

INSPECTION REPORT

GORSE RIDE INFANT SCHOOL

Finchampstead

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 109924

Headteacher: Mrs Lynne Davey

Lead inspector: Mrs Carole Skinner

Dates of inspection: 12th-14th October 2004

Inspection number: 266890

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	165
School address:	Gorse Ride South Finchampstead Wokingham Berkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Gorse Ride Infant School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Guy Pearce
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gorse Ride Infant School is smaller than average compared to other infant schools. There are 165 pupils on roll, of whom 56 were attending the Nursery part-time during this inspection. The school has similar numbers of boys and girls overall. Approximately three per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is broadly average. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning the English language. Twenty-one pupils in the main school are identified as having special educational needs (19 per cent), which is similar to the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is below average. The turnover of pupils is fairly low. Although attainment on entry to the school is broadly average overall, it is lower than average in communication, language and literacy. It also varies from year to year. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school received a second Investors in People Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23160	Carole Skinner	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology (ICT), art, music.
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
16760	Dorothy Latham	Team inspector	Science, religious education (RE), history, the foundation stage curriculum, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
11769	Jim Bishop	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology (DT), geography, physical education (PE), special educational needs (SEN).

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Gorse Ride Infant School provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is good as a result of good teaching and standards are high in reading, mathematics and science. The leadership and management of the school are good and it gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are not as high as they should be.
- Pupils learn well because teachers make lessons challenging, interesting and fun.
- Although the school has developed good assessment procedures in some subjects, they are underdeveloped in others and teachers' marking lacks a consistent approach.
- Good leadership and management have created a strong team spirit and shared commitment to raising achievement and improving the quality of education for the pupils.
- Good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes effectively to their good behaviour, positive attitudes and harmonious relationships.
- The curriculum is well planned and enriched by a good range of additional activities.
- There is good provision for children in the Nursery; shortcomings in the provision for Reception children are currently being addressed by the school.
- The school development plan identifies clearly the priorities for the current year but there is no long-term strategic plan for the school's development.

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since it was inspected in 1999. High standards have been maintained in mathematics and science and, although standards in English are lower than they were this still represents good achievement as standards on entry to the school are also lower. There have been improvements in the provision for the teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and the proportion of good and very good teaching has risen. Good leadership and management have been maintained and have kept pace with new developments. Target setting procedures have improved, as has the monitoring of the standards pupils achieve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	C	C	A	A
Writing	C	C	B	C
Mathematics	C	B	A	C

Key: A top 5% of schools; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Achievement is good. The results of the 2004 national tests indicate that standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science were also above average. Fewer pupils reach Level 3 (above average) in writing than in reading, mathematics and science. The school's continuing focus on improving pupils' writing is helping to address this. In Nursery and Reception, pupils achieve well and are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach in all

areas of learning except communication, language and literacy, where they are below average. This is because many children enter the school with low achievement in this aspect of learning. In the present Year 2, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science and average in writing. Achievement is good. Overall, pupils' work is not presented neatly enough and their handwriting is often untidy and poorly formed. Standards are in line with expectations for age in ICT, religious education, geography, music and physical education.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well motivated, show interest in learning and apply themselves well to their work. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They enjoy taking responsibility but opportunities to do so are relatively limited.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and make lessons interesting, so that pupils enjoy learning and work hard. Lessons are planned well and the pace of learning is good. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics, science and ICT but are less well developed in other subjects. The marking of pupils' work is not consistent in showing them how to do better. The curriculum is well planned and enriched by a good range of additional activities, visits and visitors. Good provision for children in the Nursery helps them to make good progress in all areas of learning. The school is currently re-organising and improving the provision for children in Reception to overcome shortcomings in the accommodation and curricular planning. There are good arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The school works well in partnership with parents and there are very good links with the junior school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by all staff and governors in leading teaching and the curriculum. Effective monitoring of standards and the curriculum, backed up with strong performance management procedures and well planned professional development, leads to improvement and raised achievement. The school's ethos is good. The monitoring of how well different groups of pupils achieve is not always sufficiently rigorous. The governors make an important contribution to determining the vision and direction of the school and meet all statutory requirements. Good financial management ensures that the school is well staffed and resourced, but there is no long-term plan for the development of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views about the school. A few would welcome more information about their children's progress and how to help with homework. Pupils enjoy school and feel secure and well cared for.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- Improve assessment procedures in those subjects where they are not yet fully developed, and make more effective use of all assessment information and performance data across the curriculum.
- Develop a consistent approach to marking pupils' work and involving them in assessing their own progress so that they know what they have to do to improve.
- Produce a long-term strategic plan for the school's development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Standards in English are average in Year 2, while in mathematics and science they are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage across all areas of learning.
- Achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science is good in Years 1 and 2 because the school is clearly focused on raising standards.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well in reading, mathematics and science but fewer pupils reach above average standards in writing.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are not high enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive effective support.

Commentary

1. Entry assessments show that, when they start in the Nursery, children attain average standards in all areas of learning except those in communication, language and literacy, where standards are below expectations for age. Children make good progress during their time in the Nursery, and are on course to reach the designated Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception, except in communication, language and literacy, where they are below the national expectations for age. Despite this, children achieve well in this area and in the other areas of learning, due to good teaching.

2. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2004, which have not yet been validated, standards were well above average in reading compared with all schools and with similar schools, based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Compared with all schools, standards were well above average in mathematics and above average in writing, while, compared with similar schools, they were average. In writing, the proportion of pupils who attained Level 3 (above average) was below the national average, while in reading, mathematics and science it was well above average. The 2004 results show a marked improvement on those achieved in 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (16.0)	16.0 (15.7)
writing	15.4 (14.9)	14.8 (14.6)
mathematics	17.3 (17.3)	16.4 (16.3)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, mathematics and science and average in speaking and listening, writing, ICT, RE, geography, music and PE, which were the only subjects where sufficient evidence was gathered to make valid judgements. Where the evidence allows comparisons to be made, these standards are the same as they were when the school was last inspected, except in English, where they are lower. However, the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is also lower, particularly in language and literacy. The judgements of the inspection are not as high as the school's results in the 2004 national tests in English. This is because a different group of pupils is involved which has a higher percentage of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, and fewer high achievers. Achievement is good overall, as pupils make good progress in learning throughout Years 1 and 2. This is because the quality of teaching is good and teachers' expectations are high. Also, the whole school focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science over the past few years has led to the introduction of a number of successful strategies which are now contributing to good achievement.

4. Although standards in writing are broadly average for pupils' ages, they are not as high as they could be in handwriting, which is often poorly formed, uneven and untidy. In general, the presentation of pupils' work in all subjects is not carried out with sufficient care and attention. The overall impression is that pupils are not encouraged to take a pride in their work or to aim to write neatly at all times.

5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve consistently well across the school. This is largely because the school identifies these pupils at an early stage and from then on they receive good support and teaching. Teachers plan work for these pupils that matches their capabilities and meets their individual needs. Good teamwork between teachers and assistants ensures that pupils receive the help they need in lessons and when withdrawn for additional help in small groups.

