands, and children respond well to these. Their drawings and paintings successfully express aspects of their lives and experiences. They try out musical instruments and suggest how these might express specific sounds, such as rain in the story of Noah's Ark. Teachers provide some good opportunities to focus on using senses, for example, in a 'feely' activity, children had to describe things like ice, sand, fur and treacle. Children use their imaginations in such activities as role-play and acting out stories. When left free to explore, they do this enthusiastically, for example, squeezing, rolling and shaping dough with great enjoyment and making up stories about their creations. However, activities that provide opportunities for children to explore, express and communicate their own ideas, thoughts and feelings are often over-directed, with little independence in selecting and exploring materials, and as a consequence, teaching and learning are only satisfactory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well.
- Pupils behave very well and have positive attitudes to the subject.
- The subject is led and managed very well.
- All work is marked, but marking is inconsistent and does not always help pupils recognise what they have achieved well and what they need to do to improve further.

COMMENTARY

45. The standards attained at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the tests and assessments in 2004 were very high and better than the findings of the previous inspection. The work in pupils' books indicates that a greater percentage of pupils are working at the higher Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6 now. Overall standards for the current pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the national average and pupils achieve well. Because pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are given very good individual support, these pupils often make very good gains in their learning and achieve very well, often attaining standards in line with the national average. The attainment of boys and girls is now broadly similar.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are well above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Teachers provide many interesting opportunities to enable all pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. The group discussions and presentations devised by pupils in a very good literacy lesson in Year 6 exemplified this well. In other literacy lessons, attention is devoted to pupil talk time so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute either in small groups or in front of the whole class. Because relationships in the school are very good and pupils know that their efforts are valued, they learn to speak confidently and articulately. Occasionally, a few pupils in classes throughout the school are so absorbed in their own ideas and thoughts that they fail to listen closely to others, and sometimes lapse into talking when others are speaking or giggling at errors. Teachers are aware of this and handle such occasions sensitively, ensuring that lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are fully involved at all times.
47. Standards in reading are very high compared to those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Many children enter school with a good awareness of basic skills in literacy and, because what they already know is built upon very successfully in school, most pupils, including lower-attaining pupils, make good use of a range of strategies when they meet unfamiliar words in texts. The reading records that go between home and school in Years 1 and 2 ensure parents are kept informed of reading activities and tasks and parents are encouraged to listen to their children read at home. In addition, parents are encouraged to come to school at the start of the day to read with children who need extra help and many do so very willingly. The vast majority of pupils enjoy reading and many read widely in their own time because the school fosters a very positive attitude to reading. By the end of Year 2, average and higher-attaining pupils know how to refer to the content and index pages in information books for research. By the end of Year 6, pupils' research skills include reference to headings, sub-headings and scanning pages quickly to find the information efficiently. This means that when they work on topics, such as the current science work on the body and muscles, in Year 5, pupils are confident in working independently to extend their learning. The library has only recently been re-located in its own dedicated area so its use has not yet been fully exploited for independent work and research. However, it is well stocked and classes and groups regularly use it as a work base so pupils are aware of the resources that are available to them.
48. Standards in writing in Year 6 are well above those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 are also above those expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, most pupils' writing, for a wide variety of audiences and purposes, is interesting and imaginative. This is because teachers are aware of the need, through the diverse range of literature they present to pupils and

through the challenging language they use in lessons, to improve the richness of pupils' use of language to articulate their ideas expressively. Many pupils have a very good vocabulary and a wealth of experiences outside school that they draw on in their discussions and their writing. For example, a pupil in Year 2 described a character the class was studying as 'remarkable', using this word with great clarity and accuracy. In another example from the work of a pupil in Year 5, 'Graves and gargoyles are carved from rock are as delicate as a newborn butterfly'; there is a high level of detailed observation indicating confidence in the use of language. The school promotes creative writing well and opportunities to develop individual styles are encouraged. Because expectations are high, and pupils are keen to achieve, the quality of the work is of a high standard.

