

INSPECTION REPORT

HARTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hartley

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118481

Headteacher: Mrs C Turpie

Lead inspector: Kevin Hodge

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 January 2005

Inspection number: 266961

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	403
School address:	Round Ash Way Hartley Longfield Kent
Postcode:	DA3 8BT
Telephone number:	01474 702742
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Turvey
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is located in a semi rural location in the village of Hartley. There are 403 pupils on roll and, currently, more boys than girls. The numbers of pupils who start or leave other than at the normal times is not usually high, but more than 30 per cent of the Year 6 class that left in July 2004 did not start at the school. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, around six per cent, is below the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs, at 17 per cent, is average; two pupils have a statement of special educational need. About three per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. The socioeconomic background of the pupils varies, but is above average overall. The area consists mainly of owner-occupied houses, with small pockets of social housing. The pupils come to the school with a range of abilities and their attainment on entry is average overall.

The school gained the government's 'Healthy Schools' recognition in 2004, and was awarded 'Investors in People' status in 2002. The school received DfES achievement awards in 2001 and again in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18466	Kevin Hodge	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Information and communication technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
9079	Ann Moss	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
22831	Clive Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Religious education Personal, social, and health education Special educational needs
24528	Garth Muton	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Art and design Design and technology
12764	Wendy Thomas	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Science Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hartley Primary School provides a good standard of education. The school gives good value for money. The good ethos created for learning, combined with the high quality relationships that exist, are key features of the school's life. It has few significant weaknesses.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are very high in mathematics and science.
- Pupils reach better than the expected standards in English and physical education.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to their work, towards each other and towards the school.
- The school is led and managed well by the head and deputy headteacher.
- The creative and investigative aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are not developed enough.
- The school makes strenuous efforts to ensure that all pupils are included in its activities.
- Links with the parents are productive and promoted very well.
- The governors' short-term monitoring role is a weaker aspect of their support.
- A significant number of additional activities enrich the curriculum.
- Subject co-ordinators vary in their effectiveness.
- Aspects of pupils' writing skills in Years 1 and 2 are comparatively underdeveloped.

There were no key issues to address from the last inspection, but the report pointed out some minor areas for the school to consider. These included: improving the provision for information and communication technology (ICT), increasing the number and quality of cultural activities, and improving communication with the parents. Progress has been made in all these areas, particularly ICT and links with the parents.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils achieve well overall, given their attainment on entry, which is average. In the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children are on course to reach or exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception. In their personal, social, literacy and mathematical development they achieve well, although aspects of their creative and investigative work are not sufficiently well developed. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils reach above the expected standards in several areas such as mathematics and science. In reading, they also do well, although writing is comparatively less well developed than other aspects of their English work. In Years 3 to 6, good progress continues and the pupils reach standards in mathematics and science that are well above those expected. The pupils also do better than the nationally expected standards in English and physical education. In religious education they exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	A	A	B
Mathematics	C	B	B	A
Science	C	A	B	A

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

In the national tests for 2004 for the oldest pupils, results in English were well above the national average for all schools, even though that particular year group had a higher than average number

of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Compared with pupils of similar prior attainment in other schools, they make very good progress in mathematics and science and good progress in English as they move through the school. The pupils who have SEN or who are from ethnic minorities achieve very well due to the very good levels of support and encouragement they receive.

The pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work and to each other.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good overall. The positive ethos of the school contributes to the high standards that pupils reach. The social and moral aspects are particularly well developed, and the spiritual and cultural aspects are promoted effectively. The attendance of pupils is satisfactory and they arrive promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching is good overall. Teaching is consistent and two-thirds of lessons in Years 1 to 6 were good. Good teaching was evident in all year groups, and some very good teaching took place in particular classes. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The pace and quality of learning is generally good. The curriculum is well planned generally, although some Foundation Stage activities are underdeveloped. A significant number of additional clubs, as well as musical activities, give the curriculum an added dimension. There are good levels of care, and pupils' views of how to improve the school are taken very seriously. The school's accommodation is good overall, with some development of outside areas currently taking place. The level of resources is good. The links with parents are very good and the school prepares pupils for their secondary transfers very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The headteacher manages the school well. The governors provide satisfactory support. The headteacher, appointed since the last inspection, has determination and the drive to give the pupils an effective all round education. She is supported by an enthusiastic and able deputy headteacher. The co-ordination of subjects is largely effective, although some weaknesses exist. The governors ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements. They support the work of the school appropriately and new governors are making a good start in their role. Systems for governors to monitor the day-to-day work of the school are not sufficiently developed, although the chair of governors works well with the headteacher and is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. The response from the parents' meeting and from questionnaires was very positive and spoke highly of the care and concern shown to pupils. A very small number of the parents were concerned about SEN arrangements and the school's response to bullying. Inspectors found no evidence to support either concern. Pupils enjoy being in the school and appreciated having their say in the school council, for example.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to improve the pupils' standard of writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve the pupils' investigative and creative provision in the Foundation Stage classes.
- Build upon the governors' support by developing routines for them to visit the school more frequently.
- Ensure a more consistent approach for co-ordinating subjects to improve standards still further.

The school has identified aspects of these issues in its own self-evaluation and plans for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are high generally in the school, reflected in the results of national tests and the work seen during the inspection. Pupils generally achieve well throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils in Reception achieve well in language, literacy and mathematical skills.
- In mathematics and science, pupils reach very high standards by the time they reach Year 6.
- Pupils reach above the expected standards in English by the end of Year 6.
- The pupils achieve well in physical education and religious education.
- Writing, although satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, is less well developed than other aspects of literacy.
- Pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve less well in their creative and investigative skills.

Commentary

1. Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as by judging how well they do in lessons. Children are of average ability when they join the school. They make good progress and achieve well in key subjects such as reading, language skills and mathematics. Their creative and investigative skills are less well developed. Most children will reach or exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception.

2. The tables below show the average points scores attained in the Year 2 and Year 6 tests in 2004 (with the 2003 scores in brackets). One point represents roughly one term's progress, so the tables show, for example, that pupils in Year 6 were around one term ahead of pupils nationally in English, and nearly two terms ahead in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.7 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.8 (15.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.2 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The evidence from past test scores indicates that, at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently ahead of the national picture. Results improved slightly in reading and writing from the previous year. Work seen in the inspection showed above average standards in reading and mathematics. Writing skills were average and less well developed than the other aspects of English. In the other subjects that were inspected, the pupils reached average standards or above. For example, pupils do well in physical education and reach standards better than expected for their age. Given their average starting point, this represents good achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (29.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.1 (28.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.1 (30.3)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In the Year 6 tests, standards have remained above or, in the case of English, well above the national average. When compared to similar schools, using their prior attainment as an indicator, the school is well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English.

5. Work seen indicates that standards in the present Year 6 are above average in English and well above in mathematics and science. Consistently good teaching, combined with very good attitudes to work, enables the pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Some pupils in Year 6 are working at levels that are much higher than expected for their age and they are achieving very well. No significant differences in attainment were noted between boys and girls, and the curriculum is planned to give all pupils the chance to achieve well. In other subjects, where judgements were possible, the pupils reach the standards expected nationally. In physical education, the oldest pupils reach better than expected standards. In religious education, the pupils exceed the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Achievement in these two subjects is, therefore, good.

6. The pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well. The extra groups taken by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and other staff provide well-tailored opportunities for pupils to achieve. The higher attaining pupils achieve well, and a very small minority of pupils in Year 6 is following programmes of study that are significantly ahead of their age. The pupils with English as an additional language generally achieve well.

7. Standards, overall, are broadly similar to those reported in the last inspection. This represents satisfactory improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school's warm and caring ethos strongly promotes pupils' moral and social development, and consequently, their attitudes to school and to learning are **very good**. Pupils behave well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well.
- The caring ethos promoted by the staff contributes to the very good relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is fostered well.
- Pupils are willing to show initiative, take responsibility, and have many opportunities to do so.