6. Discussions with pupils show that they feel they are expected to work hard and are doing as well as they can. Most parents feel that their children are making good progress. The findings of the inspection are that boys and girls achieve equally well in all year groups. The high numbers of pupils who reach Level 3 in reading, mathematics and science show how well the school caters for more able pupils. However, it has recognised the need to improve the performance of more able pupils in writing. The school is beginning to identify gifted and talented pupils in order to ensure that their needs are met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour is good in and around school.
- Pupils form very supportive relationships with each other and with adults.
- The level of attendance at the school is high.
- Pupils are punctual to school, which ensures there is an effective start to the school day.
- Spiritual and social development are much improved since the last inspection. Both are now good because they are carefully planned for across the curriculum and are included more often as features of school assemblies.

Commentary

7. Pupils' good attitudes to their work, their eagerness to learn and good behaviour make for a positive atmosphere in school. They are motivated in lessons and want to learn. They are interested in their work, concentrate on their activities, apply themselves well and remain fully engaged; as a result there is a positive atmosphere in the classroom, which enhances learning. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility, but these are still not sufficiently developed.

8. Good relationships between pupils and with staff ensure that there is a harmonious atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils collaborate well and listen to each other; they take account of what each has to say. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. On the playground pupils play well together, and in the dining hall, lunch times are pleasant social occasions. The school deals effectively with all forms of harassment. Consequently pupils and parents are confident that little bullying takes place and that any issues are dealt with quickly by any member of staff.

9. Attendance at the school is above the national median and is therefore good; the level of unauthorised absence is below the national median and is also good. The majority of pupils are eager to come to school and as a consequence, punctuality to school is good. There were 5 fixed period exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	3.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.1
National data:	0.5

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
99	5	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

10. Pupils have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others, and increasingly are given opportunities to reflect on these feelings. They adjust well to a range of social contexts, such as when visitors attend the school. These elements combine to ensure the pupils are provided with good social development. The school's weekly Celebration Assemblies are used effectively to encourage pupils' understanding of right and wrong. This provision contributes positively towards the moral development of pupils across the school. Pupils' needs for spiritual development have received considerable attention in recent years. Activities have been included across the curriculum to enhance this feature of pupils' personal growth. The Labyrinth experience for Year 2 pupils was introduced to promote pupils' appreciation of a journey through life, and to enhance the spiritual dimension of the pupils' experiences. Assemblies also now include regular opportunities for periods of reflection on stories and when praying. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and opportunities are taken to widen their knowledge of other cultures and faiths by activities such as visits to mosques and synagogues, and when members of the local Sikh community visit the school. The art curriculum also makes a good contribution to this aspect of the pupils' learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment is good in English, mathematics, science and ICT but is underdeveloped in other subjects. The school provides a good curriculum which is enriched by a good range of additional activities. The school works well in partnership with parents. Its ethos is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery and in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers in the Nursery make effective use of assessment information to plan appropriate experiences for children.
- Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and of the standards they are aiming to achieve.
- Lessons engage the pupils' attention and encourage them to learn because they are interesting and well planned.
- Pupils work hard, both independently and in collaboration with others.
- Pupils with SEN are taught well and receive good support in lessons.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and make a significant contribution in lessons.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics, science and ICT but less well developed in other subjects.
- Teachers' marking is variable in quality and usefulness.
- Assessment information is used well in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 to enable teachers to provide targeted support for pupils who need it.

Commentary

11. The table below shows the judgements made of a sample of lessons during the inspection. In addition, inspectors examined teachers' planning and pupils' work and held discussions with

pupils and teachers. Taking all of this evidence into account, as well as the standards pupils achieve, the inspection findings show that the quality of teaching and learning is good, overall and helps pupils to achieve well, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The proportions of good and very good teaching have increased since the last inspection, and the small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated. Parents also have positive views of the teaching in the school and feel it helps their children make good progress.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	17	6	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching in the Nursery ranges from good to very good, and is good overall. Planning is clear and detailed, and assessment and its use on a general ongoing basis are also good. As a result, children are given a wide range of experiences which help them to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding across all six areas of learning. In play, activities and lessons children are involved well, and skilled questioning promotes speaking and listening, as well as mathematical development. Teaching assistants and other helpers are deployed to good effect and make an effective contribution to children’s learning. Children in the Nursery learn well from the good teaching and make good progress.

13. In Years 1 and 2, teachers build effectively on the good foundations that are laid in Nursery and Reception and help pupils to make good progress in their learning. One of the key factors is the teachers’ high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers provide challenging work for the more able pupils, which extends their learning to high levels, especially in reading, mathematics and science. The school is now focusing on enabling pupils to reach higher levels in writing. Some very good examples were seen in Year 2 science lessons where high expectations resulted in a very challenging activity which developed successfully pupils’ understanding of how to carry out a fair test. Teachers also have high expectations of pupils’ behaviour and this helps to create a very positive atmosphere in which pupils are keen to learn. Class rules are discussed and agreed by all the pupils and reinforced consistently by teachers and assistants. Consequently, pupils apply themselves well to all activities and work productively.

14. Another key factor in the successful teaching is the way teachers make learning interesting and fun for the pupils. Each part of the lesson is of an appropriate length, allowing sufficient time for direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise skills or to learn through investigation. Teachers use a wide variety of resources and make effective links between subjects, which capture pupils’ interest and motivate them to learn. Topics, books and other resources are carefully chosen to appeal to both boys and girls. Most pupils say that they find lessons interesting and fun. During the inspection, pupils were observed working well independently and in pairs and small groups. In the ICT suite they work effectively with a partner, taking it in turns to practise skills and enter information. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils worked closely with a partner to write an acrostic poem.

15. One of the significant strengths of the leadership and management of the school is a strong commitment to the professional development of all staff. This is reflected in the high levels of expertise among the teaching assistants and the quality of support they provide in lessons. All are receiving training to improve their skills and feel valued and appreciated by the school. Teachers and assistants work well together as a team to support pupils’ learning. Teaching assistants have a

good understanding of how children learn and are well informed about the teaching strategies and methods being used. The ICT technician provides valuable support to all teachers and pupils as well as providing training for other teaching assistants.

16. The quality of teaching and learning provided for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils are regularly taught individually or in small groups in their normal class lessons. Careful attention is taken to meeting their needs and to offering them challenging tasks. Sometimes pupils are withdrawn from classrooms to receive specialist tuition. The SEN co-ordinator and support staff have considerable experience and expertise, from which pupils benefit greatly. The pupils are given work that is appropriate for their needs and levels of attainment. They receive particularly good support from class teachers and teaching assistants, who, under the leadership of the SEN co-ordinator work well together as an effective team.

17. The school has developed good assessment procedures in English, mathematics, science and ICT and effective systems for recording and tracking pupils' progress on a termly basis. Individual end-of-year targets are set for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and their progress towards them is carefully checked. The introduction of personal target cards in writing is a good initiative which is helping pupils to form a clearer idea of what they need to do to improve. Procedures are less well developed in other subjects, where assessment is rather informal and it is left to each teacher to devise their own methods for recording pupils' attainment and progress. There are no agreed procedures for marking pupils' work or involving them in assessing their own work to ensure consistency of approach throughout the school. Consequently, the quality of marking varies significantly. In the best examples, marking shows pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work, but there is much that just gives praise or consists of ticks.