49. Teaching and learning are good. In most lessons expectations are high, lessons run at a brisk pace and teachers use the assessment information they have to plan work accordingly. In the very good lesson in Year 6, the choice and use of resources included very challenging and thought provoking work by Tony Harrison and Bob Dylan. However, because the teacher knows the class well and relationships are very secure, he skilfully ensured questions were carefully matched to pupils' abilities and interest levels. The relentless pace kept everyone fully engrossed throughout as they tried to elicit what messages the writer and the musician were trying to convey. Despite the complexity of the text, learning was very good and the sensitive touches of humour added to the overall effect. The teacher set a very good example for pupils when reading aloud with expression and obvious enjoyment, and the pupils listened with rapt attention and were totally captivated. As a result, pupils enjoyed their work and made very good gains in their learning.
50. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively and this is one of the reasons why pupils enjoy the subject and work hard. Teaching assistants are used to support individual and groups of pupils very effectively and teachers ensure the work they plan is matched accurately to pupils' needs so that they achieve success. In occasional lessons, which are nevertheless good, the introductory part of the lesson is slightly too long to hold the attention and interest of all pupils' fully and the work lacks sufficient challenge for those who are very high attaining. The marking, whilst satisfactory overall, is inconsistent across the school. There is often insufficient detail about what pupils have achieved in relation to their targets and comments that will take learning forward. The exception to this is the high standard of marking in Year 6 which provides pupils with very clear information about what they have done well and how they might improve their work further. Links to other subjects are developing well and the school is at a point where it is looking at ways to make more creative use of the curriculum time to promote literacy skills through other subjects.
51. The subject has a very high profile in the curriculum and a great deal of time has been given to develop provision. The leadership and management of the subject are very good, although time to monitor teaching and learning is limited. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a very clear understanding of the school's strengths. She understands what the school should develop in order to raise standards even further, for example, by creating more links into other subjects, and planning more actively for activities such as drama and debate. Assessment is used well to guide planning in most lessons and set targets for improvement. Pupils are made aware of

their individual targets and this encourages them to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The school ensures pupils apply their literacy in other subjects effectively to extend their awareness of language for different purposes, for example, reflective writing in history and religious education and report writing in science. Throughout the school, valuable time is given to question-and-answer sessions and activities such as 'talking partners' encourage opportunities for pupils to exchange ideas and opinions in many lessons. For example, in a science lesson, pupils in Year 5 were encouraged to work through a range of texts, including material on the computer, to investigate and present their findings about the relationship between muscles and bones during movement in various parts of the body. Pupils use non-fiction books and the Internet to research information regularly in their topic work and develop an enthusiastic interest in working independently. For example, pupils in Year 6 are encouraged to participate in multi-media presentations on subjects they have explored at home and in school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average because teaching and assessment are good.
- Numeracy skills are taught in a systematic way and this helps pupils develop skills and understanding step by step.
- ICT is used well to support learning.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- Marking of work and pupils' involvement in monitoring their own performance is inconsistent.

Commentary

53. Results of the National Tests and assessments for 2004 indicate that standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were well above average and very high at the end of Year 6 when compared to all schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Higher-attaining pupils working at Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6 did particularly well. Pupils' skills in number work and problem solving are particularly well developed because these aspects are taught well and pupils' literacy skills are very good. From the work seen during the inspection standards are above average for the pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress through the school and overall achievement is good.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and this ensures that pupils build up their knowledge, understanding and skills step by step, building well on prior work. The teaching of

number skills is particularly good, and with pupils' literacy skills being very competent, they handle problem-solving tasks confidently. There is a good emphasis on investigations and this encourages pupils to explore ideas and come up with explanations for their thoughts and ideas. The school's procedures to monitor and assess pupils' progress are being used effectively to ensure pupils make good gains in their learning in order to meet the targets they are set.

55. Lessons generally have a brisk start and move on at a good pace, so that all pupils are kept alert and busy. The 'mental maths' starters particularly gain pupils' interest and enthusiasm and they enjoy the element of challenge in these activities. Activities are generally relevant and often fun, for example, playing 'Battleships' at the end of a lesson on co-ordinates and tossing coins or playing cards in investigations of probability. At the end of lessons, useful summaries take place and this consolidates learning for many pupils. Some teachers, but not always in all lessons, ask pupils to reflect on what the objectives for the lesson were and to assess their achievement against these objectives. This develops those pupils' involvement in monitoring their own learning effectively. All teachers mark work regularly and thoroughly, but information from marking is not always used as well as it might be to ensure subsequent work is sufficiently challenging and addresses pupils' previous errors or misunderstanding. Insufficient guidance about showing 'working out' is given and this makes it difficult to assess where pupils have gone wrong in such tasks as problem solving using their own methods.
56. Teaching assistants give good support and are particularly effective in oral and mental sessions where they log which pupils answer questions and whether the pupils' answers are correct or incorrect. This is an excellent strategy to ensure that pupils who are reticent or those who lack confidence to have a go in front of the whole class are brought to the teachers' notice. Their support for lower attaining and special needs pupils is very good during these lessons, enabling these pupils to often make very good gains in their learning. Computerised boards are used well to support teaching and learning, particularly of ICT skills, for example, to demonstrate how to set up a spreadsheet and enter data. Homework is used appropriately for such tasks as practising number facts and finding out the capacity of containers and the price of food items.
57. Mathematics is very well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. He monitors planning to ensure that the statutory curriculum is covered. He also monitors pupils' performance and progress in their day-to-day work and their test results. The information gained from these activities helps identify where teaching needs to be improved in order to raise standards further. There has been good improvement in the subject as the decline in standards at the end of Year 2, that was apparent over the last three or four years, has been successfully arrested.