Commentary

8. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, and they collaborate very well with other children. They listen attentively, undertake tasks enthusiastically and are keen to answer questions. This is particularly noticeable when teachers plan lessons that pupils find more interesting and set challenging tasks that ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve well. Pupils enjoy school and play a full part in school life and the range of activities offered. Attendance levels are satisfactory, and pupils are punctual to school. Parents are informed of the school's expectations of them when their children are absent and most work well with the school to promote good attendance. However, a small minority of pupils do not attend regularly. The school is working with the education welfare officer to improve the attendance rates of these pupils by informing parents of the detrimental effect it can have on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development.

9. Standards of behaviour are good in classrooms and around the school, and are often very good. All pupils discuss and agree class rules. They are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. The pupils play harmoniously together at playtimes and very few signs of aggressive behaviour were noted during the inspection. Pupils intimated that bullying occurs very rarely and that any instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and efficiently. The recent introduction of playground games and equipment is maintaining the standards of behaviour at playtimes. Racial harmony is promoted very well. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

10. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and they willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. These include acting as monitors and house captains and being members of the school council. Older pupils look after younger ones at playtimes, and 'buddies' have been trained to befriend other pupils who need extra support. They co-operate well when raising funds for others less fortunate than themselves and take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously. They work happily together and show increasing maturity and self-awareness as they progress through the school.

11. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils are very conscious of right and wrong. This is because staff give a very positive lead in engendering positive relationships and, for example, by giving praise and encouragement frequently.

12. Socially, the pupils play a full part in their own community and they participate very enthusiastically in the monthly meetings of the school council. Well attended, extra-curricular activities also enable pupils to develop their social skills effectively. Pair and group activities in lessons allow pupils to learn how to negotiate and manage situations, and residential journeys for Year 6 pupils enable them to learn about working closely with others. The school ensures that all pupils are included effectively in activities and so they make good progress in their personal development.

13. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop self-awareness during times for reflection and prayer. Collective worship allows pupils to learn effectively and develop a sense of empathy. They show respect for the feelings of others and enjoy the activities they engage in. All pupils are valued equally.

14. Pupils have opportunities to understand their own culture through their learning in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. These lessons and the introduction of, for example, 'multicultural week' are now promoting pupils' understanding of other cultural traditions and the different cultures that make up contemporary British society. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/03

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good overall**. The curriculum generally provides a good framework for teachers to plan, and gives a step-by-step structure for learning. Local visits, links with other schools and musical activities enrich the pupils' learning. Extra-curricular provision is very good. The quality of teaching is good and is particularly strong in some year groups.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good overall**. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is particularly good.
- Support staff are used well throughout the school and make an invaluable contribution to the quality of learning.
- Very good use is made of assessment in English, mathematics and science.
- Homework is used well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.
- Good classroom management promotes good progress and learning.
- The teachers do not allow pupils enough scope to make choices for themselves in the Foundation classes.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 61 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5 (8%)	31 (51%)	24 (39%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

15. The quality of teaching of the Reception children is satisfactory overall and some good teaching was seen. A new temporary teacher started this term and has settled in well. The teaching is particularly good in promoting the pupils' literacy, language and mathematical abilities, but investigative and creative play is sometimes over directed.

16. The quality of teaching in approximately two-thirds of lessons in Years 1 to 6 was good and in a small number it was very good. Only one lesson in Years 3 to 6 was judged unsatisfactory. Scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of the very good year-on-year results in national tests indicate that pupils make good progress over time, due to the sustained good quality of teaching.

17. The teaching in English, mathematics and science is good overall. Key skills are taught progressively and built up systematically, and pupils receive very good additional support where necessary. Teachers know their subjects well and are particularly confident in English and mathematics, where they plan work very well for the differing needs of the pupils. Staff in each year group plan English and mathematics lessons together, and there is a high level of consistency in what is taught. Well-informed grouping of pupils for English and for mathematics successfully stretches higher attaining pupils and boosts pupils needing further support. Well-chosen homework activities reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and skills in English and mathematics, particularly in the oldest year groups.