18. Assessment information is used effectively in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 to identify pupils who may be underachieving or who need additional focused support in one or more areas. For example, this has enabled the school to provide support for small groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics which is helping to raise these pupils' achievement. Teachers and assistants make good use of additional materials to support the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is good and is relevant to the ages and interests of pupils, with an appropriate range of subjects that meet statutory requirements, while the accommodation and resources to support them are satisfactory. The enrichment of the curriculum is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is both broad and well balanced.
- Provision in English, mathematics and science is good.
- Up to date policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects.
- The opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Liaison with the junior school is very good, and pupils are well prepared for transition.
- Although ICT is now being used in most subjects, the school recognises it as a priority to integrate it more firmly into the planning for other subjects.
- There is a lack of outdoor accommodation for Reception children, although this is already planned and implementation is imminent.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is well-planned, and is good overall: the school provides a broad and balanced programme which meets statutory requirements in all subjects of the National Curriculum, and in RE and in acts of collective worship. Provision, co-ordination, monitoring and assessment are strong in English, mathematics and science, aiding continuing progress for pupils. Leadership and management are also good in ICT, music, RE and personal, social and health education. The latter subject, together with science, includes aspects of citizenship and both drugs education and sex and relationships education suitable for the ages of pupils. There are regular reviews of all subjects, including updating of documentation, which also feed into the annual school improvement plan. The school is developing its approach to the cross-curricular linking of subjects, and has done well to include ICT techniques in a number of subjects, but this has not yet reached the stage of fully effective integration. Weekly teaching times meet requirements, and subject time allocations are sensible, tailored to meet the needs of pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra activities including those to do with sport and the arts, as well as valuable focuses on multicultural and multi-faith topics, an improvement since the last report. Visiting experts and musicians provide specialist input, while numerous visits to places of interest enhance pupils' studies.

20. There is enthusiasm for further curricular development, and in pursuing this, the school places a high priority on the continuing professional development of the teaching staff, which has improved provision and is contributing to raising achievement. Science is an example of a subject where the recent influence of in-service training has improved both provision and pupils' attainment. Teaching assistants are well trained and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Induction procedures for new staff are effective. Governors play a key role in monitoring curriculum development, and there are specific governor links to all subjects, with scheduled discussions between link governors and subject leaders, resulting in specifically focused reports to the governing body. There is a policy for pupils with special gifts and talents, and the school is currently engaged in building a register of these pupils with a view to developing appropriate support to develop and extend their abilities.

21. The quality of learning opportunities in the Nursery is good. Planning is imaginative and develops children's motivation and play effectively. The balance of free play and directed activities is appropriate for both Nursery groups. The outdoor play area is attractive and well designed, and offers good opportunities – it is exploited well by the teaching staff. The curriculum for the Nursery is good, and is both broad and balanced. It is appropriately based on nationally set goals for five year olds, and is socially inclusive. Samples of the curricular planning for the Reception stage show that the programme for this phase is appropriate.

22. Children are happily settled into the Nursery, and transfer to both the Reception stage and on into the main school seamlessly, while the transition to the neighbouring junior school is smoothly effected. Liaison is very good between the staffs of both schools, especially so in terms of subject development and assessment procedures. The match of both teachers and assistants to the demands of the curriculum is good, and this adds to the quality of support the school provides for its pupils in their learning. Resources are satisfactory overall, although in several subjects they are good. The accommodation is well-maintained, and in some areas is spacious, but there is no outdoor area for the Reception children, and their classrooms require refurbishing; however, the project for both these enhancements is under way, and is planned to be ready by January. The Nursery outdoor area is particularly delightful. In addition, the library is at present situated in a small room, which limits its use, but is soon to be moved to a much larger space that will ensure greater usage.

23. Provision for pupils with SEN is effective in meeting their needs. Pupils are fully included in all aspects of learning. They are given work that is pitched at appropriate levels for their stage of development. This ensures that they make good progress towards their individual targets. Some pupils receive additional help in small groups to improve their standards of attainment in English and mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good, appropriate support and targets are well matched to pupils' individual needs. Good links with parents have a positive effect on these pupils' achievement.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are effective procedures to safeguard pupils' health and safety.
- Good levels of care ensure that pupils feel well supported.
- There are good procedures for child protection and first aid.
- The monitoring of pupils' achievement is good in English and mathematics but less well developed in other subjects.

Commentary

24. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Governors are involved in annual reviews of health and safety matters. Regular checks are made on grounds, buildings and equipment to ensure that the school environment remains safe. The Headteacher is the nominated person for the protection of children and has received appropriate training. She has ensured that all staff are aware of the need to inform her should they have any concerns. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of pupils feeling unwell are thorough and ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Appropriate induction procedures are in place for pupils when they enter the school. Both pupils and parents said they appreciated the support given. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents confirmed that they were happy their children were well cared for and nurtured by the school.

25. Informal procedures to monitor pupils' personal progress as they proceed through the school ensure that they are well cared for. Pupils confirmed that they feel comfortable with staff and that there is always someone they can turn to for support and advice. The school has developed good procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets for them to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the monitoring of pupils' progress in other subjects is not as rigorous. Assessment and monitoring of children's academic and personal progress and development in the Nursery are thorough and comprehensive and are used well on a day-to-day basis for planning for groups and individuals. Analysis of assessment information is not yet sufficiently well utilised however, to enhance longer term planning for different groups of children.

26. The school has no formal procedures for gaining the views of pupils, although pupils feel they can talk to staff. The 'Listening Governor' sits and reads with pupils and talks to them, but this is not an established procedure for gaining pupils' views and taking account of them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good. Links with the community are satisfactory. There are very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school and are very supportive.
- The school provides parents with a good range of information about what the school provides.
- The school works well in partnership with parents of pupils with SEN.
- Pupils' end-of-year reports do not always explain clearly how much progress they have made.
- The school has very good links with other schools, which support pupils very well.

Commentary

27. A good range of information is available for parents to let them know what is happening in school as well as informing them of events. The school provides useful information about the curriculum to assist parents in helping their children at home. Recent curriculum evenings have been well attended and enjoyed by parents. Parents confirm that they are happy with the quality of information provided.

28. The active Parents' Association, run jointly with the junior school, is very supportive of the school and raises significant funds for both schools as well as organising social events. Parents are happy that there is an open door policy, which gives them easy access to staff, and that staff are always willing to help them. Many parents provide support in the classroom on a regular basis. Parents and children have the opportunity to visit the Nursery before children start, and home visits are also offered. There is an open door policy and parents have plenty of opportunity to speak to teachers about day-to-day needs, as well as to discuss their children's progress over time at the regular consultation occasions.