Numeracy across the curriculum

58. Numeracy skills are applied well in other subjects in order to raise pupils' awareness of the importance and value of working hard to perfect their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example, pupils learn about co-ordinates to look more closely at mapping skills in geography, and they learn to record data from their measurements in science and tabulate and graph their findings in a more visual format to interpret. They have a good understanding of chronology and understand how to calculate the passage of time between major events in history. Because numeracy lessons have fun elements in them, many pupils enjoy working accurately and being precise in their observations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, which enables all pupils to achieve well.
- The curriculum emphasises developing pupils' learning through practical investigations.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Pupils have very positive views about their work in science and their attitudes are very good.
- There is not enough use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

59. Over the past few years, most pupils in Years 2 and 6 have reached standards that are well above the national average. In 2004 the school did exceptionally, with standards being very high and in the top five per cent nationally at the end of both key stages. The pupils in these two year groups were very high attainers. Pupils currently in these classes are in line to reach the same high standards, achieving well and making good progress as they pass through the school.
60. Teachers plan their lessons well to build on previous work, so that pupils use prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. They give careful explanations of what pupils are to do, so that they are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Activities are interesting, which helps to maintain pupils' concentration so that they work well throughout. There is a strong emphasis on pupils using accurate scientific terminology when talking about their work, which means most of them have a well-developed scientific vocabulary. There is careful teaching of the different stages of an investigation that leads to pupils having a good understanding of the reasons why a test needs to be fair. By Year 6, pupils show good skills in devising such a test and carrying it out independently of the teacher. Their conclusions to their experiments are thoughtful, being an evaluation of what they have found rather than just a description of what they have done.
61. Teachers often give pupils work that links to their own experiences, which helps them use their knowledge of everyday life to help their learning. This was evident in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 6 investigating how much sugar will dissolve in a beaker of water. As the teacher skillfully linked the work to what they already knew, the pupils were able to make sensible predictions and formulate a hypothesis to test. The marking of work is inconsistent and in some classes does not indicate to pupils how they might improve their performance. There are times when the work given to pupils, particularly the higher attainers, lacks sufficient challenge and so restricts the progress they make. Teaching assistants give pupils good support in their paired and small group work. Pupils spoke with a great deal of enthusiasm about their activities in science. They showed much interest and curiosity in what they were doing, which has a positive impact on the quality of their work.
62. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. Her teaching is a good model for colleagues. She has a clear view of the subject's weaknesses and how they might be tackled. She has satisfactory opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through classroom observations. The curriculum is planned well to enable pupils to develop their scientific knowledge, understanding and skills by being involved in structured, practical investigations. There are good opportunities for pupils to practice their literacy and numeracy skills during their investigations. For example, pupils in Year 6

have taken careful thermometer readings during investigations into how quickly salt dissolves in water of different temperatures. They have then written detailed accounts of their work, with accurately labelled scientific diagrams. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their ICT skills to support their learning in science. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Information and communication technology

63. As little direct teaching was seen, it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of provision. However, other evidence indicates that most pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve well and reach standards that are above those expected for their age in all aspects of the curriculum.
64. Since the previous inspection, an ICT suite has been created that allows half a class at a time to develop their basic skills in the subject. The suite is soon to be further extended to include more workspace and extra computers to enable a whole class to be taught skills and then to put them into practice. In the two lessons seen, the teacher and teaching assistants showed secure subject knowledge and expertise. This allowed them to effectively explain and demonstrate new techniques for pupils to use. As a result, pupils in Year 4 made good progress in using a publishing programme to create a text box and write in the style of a newspaper report. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 quickly learned how to edit a piece of text by adding full stops, capital letters and a variety of connectives. In both lessons, there was good use of ICT to help pupils practise their literacy skills. Pupils enjoy working on computers, and their keenness to learn helps them to make good progress. They are confident in their ability to work independently when given these opportunities and many use their ICT skills at home regularly, thus adding to their competence in the use of ICT. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively in pairs on the computers and help each other when necessary. Such opportunities make a good contribution to their personal and social development.
65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that teachers and pupils have access to a range of software that meets their needs. She does not have the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through the school, and so is not aware of the standards that pupils achieve. This limits her ability to suggest improvements that could be made. An extra-curricular computer club, led by two teaching assistants, enhances provision for ICT. Resources are good, and include a microscope that can be linked to a computer to help pupils make close observations in science.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. In English lessons, pupils word process their stories and poems, changing the type of font and its colour to add interest. Graphs are created in mathematics to present findings. In science, history and geography, there is some use of the Internet to research information. However, the school acknowledges there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to practice and refine their ICT skills in most subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography

67. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about provision, standards or teaching and learning in **geography** as only one lesson was seen and very little was evident in the books. The curriculum is sound and there is appropriate continuity in the way pupils learn new skills and acquire knowledge. This is confirmed by the displays of work in the classrooms. For example, pupils in Year 2 are beginning to learn about mapping skills through their studies of island life and specifically the isle of Struay in their literacy work. Mapping skills are developed further in Year 4 as pupils learn how to plot co-ordinates, recognising that this is important when trying to locate features and landmarks on maps. In the good lesson seen in Year 1, pupils looked at types of weather in different places and the cycle of seasonal changes and enjoyed talking about their observations. The educational opportunities are enriched well by visits, such as to the local river and the coast in relation to the unit of study on rivers. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures, for example, through studies of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and in India.

History

68. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about overall provision in **history** because only two lessons were observed, and there was insufficient recorded work to make secure judgements about standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
69. The standard of work in the limited sample seen was in line with national expectations. Pupils gain good historical knowledge and understanding of Britain and the wider world. They describe characteristic features of past times and they are beginning to suggest reasons for the main events and changes in the various periods that they study. For example, in a lesson on Romans and Celts, pupils made some good suggestions as to why the Romans defeated the Celts. Pupils are developing their skills in looking for evidence, but there is insufficient variety in historical resources in the school, and for some topics there are too few resources. Some good teaching was observed in Year 3. The teacher was enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the history that she was teaching. Her presentation was lively and her questions probed pupils' understanding and made them think about why things happened.
70. Visits and visitors are used well as sources for historical enquiry. Good use is made of local museums and historic houses. Parents, grandparents and members of the local community provide information about life in the past. For example, the local rector tells the pupils about an historic grant to the school linked with the local church. The new co-ordinator is knowledgeable and interested and management of the subject is satisfactory. She has gathered appropriate documents together and identified where resources are urgently needed. The subject is well placed for future development

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers make effective use of available resources and artefacts to support teaching and learning.
- The teaching of different religions promotes pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures.
- Learning is further enriched through assemblies and the personal education programme.

Commentary

71. From the two lessons observed, both in Key Stage 2, pupils learn effectively. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and overall achievement is good. Pupils had good opportunities to talk about the subject and express their thoughts and ideas. For example, they reflected on how Joseph's brothers may have felt with Joseph being treated so favourably by their father, or how Abraham might have felt about God wanting him to sacrifice Isaac in order to test his faith. Because pupils are articulate, and keen to learn, they confidently discuss their thoughts and opinions and learn from each other. A minor weakness is that occasionally a few pupils fail to listen well and this detracts from their discussions. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 indicate an above-average understanding of the importance of God and being aware of the needs of others. Although no lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, learning is good and the limited recorded work seen reflects good opportunities for pupils to write their ideas and observations about stories they learn from the Bible accurately. They relate the Christmas story well and recall main facts about Easter.
72. From pupils' work sampling and curriculum planning, the teaching and learning are good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and plan activities that engage pupils' interest well, using a range of good resources effectively. The vicar makes a valuable contribution to the teaching and his knowledge and expertise enhance provision effectively. Appropriate attention is given to helping pupils become aware of other faiths and how these impact on people's lives. In Year 1, pupils start to learn about other faiths and as this develops through the school, their awareness of other cultures and traditions is enhanced. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 pursue very detailed learning on Hinduism and compare and contrast this faith with what they know about Christianity. The extended writing on this was of a very high standard and it is clear pupils have a keen interest in learning about and appraising facts and ideas, such as re-incarnation, for example.
73. Good links are made with work done in PSHCE to encourage pupils to think about the moral and social implications of what they learn in religious education. Acts of collective worship also enrich the curriculum, as do regular visits to places of worship and services in the local church at harvest and Christmas time. The reflection time presented in activities such as 'circle time' is helping pupils voice their views and ideas, for example, and about how they feel, about special events in their lives. Assessment procedures are in place to evaluate pupils' progress and inform curriculum planning. However, these procedures are not yet fully established to

identify the standards pupils attain. As no discussion took place with the subject co-ordinator, no judgement is made regarding leadership and management.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

As only one lesson was observed in **art and design** and none in **design and technology** or **music**, it is not possible to make firm judgements about overall provision in these subjects.