18. Teachers plan well together to make cross-curricular links between, for example, English, geography, history and religious education, in order to make learning more relevant and fun. Teachers use a wide range of resources effectively, which includes a variety of visits and visitors. The use of ICT equipment, including the data projectors installed in classrooms, enhances the curriculum and supports pupils' learning. Class computers were in use in the majority of lessons observed, although the number of pupils using them is relatively limited.

19. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, and pupils bring very positive attitudes to their learning: they are very well motivated and responsive. Almost all lessons are brisk and productive, and pupils concentrate well on their work. Where teaching is very good, the skill and expertise of teachers in managing and motivating pupils create a highly stimulating and exciting environment for learning. The result is a very good working atmosphere that allows pupils to learn quickly. This was vividly illustrated in a Year 4 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, where the aim was to develop pupils' interpersonal and listening skills. The very good relationships allowed the teacher to organise a series of potentially noisy activities to dramatise the issues, and pupils were able to have fun, whilst at the same time learning and remaining sensible. The great majority of lessons were conducted at a brisk pace, however a slow pace and a lack of challenge in the planned activities resulted in one history lesson being found unsatisfactory.

20. Pupils with SEN are supported well by class teachers and experienced teaching assistants. The school works hard to give all its pupils equal access to the full curriculum. Class teachers ensure in their lesson plans that appropriate provision is made for pupils with particular learning needs. Teaching assistants work well with class teachers and provide good support for pupils, monitoring their progress and providing an appropriate blend of help and challenge. Support for pupils with a statement of special educational need is frequently very good. The SENCO and learning support assistants make good use of additional literacy activities to boost pupils' learning.

21. Pupils' work is marked regularly, and the teachers' comments offer a good level of praise and encouragement. With a few exceptions, marking identifies pupils' strengths and weaknesses and helps them to understand what they need to do next to improve their work. Teachers provide pupils with specific half-termly learning targets in the key subjects, and pupils are beginning to become more involved in setting and reviewing their own targets.

22. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is carried out appropriately, and the school profiles provide a satisfactory picture of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. In Years 1 to 6, systems for assessment in English and mathematics are very effective. In science and ICT, they are good. Pupils are monitored very carefully as they move through the school and take a range of tests, including 'optional' assessments for reading, writing and mathematics. This information is used to inform SEN support and is the basis for the formation of ability groups. However, these arrangements are relatively new and have yet to contribute significantly to an improvement in standards. Systems for the assessment of other subjects remain underdeveloped.

The curriculum

The quality, breadth and balance of curricular opportunities are **good**. Opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities and learning opportunities.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- Provision for pupils' PSHE is good.
- Creative and investigative aspects are not emphasised sufficiently in the Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly to identify areas for further improvement.

COMMENTARY

23. The curriculum is generally well planned, ensuring a good balance of learning opportunities, although not enough attention is given to creative and investigative activities in the Foundation Stage curriculum. All the National Curriculum subjects are taught and meet statutory requirements. Teachers are often skilled in linking areas of learning together to make them more interesting to the pupils. French, taught in Year 6, is popular with pupils, and there are plans to extend this provision. All pupils have equal access to all learning opportunities. Pupils have a planned programme for personal and social education as well as regular opportunities to raise their own concerns in class discussion times.

24. In addition to the planned curriculum, every opportunity is taken to enrich pupils' learning by arranging visits to places of interest and inviting visitors into school. The 'special weeks' that have a particular focus on books, art or multicultural issues are especially successful. Every teacher is involved in organising at least one club, so that pupils have a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs to choose from. Participation in sports and the arts is further encouraged through the involvement of pupils in inter-school tournaments and combined school music festivals, as well as school matches and concerts. All pupils are encouraged to follow their particular interests outside the normal school day.

25. A particularly strong feature of the school is the level of care taken in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education. There is a wide range of schools to which pupils can transfer, some of which have selection procedures, so the climate can be very competitive. Staff are very aware of the vulnerability of their pupils' confidence and self-esteem in this process. The curriculum for Year 6 pupils is carefully balanced to ensure that they are prepared for the differing expectations of their possible new schools.