29. There are good opportunities for parents to meet staff informally at the end of the school day to discuss their children's progress, as well as regular formal parent consultation meetings. Written annual reports for parents are satisfactory: they inform parents what their children know, understand and can do, but they are not consistent in giving information about what children can do to improve, nor do they give parents a clear idea of their children's progress. The school is meeting the requirements of the most recent SEN Code of Practice, and as a result places considerable emphasis upon having a strong partnership between its pupils' parents and itself. An effective process has been established by the school, whereby parents of pupils with SEN are included in the arrangements for the setting and reviewing of their child's targets and Individual Education Plans.

30. Appropriate links with the local community; support the work of the school. A range of visitors comes into school to work with the pupils, including different faith groups and dance workshops. The school nurse and the Community Policeman come in and talk to the children about safety. The school facilities are used by the well attended after school club.

31. The school has very good links with the junior school, which support pupils very well when they transfer at the end of Year 2. Subject leaders liaise closely with their counterparts in the junior school to ensure that there is continuity of learning for all pupils. Links between the staff of the schools in the cluster group enhance the curriculum very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory; other leadership roles are fulfilled well. The management of the school is good. The school's governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership by the headteacher provides a clear focus on raising achievement.
- Governors carry out their duties well and make a good contribution to shaping the direction of the school.
- Self-evaluation procedures are effective in helping staff and governors to identify appropriate priorities for improvement, but the checking and use of performance data is not always rigorous enough.
- Performance management and continuing professional development are well organised and contribute effectively to raising standards.
- The management of the Nursery is good, while that of the Foundation Stage as a whole is satisfactory.
- Good financial management ensures that the school uses its resources well to achieve its educational priorities, but the school lacks a long-term plan for its development.

Commentary

32. The good leadership and management of the school have been maintained since the last inspection and have evolved in response to changing circumstances. The effective leadership of the headteacher has created a strong team spirit throughout the school and ensures that all staff and governors maintain a clear focus on raising achievement. The headteacher has led the school well through a period of change and upheaval, which has resulted in significant modifications to the leadership structure and has involved dealing with a fall in the school roll, the possibility of a redundancy and a potential amalgamation with the junior school. The formation of a new leadership team has helped to generate greater participation by all staff in the management of the school. The development of the roles of subject co-ordinators in evaluating the quality of education provided for the pupils has had a good impact on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, although, at present, staff changes have resulted in the headteacher taking responsibility for English and ICT which represents a heavy additional workload.

33. Governors have also played an important role in supporting the headteacher and staff and in contributing to decisions about the future direction of the school. They are fully involved in producing, reviewing and evaluating the school improvement plan and liaise closely with the headteacher and staff through their active involvement in all aspects of school life. Governors are kept fully informed about the performance of the school and compare it with other similar schools and the national picture. Through visits, discussions and their well organised committees, governors have formed a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and effective systems for checking on the progress being made towards targets and performance management objectives. They are particularly successful in their efforts to bring about workforce reforms and to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the school through decisions about staffing.

34. There are good procedures for evaluating the quality of education provided for the pupils and for checking and analysing the standards pupils achieve in the national tests at the end of Year 2. Good leadership in English, mathematics and science ensures that teachers are made aware of where improvements are needed and how these may be brought about. For example, the

introduction of new strategies to improve standards in writing is already having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Good leadership in ICT has improved curricular planning and ensures that pupils now cover all aspects of the subject in sufficient depth. Leadership is also good in RE, music and PSHCE, and this is having a good effect on the development of the curriculum and teaching in those subjects. The analysis of performance data from the national tests has contributed effectively to identifying areas needing improvement, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, the monitoring of how well different groups of pupils achieve is not always sufficiently rigorous. For example, the school has not investigated to see if there are any significant differences in achievement between pupils who have autumn, spring and summer term birthdays, as they do not all have the same length of time in the Foundation Stage. There has also been insufficient analysis of the assessments carried out at the end of the Foundation Stage to ensure that the information is used effectively to address shortcomings in the children's achievements.

35. The performance targets that are set for both staff and pupils are effectively linked to the priorities in the school development plan and whole school targets. For example, governors have set measurable and challenging targets for the headteacher to achieve in raising standards which are reflected in teachers' performance management objectives and the targets that are set for individual pupils. Every teacher has a specific target to meet in order to raise standards in writing and each pupil has both an end of year target and step-by-step written targets to help them reach their ultimate goal. The good arrangements for the continuing professional development of all staff are closely linked to these objectives and provide teachers and assistants with a good range of training opportunities. For example, all staff have benefited from training in the teaching of writing, science and ICT skills. The school also makes an effective contribution to initial teacher training through its commitment to the training of graduate and overseas teachers.

36. The Nursery team is well led by the coordinator, and the work of the Nursery is also well managed by her. Members of the Nursery staff work well together. However, until recently, the two phases of the Foundation Stage, Nursery and Reception, have been seen as somewhat separate entities, so that their co-ordination was not fully integrated. However, with the implementation of a recent school initiative, a Foundation Stage team has been created, fusing both together, and enabling full co-ordination for the future.

37. The headteacher, governors and financial officer ensure that the budget is managed efficiently and that the school receives good value for money when purchasing services and equipment. Good financial management has enabled the headteacher and governors to improve the numbers of teaching assistants in the school, which, in turn has had a positive effect on the quality of pupils' learning. It has also enabled them to carry out a complete review of the Foundation Stage and to make improvements to both the staffing and accommodation in order to enhance the provision for children in Reception. The finance officer has carried out detailed research which has contributed significantly to these proposed improvements. The headteacher, governors and finance officer also take a long-term view of financial planning when they consider the potential impact of changes to the school's roll, as far as they can be foreseen, and when they make decisions about staffing. However, there is no written plan which sets out ideas for the development of the school over a three to five year period with reference to the financial implications.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	463094	Balance from previous year	6438
Total expenditure	450711	Balance carried forward to the next	18821
Expenditure per pupil	2242		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Nursery is **good**.

38. At the time of the inspection there were 56 children in the Nursery, 33 in the older group attending in the mornings, and 23 in the younger group attending in the afternoons. There were no children in Reception classes, since these operate only from January to July. Children in the morning Nursery group transfer into Reception in January, while those in the afternoon group transfer to morning sessions in the Nursery. Children start in the Nursery in the January or April of their fourth year, depending on their birthdays. The transition from the Nursery to Reception, and then on into Year 1 is smoothly organised, and comprehensive records of progress accompany the children. When children enter the Nursery, most are attaining standards in aspects of language and literacy that are below those expected for age, especially those aspects to do with letters and sounds. In all other areas of learning, the standards children attain on entry are in line with national expectations for age, although there are some variations between different year groups.

39. Children currently in the Nursery are on track to reach the officially designated Early Learning Goals for five year olds by the end of the academic year, that is at the end of their Reception class period, in all areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy, where most will not be likely to reach this standard. This is despite making good progress in their language development. In mathematical development, children do well, and most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of Reception. Most children make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery, and this is due to good teaching and good curricular planning. Samples of planning showed appropriate curricular provision for the Reception classes, although this could not be observed in operation. Assessment is thorough and comprehensive, but analysis of assessment information is not yet used sufficiently to enhance further the planning for groups and individuals.

40. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to very good, and is consistently good in all areas of learning. The main strengths of the teaching are the wide programmes of stimulating activities, which promote first-hand experience and active learning, and the very good use of language in promoting speech and extending children's vocabulary. Tasks and activities are also well matched to children's needs through careful, ongoing assessment and there is good provision for children who have special educational needs. The balance between children's own choices of activities and those that are led by adults is good. Leadership and management of the Nursery team are good, although until now these arrangements have not included the Reception stage; however, with the recent formation of a Foundation Stage team it is well poised to move forward as a whole. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory: teaching, including planning and assessment, has improved. The previous report shows that then children made good progress also, but at that time attainment on entry was above average against expectations for age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative teaching, which is always at least good and often very good, leads to good learning and good achievement
- Relationships between adults and children are very good, and children feel safe, confident and happy in the Nursery

- The broad curriculum allows plenty of opportunity for children to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play.
- Children learn and achieve well through interaction and play.
- Despite good assessment practices, analysis of assessment data is not well developed.
- There is no outdoor area for Reception class children, although this is soon to be remedied.

Commentary

41. Children feel safe, confident and happy in the Nursery. Relationships between adults and children are very good. Children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development** through interaction and play. In the morning group, most children enjoy playing alongside each other, and interacting, with only a few preferring to play alone. Occasionally children begin to play co-operatively, sharing the same purposes for their play. In the afternoon group, where children are younger, many prefer to play alone, while a substantial minority liked playing with others. Children in both groups behave well for their ages, and show the independence they are encouraged to develop. Children show respect for each other's needs and this is promoted well through sharing and turn taking.

42. In both groups, children make good progress and show good achievement in developing skills in **communication, language and literacy**, but they start from a lower base than in the other areas of learning. Thus, despite the good teaching which leads to good achievement, they are not quite on track to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Children are interested in books, and enjoy stories, but their understanding of letters and sounds remains immature, even though teaching shows a strong focus on conversation and clear diction, to promote speaking and listening and the start of phonic skills.

43. Most children in the Nursery are on track to attain the standards expected for age in **mathematical development** by the end of the year, and in fact many are doing so well that they are on course to exceed the expected goals. Progress is good, and children show interest and are pleased with their own competences, bringing good achievement. Teaching carefully targets tasks and challenges to match children's individual needs, enabling success and thus pushing progress further. It is also well grounded in a practical way, using a variety of real, everyday objects as well as mathematical apparatus. Understanding of number order and number values is very sound, and children are interested in other aspects of mathematics such as shapes, and the experience of amounts and volumes.

44. In the Nursery children enjoy their experiences in the area of learning about **knowledge and understanding of the world**, and take part in the activities provided with enthusiasm. They were very interested in making vegetable soup, and shared in eating the soup at snack time. They learn about growing plants, and talk about themselves and their families. They also learn to use the computer, and most can operate the mouse sensibly and can produce their own pictures using an appropriate program; they produced attractive coloured drawings of autumn trees. They enjoy role-play in the 'camp site'. Children achieve well in this area of learning, due to the imaginative planning of the programme by the teaching staff, which provides good motivation for children to engage in activities and to learn.

45. Children in the Nursery achieve well in **physical development**, and progress between the younger age group and the older is very obvious. Larger movements such as running, cycling, jumping and balancing are developed well by the outdoor activities provided, including the favourite 'obstacle course', while a variety of indoor pursuits, including puzzles and construction toys, support the growing development of manual dexterity. Teaching provides not only encouragement, but also

often some specific skills tuition, helping children to refine and improve their capabilities. The Nursery has good access to an attractive and purposeful outdoor area, and a similar facility is planned for the Reception children.

46. In **creative development**, children enjoy the range of activities provided for them, including drawing and painting, role-play, dressing up, using malleable materials and play dough, singing familiar songs and listening to music. Children are given plenty of opportunities to choose activities, but teachers and assistants also give appropriate guidance to aid progress in learning more and developing skills. For instance, in painting, a display of autumn leaves showed clearly that children had been encouraged to look carefully at leaf shapes, sizes, structures and colours, reproducing some features of these in their own work. Children make good progress in creative development during their time in the Nursery, and their achievement is good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieved high standards in the 2004 national tests in reading and writing.
- Teaching is good, overall, but on occasions group writing tasks are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities.
- Assessment procedures are good, but teachers' marking is variable in quality.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are not high enough.
- Good leadership and management identify appropriate priorities for improvement and are helping to raise standards.

Commentary

47. The 2004 national tests, which have not yet been validated, showed a significant improvement on those of the previous year, which were in line with the national average. Standards in the present Year 2 are above average in reading and average in writing because this year group, like the 2003 cohort, contains a higher proportion of lower achieving pupils. Variations between year groups are significant and account for the difference between attainment at the time of the last inspection, when standards were well above average, and now. Attainment on entry to the school was judged to be above average in 1999. It is now below average in language and literacy. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading and writing, though reading is still the stronger aspect of the subject. Due to good teaching and careful tracking of individual pupils' progress, they increase and extend their knowledge and skills in literacy at a good pace. Well planned provision for pupils with SEN ensures they make good progress and achieve well.

48. In Year 2, pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and are able to give their opinions about them and extract relevant information from them to answer questions. They write for a range of audiences and purposes in a variety of styles, such as stories, poems, factual recounts, invitations and letters. These include writing a letter of apology from Goldilocks to the three bears and writing an account of the class visit to four different places of worship. Pupils are taught to plan and structure their writing carefully with due emphasis on style, range of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Literacy lessons are planned well to achieve an appropriate balance between reading and writing, and pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed soundly through discussion, paired work and whole class shared reading and writing sessions. However, teachers' planning does not show clearly enough how speaking and listening skills are to be used and improved through specific activities. This is a current priority in the subject action plan which teachers are addressing. In most cases, teachers take good account of individual pupils' capabilities and previous learning when planning work for them. However, one or two lower achieving pupils are occasionally given tasks that are either too difficult for them or which lack sufficient challenge. Teachers demonstrate expressive reading well and model the writing process for and with pupils to help them improve the content and style of their work.

50. Assessment procedures are good and are used effectively to track pupils' progress and set meaningful targets for them. Target groups for reading are formed on the basis of twice-yearly reading tests, which show teachers clearly which pupils are not making sufficient progress. Twice a term, pupils undertake writing assessments, one piece of fiction writing and one non-fiction. These assessments are recorded on a tracking sheet which helps teachers to spot pupils who are not making expected progress towards their end of Year 2 targets. The recent introduction of individual writing targets is a further good initiative to raise standards. Pupils refer to their targets in writing lessons and this helps them to improve their work. Teachers discuss pupils' work with them and some teachers write helpful comments in pupils' books to show them what they need to do to improve their work. However, this practice is not consistent across all classes, and some work has no comments of this nature.

51. The most notable weakness in pupils' work is the poor quality of many pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work, which is often untidy and careless. This is reflected in their work in other subjects too. Handwriting practice in separate books shows that pupils are taught to write in a neat joined style in Year 2, but this is not carried over into their other work books and teachers do not make it a sufficiently high priority in lessons.