74. The work seen in **art and design** is of a high standard and above expectations. Pupils use a wide range of materials, tools and techniques successfully. Throughout the school, good emphasis is placed on providing pupils with opportunities to observe and take pride in their work. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have taken inordinate time to look carefully at the tones, textures and shapes of different fruits and the still life drawings they have created using chalk and oil pastels are of a very high standard. Pupils learn to apply layers of colours and blends using a range of fine techniques using watercolours and the portraits in the style of Van Gogh illustrate how effectively they have followed this artist's work. They are aware of the work of a number of artists including, John Constable, a famous local figure, and frequent visits to local galleries add to their experience of art. Visitors to the school have included art students who have worked alongside pupils, for example in Year 3. Here pupils have been introduced to fine art skills using paint and crayons to create very detailed images of flowers and plants. From the work seen and in the one lesson observed, it is evident pupils enjoy opportunities to develop their creative skills. Displays of pupils' art work enhance the school environment very effectively, but opportunities are missed for pupils to learn from each other by annotating their work and commenting on how they may have created it or what they find particularly pleasing about a specific style or medium. Over twenty pupils from Years 3 to 6 regularly attend the art club and here they have very good opportunities to work on additional projects for pleasure in their own time.
75. The standards of the finished work that pupils have produced in **design and technology** are in line with national expectations. There was insufficient information regarding the design, planning and evaluation stages of the design and technology curriculum to make more detailed judgements. A new scheme of work is being tried out this term in order to raise standards further and the subject is currently a priority area.
76. In **music**, pupils have good opportunities to participate in a range of activities including singing, learning to play recorders and other instruments, and taking part in musical events such as the 'Dickensian' evening and school performances. In assemblies, they sing enthusiastically and tunefully, and listen attentively to the range of music played as they enter and leave the hall. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for adults leading the assemblies to encourage pupils to reflect on what they are listening to by raising their awareness to the name of composer or the title of the piece. Pupils talk excitedly about musical events and performances they have been involved in. Their cultural development is promoted well through the subject.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, which enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is a good curriculum that is enhanced by a range of extra curricular activities.
- Pupils are not always given the opportunity to evaluate their performance.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.

Commentary

77. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards above those expected for their age. In so doing they have achieved well and make good progress in all aspects of the curriculum as they pass through the school.
78. Teachers show good subject knowledge that enables them to explain to pupils how to set about their activities and how to improve their performance. They set good examples by dressing appropriately for physical education lessons and, as a result, are able to demonstrate techniques well. This was evident in a dance lesson for pupils in Year 6 on exploring a range of movements, using dance styles from different eras. The teacher's expertise led them to make very good progress in learning techniques used in *rock and roll* dancing. The introduction to lessons are used well to prepare pupils' bodies for exercise, and at the end of lessons, pupils have a cool down session before returning to class. There are sometimes missed opportunities to let pupils appraise their own and others' performance and make suggestions for improvement. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning, being well behaved and very keen to be involved in physical activities. They collaborate very well and share equipment and resources fairly.
79. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with very good opportunities for enrichment that make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. For instance, pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and are also able work with a variety of professional coaches to develop their skills in cricket and football. These activities have been built up by the co-ordinator, whose work has had a positive effect on provision. His leadership and management of the subject are good, with his teaching being a very good role model for colleagues. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 have sessions in the local swimming pool to promote their swimming skills and develop their knowledge and understanding about water safety. By the time they leave school, most pupils swim in line with national expectations. There is good involvement in competitive sports with other schools. The accommodation is good, with an adequate sized hall for indoor activities and outdoor hard surfaces and grassed areas for developing pupils' outdoor-games skills. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision, although the subject features well across the curriculum.

80. The caring ethos the school promotes supports pupils' personal development well. There is a good programme of activities, including work on healthy eating, general health awareness, sex, drugs, bullying and personal safety. Teachers make good use of discussion and reflection activities through, for example, 'circle time', to help pupils learn to explore and share their feelings and to discuss a wide range of different topics. In addition, teachers explore opportunities, for example, through work in science and physical education, to help pupils become aware of how to take care of themselves and develop a healthy lifestyle. The establishment of the 'walking bus' has been a valuable and successful initiative and the school is looking at the possibility of promoting 'healthy eating' in the snacks pupils bring to school. Where possible, visitors are brought in to extend pupils' experiences of working with and relating to others. For example, visitors from the public services help promote pupils' awareness of the work they do and how pupils can learn to take some responsibility in the care of others.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