26. The school is keen to give more prominence to the creative element of the curriculum. However, instead of making impulsive decisions, the school is testing different approaches before making permanent changes to the way the curriculum is planned. The experience of last summer term's successful creative work project has provided insights into what works well and what does not. A similar approach is being planned for this year. In the meantime, the new curriculum co-ordinator is very aware of the strengths of the current curriculum and of key points for development.

27. Plans are in hand to improve the equipment and facilities for ICT, otherwise the curriculum is well resourced. The central library is rather small for the size of the school but there are two large halls, and many of the classrooms are spacious and have additional practical areas. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **good** standard of care and welfare. The support, advice and guidance pupils receive are also **good**. Pupils are involved very well in school life because the school seeks, values and acts on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel very secure and well cared for in school.
- They have very good and trusting relationships with all adults in the school.
- The school does much to seek pupils' views and acts on them when appropriate.
- The school provides good support and guidance based on regular monitoring.

Commentary

28. The school provides a happy environment that is very conducive to learning. Pupils' healthy and safe living is promoted well through PSHE lessons. Child protection procedures are comprehensive, and liaison with other agencies is effective. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues around the school, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. Designated members of staff are fully up to date in aspects of first aid, and risk assessments of potential dangers are undertaken regularly.

29. Assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Procedures for noting and improving pupils' personal development are also good. Pupils have individual portfolios that are kept for them through their school life. The younger pupils are given their own targets and the older pupils set them for themselves. These targets are shared with parents through the 'target books' and are known and understood by pupils. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families well. They are sensitive to their needs and provide good support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. Pupils say that the adults are 'really nice and kind'. Almost every parent who attended the parents' meeting before the inspection and who responded to the parents' questionnaire said that their children like school very much.

30. All pupils are highly valued and their views are sought on a regular, formal basis through the school council. The council is influential on school life and has recently been involved in, for example, the purchase of playground equipment. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were confident that their ideas are acted on when appropriate.

31. Satisfactory induction arrangements, including good liaison with the pre-school playgroup, ensure that children settle happily into school. Parents receive information packs that indicate how they can help their children settle in, and they can discuss issues informally over a coffee when they are invited into the school. Pupils who start school at times other than at the beginning of the school year are also well inducted into the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents are **very good** and links with other schools and colleges are **good**. There are very good procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The great majority of parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate what it provides for their children.
- Parents are given good information about the school.
- A few parents are worried about incidents of minor bullying at playtimes.
- Mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to the next stage in their education are very good.

Commentary

32. The great majority of parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel it is very well led by the headteacher, and they are comfortable about approaching school with any concerns. They say that their children are encouraged to be mature and they appreciate the good range of extra-curricular activities. Parents value the school's caring attitudes highly and say that the staff expect their children to work hard and achieve their best. They are confident that any issues or complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently. The inspection findings support these positive views.

33. Parents are given good information about the school through, for example, the prospectus, regular newsletters and frequent other correspondence. Information is given out each year about the areas of the curriculum the pupils will be studying and there is a parents' meeting at the beginning of the school year to discuss this. Parents receive information about their children's progress through consultation evenings when, for example, they are shown their child's portfolio, and through annual reports. However, a few parents said that they would like more information on how they can best help with their children's learning at home. Although the school sends out many leaflets to give advice and guidance in this area, the headteacher is aware that more could be done. The views of parents are collected by the headteacher through regular questionnaires and are acted upon when appropriate. For example, the change in the way that children line up in the morning was prompted by parents' suggestions. Parents are always willing to come into the school for specific purposes, for example to help to clear the pond area, and are keen to help on educational visits. The parent/teacher association has recently contributed towards building the new hall and is currently raising funds for the alterations to the playground.

34. A small minority of parents expressed concerns about incidents of harassment or minor bullying at the school, although they did say that any such instances are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils say that instances of bullying are rare and that behaviour at playtimes has improved. The inspection team saw no evidence of bullying during the inspection period and they agree with the parents and pupils who say that any inappropriate behaviour is recorded and tackled consistently and well.