52. The headteacher provides effective leadership in the development of the subject and regularly checks the quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Good management ensures that all teachers have performance targets which reflect the whole school targets in the school development plan. Continuing professional development for all staff ensures that all are well acquainted with the latest strategies and resources. The teaching of phonics and writing has improved with the introduction of resources such as 'Progression in Phonics' and 'Developing Early Writing'. Other initiatives which are having a beneficial effect are the additional support strategies for small groups of pupils who have been identified as potential underachievers. These strategies are supported effectively by the efficient deployment of teaching assistants. The subject is enhanced by a good range of resources, particularly the wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books which are displayed attractively in classrooms and around the school. Raising standards in literacy is a high priority for the school, shared by all staff and governors.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Speaking and listening skills are developed effectively in 'circle time' and PSHE lessons, where pupils are given opportunities to express their ideas and listen to others. However, teachers' planning does not always show how these aspects are to be developed in a structured way. Pupils use their literacy skills for research in science and to record their findings, and also to write about what they learned in history, as when Year 2 pupils describe what happened in the Great Fire of London.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well due to good teaching.
- The highest attainers in Year 2 are challenged because teachers have high expectations.
- There is a strong focus on developing numeracy skills, while problem solving is a relatively weaker aspect.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to enhance learning.
- Assessment procedures are good overall, but some teachers' marking does not show pupils how to improve.
- The subject is led and managed well but the analysis and use of test results lacks rigour.

Commentary

54. Standards in Year 2 are above average. This judgement reflects the findings of the school's last inspection. However, since then the school has been very active in continuing to focus on raising standards in the subject. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has assisted pupils' progress well. It has led to a particularly marked improvement in the quality of lesson planning. This has steadily enhanced the quality of teaching and learning, and as a direct result there has been a favourable impact on the pupils' achievement. In recent years, the most able pupils have consistently achieved results in national tests which have been well above average. Improved assessment procedures have also been refined to ensure that teachers can now give their pupils work that is routinely both challenging and attainable. This improved provision has also contributed to the attainment of pupils with SEN who make good progress.

55. Across all ability levels pupils achieve well. Results from both national tests and evidence observed in lessons during the inspection show that the school is particularly competent and successful in the teaching of numbers and the number system. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been taught counting, number patterns and sequences, with most pupils able to understand the place value of digits and to sequence numbers to 100. Almost all of the more able pupils can also understand place value to 1,000 and mentally add and subtract two digit numbers. Pupils use mathematical names for common two and three-dimensional shapes and can describe some of their properties. Most pupils are beginning to construct and interpret block graphs, though they do not often use computers for this. From evidence observed during lessons, analysis of pupils' work and data from national tests, there is insufficient emphasis on teaching pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in problem solving.

56. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, they select effective teaching methods and they successfully make learning fun. The best teaching is characterised by appropriately differentiated learning tasks for pupils of all ability levels, effective use of teaching assistants and high expectations. Teachers know their pupils well and assess their progress in the long and short term. This ensures that new work builds on what has already been learned. Pupils' work is usually marked thoroughly, though teachers' comments often concentrate on the lesson's objective rather than on where and how pupils could do better.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is an effective action plan, which is linked to the School Development Plan. The action plan also ensures that improving

standards in numeracy remains as a major strategic priority for the whole school. Whilst the subject leader has established good assessment procedures across the school, the analysis of test results is not yet fully effective in leading to improvement. The subject has made good progress since the last inspection, with none of the issues mentioned in that report remaining.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Satisfactory use and development of pupils' mathematical skills is made in other areas of the curriculum. Examples observed were patterns and shapes in art and measuring techniques in DT lessons. Currently insufficient opportunities for the use and application of mathematics have been identified in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach high standards attainment.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Curricular planning and assessment are effective in helping to raise standards.
- Good leadership and ongoing in-service training have inspired the updated scheme of work for the subject, now used by all teachers.

Commentary

59. Standards of attainment in science are good. Pupils in Year 2 are on track to exceed national expectations for age by the end of the year. This is in line with the school's most recent results in the national end of year assessments in 2004, where they were above the national averages. These findings are also similar to those reported by the last inspection although, during the intervening period, results in science had fallen before returning to this higher level. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and this is reflected in the samples of pupils' work from each year group. Pupils of all abilities do well, including those with SEN who are well supported. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged and given plenty of opportunity to exercise their own ideas and ingenuity.

60. Pupils are taught all elements of the subject as they move through the school, and coverage of the programme designed for this age group is good. Younger pupils study growing plants, minibeasts, the life cycle of the butterfly, different materials, and sounds. Currently they are experimenting with smells and scents, in a series of lessons about the senses, and enjoy guessing, describing and recording their results. Older pupils learn about natural materials, plants in the local environment, using electricity and making simple electrical circuits, forces and movement, and are now studying health and growth. They are investigating the efficacy of different types of soap to clean dirty hands, using practical experimental methods, and trying to design a fair test. Pupils' understanding of the concept of a fair test was gradually introduced and established by teachers through experimental trials conducted by the pupils, drawing on their reasoning and thinking abilities well. Pupils have strong motivation to learn in these active investigations.

61. Teaching is good overall, and in the lessons seen in Year 2 it was very good. High expectations of the pupils, imaginative planning, extensive use of first hand experience, active learning, collaborative modes of working and promotion of thinking and reasoning characterise this very good teaching, which has a considerable impact on pupils' learning and progress. Because of

the imaginative and active approaches, pupils are well motivated and enjoy science. Planning is clear and detailed, while assessment is also good, and influences future planning for groups and individuals, in order to meet their needs. Tasks in lessons are well matched to pupils' individual capabilities. ICT is used well in science: for example, pupils use the digital camera, and are able to produce graphs and pie charts to represent their results. There are also good links with numeracy and literacy. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable about the subject and has recently undertaken extensive in-service training. She has injected new and exciting ideas into the scheme of work, and provided updated information for members of staff. She surveys planning, observes lessons and samples work in order to review the subject and monitor quality.

62. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in terms of better teaching, with clearer learning objectives. Also there has been improved use of ICT in the subject. While standards attained are similar to those reported in the last inspection, they have improved recently from the lower levels to which they had dropped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made good progress in improving resources, curricular planning and assessment in the subject.
- Some aspects of the subject are less well developed than others.
- An effective ICT development plan sets out how provision will be further improved.

Commentary

63. It was not possible to observe any ICT lessons during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. However, two literacy lessons in Year 1 took place in the ICT suite, and made effective use of drawing and writing programs to further pupils' skills in writing captions. Both of these lessons were good and showed that teachers were skilled in using the interactive whiteboard for demonstration purposes and in improving pupils' skills through opportunities for 'hands on' experience.

64. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in ICT were in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and this is still the case. Achievement is satisfactory. However, there have been a number of improvements in provision over the past five years. The installation of a suite of 15 computers has greatly increased the opportunities for all pupils to learn and practise ICT skills. Regular training for all staff is raising the levels of expertise throughout the school. A teaching assistant provides very good technical support which has a positive impact on the management of resources and the effectiveness of lessons. She also provides training for other teaching assistants so that all are able to support pupils effectively in lessons.

65. A recent ICT review by an external specialist found that the use of ICT to find out information is underdeveloped. Modelling and control technology using programmable toys were also identified as requiring attention. Revision of the school's scheme of work and teachers' termly plans has now addressed these issues. For example, pupils in Year 1 create pictograms and use them to answer simple questions, while Year 2 pupils learn to control a 'floor turtle' and program it to follow a path through a set of obstacles. They also find information from a CD-ROM and use a search tool to find answers to simple questions. Work in the school portfolio and on display around the school shows

that pupils achieve well in combining pictures and text, as when Year 2 pupils illustrate their class rules and produce pictures with captions. Assessment procedures have been introduced which record individual pupils' achievements simply and clearly and show their progress through the levels of the National Curriculum.

66. Despite interruptions in the leadership of ICT, due to staff changes and long-term absence, the school has made steady progress in improving the quality of provision. The headteacher is currently leading the subject well on a temporary basis and has produced a useful development plan following the external review earlier in the year. This highlights the school's main objective which is to review the schemes of work in all subjects in order to identify where the use of ICT could enhance pupils' learning. This process is already underway and some good examples were seen in science. The introduction of a school portfolio of evidence provides a useful tool for monitoring the quality and range of provision and the progress made by the pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The use of ICT to support learning in numeracy is less well developed than in literacy, although the school has a good range of software to support this. ICT is used well to support learning in art, as when Year 2 pupils create pictures in the style of Mondrian and produce symmetrical designs, which also contribute to their learning in mathematics. Good progress has been made in identifying opportunities to use ICT in the science curriculum.

HUMANITIES

68. Only one **history** lesson for younger pupils in the school was seen, together with samples of work done by both younger and older pupils and teachers' planning. It was not possible to make overall judgements about provision. Indications are that pupils are attaining the standards expected nationally for age, and that their achievement is satisfactory. Progress is satisfactory for all ability groups, including those with SEN. The planning shows that the programme of work for both year groups is appropriate and reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum. Older pupils learn about some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, and become familiar with stories about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot, and the Great Fire of London. Younger pupils explore the domestic life of yesterday and contrast it with their own lives today; they look at themselves when younger, using photographs, and at members of their own families, to provide a perspective of time. In the lesson seen, they were looking at toys for babies and toys for children, and placing these on a simple time line indicating a few months at one end and 5 years old at the other. They were able to see how the toys reflected a growing competence in all sorts of activities as they got older. The teaching seen was good, using first hand experience and active learning with children's own toys, which promoted good achievement.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and pupils enjoy learning, but the standards of presentation of pupils' work are unsatisfactory.
- There is good curriculum coverage and an effective scheme of work.
- Good use of the school site and locality promotes pupils' understanding of maps.
- There are no formal means of tracking pupils' progress.

Commentary

69. Standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations. The pupils show a curiosity about their surroundings. They enjoy undertaking fieldwork and develop a sound understanding of cause and effect. By the end of Year 2, pupils appreciate environmental concerns such as road safety and can describe human and physical features. They can also recognise how places are linked to other places in the world.

70. Geography is taught satisfactorily. Pupils taught in parallel classes receive the same experiences in their learning. Skills and vocabulary grow through an understanding of the immediate locality and those further afield. Teachers make good use of the school's comprehensive collection of teaching resources. Additionally, they are supported by an effective scheme of work. This underpins good lesson planning and provides clear objectives for learning. The pupils enjoy their learning. This is promoted not only by teachers showing enthusiasm for the subject, but also by the successful use of activities that appeal to the pupils. For example, pupils are encouraged to take the school's toy Barnaby Bear with them if they travel, and on their return to identify the places visited on maps and in atlases. The scheme of work actively encourages the use of the school site and its locality to enhance the pupils' local knowledge and to improve their understanding of environmental features. All pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with SEN. However, standards of presentation in pupils' books are weak. Evidence observed during the inspection revealed many pupils took insufficient pride in the quality of their work and teachers' marking rarely identified this aspect as being in need of improvement.

71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader ensures that resources are accessible, well maintained and organised. Currently she does not monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning sufficiently, and the school has no formal means of telling how well pupils are doing. Satisfactory progress has been achieved since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched well by a good range of visits and visitors.
- Multi-faith aspects of the RE curriculum are strong.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures lack consistency.

Commentary

72. During the inspection only one RE lesson could be seen. However, samples of work were examined and discussions held with pupils and the co-ordinator. Indications are that standards attained by pupils in Year 2 are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils of all ability groups make satisfactory progress, including those with SEN.

73. Pupils study aspects of different faiths, and make comparisons about special things, special books, special times and festivals. They observe and celebrate Christian and other festivals during

the year. They learn about Bible stories, and also some of the stories from other religions. In the lesson observed, pupils listened to representatives of the Sikh faith and the Christian faith discussing artefacts, books, places and celebrations together, so that they could not only learn about both faiths, but also draw comparisons about the way people have their own special things, holy books and places of worship. This lesson had a strong impact on learning, since it was a real and vivid experience provided at first hand, and pupils also had the opportunity to ask questions and find out more. Spirituality is a prominent aspect of RE in this school, and a recent focus was the 'Labyrinth' experience, a celebration when all pupils followed a route symbolising a journey through life, where they learned through displays, and interactive tasks and activities along the way. Pupils remember this as a highlight of their time in school, and many have written descriptions and evaluations in appreciation.

74. The teaching seen in the subject was good, bringing about good learning as a result. First hand experience and active learning were central to this lesson, and are also features that occur with other experiences within the RE curriculum. Comparative religion is a strong feature, with Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam all studied to some extent, and both visitors and visits to places of worship make a big impact on pupils' learning. Links with local Christian churches are strong, and pupils visit a Jewish synagogue, a Hindu temple, a Sikh Gurdwara, and a Muslim mosque. Planning in the subject is good, detailed and clear, and reflects appropriately the content of the designated syllabus. There is obvious integration of literacy within the subject, and some input from ICT, for instance use of the digital camera, and word processing opportunities. While assessment follows suggestions in the syllabus, it is left to individual teachers to make their own observations, culminating in an annual statement for each pupil, without any whole school agreed structure to sharpen evaluations.

75. Co-ordination in the subject is good. The subject leader has a wide knowledge and great enthusiasm for the subject. She has updated the scheme of work and has imaginative ideas with which she pursues the implementation of the programme. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Teaching, co-ordination, and the level of enrichment in the subject have all improved since the previous report.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. There is not enough evidence to judge the overall quality of provision in **art and design** as no lessons were observed during the inspection. However, a survey of pupils' work, teachers' planning and displays around the school shows that pupils learn to develop a range of skills and use a variety of materials and techniques when creating art work. Standards are at least in line with expectations, and sometimes higher. Year 2 pupils draw self-portraits and portraits of a friend after studying the techniques used by Picasso and Van Gogh. After reading the story of *The Twits* by Roald Dahl, they draw striking black and white portraits of some of the characters. The school has a good scheme of work which covers painting, drawing, printing, textiles, collage and three-dimensional work. Pupils learn about the work of artists and craftspeople from Africa, India, China and Mexico. They use ICT to produce art work: for example, Year 2 pupils use a computer program to create designs in the style of Mondrian. The subject is enriched by initiatives such as a recent art exhibition, where pupils' work was displayed and presented in a professional manner and parents and friends of the school were invited to attend. This work was of a high standard. The school also takes part in the local 'Arena for the Arts' project, which also gives pupils the opportunity to have their work displayed in public.

77. Only one **DT** lesson was observed during the inspection and therefore inspectors did not obtain sufficient evidence to make a reliable judgement about overall provision in the subject. In the lesson observed in Year 1, there was evidence of good skills teaching. There was also good support

from the teacher and teaching assistant. This enabled the pupils to complete tasks such as cutting and hole punching, so that they could make a moving picture they had individually designed. During the effectively planned lesson, the pupils achieved well because they had been taught the necessary skills, the teacher had given clear instructions, and the pupils listened attentively. Behaviour throughout the lesson was very good and pupils took pride in their achievements.

78. Evidence from the subject leader's portfolio of pupils' work indicates design processes being taught and pupils creating designs to solve problems. There was also photographic evidence of pupils having evaluated their designs. However, some evidence showed that pupils had taken insufficient care in presenting their work. The quality of presentation and the clarity of some work indicated a lack of pride in their work and inhibited their ability to communicate ideas effectively. The portfolio also showed that Year 1 pupils could follow appropriate procedures for food safety and hygiene, and that Year 2 pupils had designed and successfully made stick and glove puppets.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well in lessons.
- The leadership of the subject is good.
- Good curricular planning ensures that skills are taught in progression from year to year.
- There is a good range of resources to support learning.

Commentary

79. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. In one of these the teaching was good, in the other it was very good. Both lessons were taken by the subject leader, who teaches music in all classes. Class teachers follow up with other activities and pupils also benefit from singing practice as a whole school activity. The teaching is good because the teacher has high levels of expertise in the subject and knows the curriculum well. As she teaches all classes, she has a good overview of pupils' progress and plans work to build effectively on their previous learning.

80. Pupils in Year 2 attain the standards expected for their age. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils created a simple musical score using coloured squares and clapped the rhythms that corresponded to it. They understand that pulse is a steady beat while rhythmic patterns are varied. Pupils clap a range of rhythmic patterns and also use instruments to play them. The Year 1 lesson was very good because the pace was brisk and challenging, and the activities increased in complexity as the lesson progressed. There was very good use and explanation of musical terms such as 'pulse', 'beat' and 'rhythm' which clarified their meaning for pupils. The teacher made very effective use of a 'rhythm square' to record rhythmic patterns using black circles. As the teacher 'conducted', the pupils clapped and played instruments in response, leaving a rest to signify a blank square.

81. Good leadership in the subject ensures that it is taught well and that provision is regularly reviewed. The subject leader's action plan identifies the main priorities for improvement during the current year, which include incorporating the use of ICT, reviewing one of the units of work and developing a portfolio of pupils' work to improve the assessment of their progress. She liaises well with the junior school to ensure that pupils are prepared well for the Key Stage 2 curriculum.

82. The scheme of work has been modified and reviewed to ensure that it promotes continuity in learning and addresses the teaching of relevant skills in effective progression. By the end of Year 2 pupils are expected to create compositions by combining layers of sound and to understand musical terms such as texture, timbre and dynamics. This indicates high expectations. There is a strong emphasis on teaching pupils all elements of music within a well-structured framework, and this is enhanced by a good range of instruments, including some unusual ones from other countries. The good provision in music has been maintained since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are encouraged to have a good knowledge and understanding of fitness and health.
- The school offers a broad range of curricular opportunities and apports plenty of teaching time to the subject, but teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
- Teaching and learning have not been effectively monitored or evaluated.
- All pupils have equality of opportunity and are fully integrated into the school's provision.

Commentary

83. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the standards expected for their age. All pupils are encouraged to be fully integrated into the school's broad range of learning opportunities, which include gymnastics, games and dance. The teachers are also mindful to include all pupils in every aspect of the lessons. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. The last inspection judged progress to be good. The school has designed its curriculum and scheme of work to ensure that pupils receive a carefully selected programme of activities that will maximise their physical development. The school also allocates substantial amounts of time to the teaching of the subject, but therefore ought to have the capacity to achieve even higher standards than it does currently.

84. In the lessons observed, the progression of skills being taught was appropriate for the age of the pupils. However, the expectations of the teachers were not always sufficiently high. Not enough attention and emphasis were placed upon the need for quality of control in pupils' actions, and pupils were not given adequate opportunities to evaluate and improve their performances. Occasionally, learning opportunities were missed because some pupils were not expected to pay proper attention to instructions and guidance from their teacher. The best feature of the teaching in lessons for pupils in both Years 1 and 2 was the pupils' understanding of fitness and health. Most pupils could talk about how to exercise safely, and how their bodies feel during an activity. Lessons routinely commence with a warm-up session and conclude with an appropriate cool-down period.

85. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. However, the current subject leader has only just been appointed and will need opportunities to be properly trained in her role if she is to be able to continue to raise standards in PE. Lack of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in recent years has resulted in only satisfactory teaching of some basic skills, such as catching and throwing. The subject has been provided with adequate equipment, and the previous subject leader was effective in acquiring resources from outside agencies such as Top Sport. There are no formal procedures for assessing the progress of pupils in order to support the raising of standards. Overall, provision is not as strong as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good, clear and thorough.
- Topics are relevant to the experience of pupils.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

86. Standards in Year 2 are in line with the expectations for age within the school's designated programme. Progress is sound, and achievement of pupils of all ability groups is satisfactory, including those with SEN.

87. Pupils enjoy PSHCE lessons and readily take part in discussions, give opinions and ask questions. Topics are carefully selected to interest pupils, but also to advance their understanding in their personal lives, and help their relationships to be positive. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils discussed how to deal with and control anger, a subject with direct relevance and one that could be understood by all. The story of 'The Very Angry Ladybird' both amused and interested pupils, and they were quick to suggest the feelings of those who came into contact with the ladybird, what was going wrong, and how to put it right. Suggestions for calming down were explored.

88. Teaching is good in the subject, making issues relevant to the experiences of pupils so that they understand better, and encouraging discussion with pupils. Interesting topics motivate pupils, and learning reflects the quality of teaching. In 'circle time', rules are observed to allow all to contribute, but without any pressure, and to respect everyone's contributions. Planning in the subject is detailed, clear and appropriate in content. Co-ordination is good in this subject. The subject leader is knowledgeable, and is pursuing substantial further training to extend her expertise, which is already good. She is able to make a positive input to the staff through updating the documentation in the subject, and to pass on her enthusiasm and her ideas. In the last inspection, no judgements were made about PSHCE.

89. 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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