35. There are satisfactory links with the community and these are used to pupils' benefit. The school has visits to the local church, and the vicar leads assemblies regularly. The pupils have also sung carols at local shopping centres. Some local groups use the school premises and pupils have received visits from the 'Romans' and theatre companies. The wider community is also used as an educational resource. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoy a residential visit to an activity centre, and pupils have visited Rochester, Hever Castle and the River Darent. Links with other schools and colleges are good, and the school takes in students from a local university for their initial teacher training. It participates with other local schools in sporting activities as well as science and modern foreign language sessions. Links with the local secondary schools and high quality management by the headteacher ensure that there are very good mechanisms in place to help pupils to move easily to the next stage in their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Governors give satisfactory support and ensure the school meets its statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The senior managers promote very good relationships within school.
- All staff are very good role models for the pupils.
- A good climate for learning is promoted by all staff.
- Subject co-ordinators vary in their effectiveness.
- The governors do not monitor day-to-day activity frequently enough.
- Some priorities in the school improvement plan are not sufficiently detailed and precise.
- The co-ordination of provision for the pupils with SEN is good.

Commentary

36. The headteacher leads the school with enthusiasm and a commitment to improvement, ably supported by the recently appointed deputy. A key feature of improvement has been the review of current practice and proposals for development. The revised school improvement plan usefully draws on the views of staff, pupils and governors. It is strong in relation to improvements to accommodation and resources, but less successful in pinpointing the key actions needed to

improve standards still further. Monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and deputy is having a positive effect upon teaching and learning. The very good ethos created by the senior staff also makes a significant contribution to supporting pupils' learning. The school has few significant barriers to improve learning and is well placed to improve still further.

37. The governors provide appropriate support and are effective in overseeing aspects such as finance. They have also usefully produced and edited the school prospectus, for example. The chair of governors is very supportive and has been involved with the school for a long period. He provides a stable influence and has a very good relationship with the headteacher and the school. New governors are welcomed and receive good levels of support. The governors are generally aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and some governors with educational experience provide a high level of professional support. The governors have good informal knowledge of the work of the school, but more formal and structured monitoring is too infrequent. The links between the decisions taken, the resulting actions and the success of the eventual outcomes are not systematically monitored.

38. The school is well managed. The daily routines run smoothly and effectively. The high profile that the head and deputy maintain about the school has a positive impact on the rest of the staff. For example, the deputy shares the teaching of a class and makes good use of the time she is not with her class to take small groups of pupils for computer work. The headteacher knows her pupils well, and they appreciate her day-to-day acknowledgement of their efforts. The parents feel able to approach the school and the vast majority believe that the school is quick to act to resolve problems when they arise.

39. Subject co-ordinators are keen and enthusiastic, and English, mathematics, science and ICT are managed particularly well. Many have carried out reviews of their subject and some have monitored teaching. However, not all are equally successful in improving pupils' achievement, or in fulfilling their role.

40. Work with pupils with SEN is also well managed, and these pupils achieve well. Group work is well organised and teaching assistants are well briefed and effective in the classroom. During the inspection, they were particularly useful in those classes where the teacher was new. The number of assistants is comparatively low at certain times of the day, however, so some continuity is lost.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,001,366.00
Total expenditure	966,220.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,368.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	15,344.00
Balance carried forward to the next	50,491.00

41. The school runs its finances efficiently. In the past, significant sums were earmarked for building development, and the school is repaying them over five years. These repayments have put some strain on the budget and caused a reduction in the number of teaching assistants. The level of funding is gradually improving and significant amounts are being used to improve areas of the school such as the outside play areas for the Reception class. A fitness trail for all pupils has also been completed in the school grounds. Other projects, such as the extension of the library and an increase in ICT equipment, are under active consideration.

42. The headteacher gives governors regular information about spending patterns and potential difficulties. The chair of governors, along with other governors, oversees the finances well. The headteacher and school finance officer monitor expenditure carefully. The principles of 'best value' are applied to spending decisions, and the school follows the audit commission's 'best value' principles. Given the level of funding, the standards the pupils reach in key subjects, and the standards of behaviour, the school gives good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children start school in the September following their fourth birthday. They attend part-time for a settling in period. At the time of the inspection, all children were attending full-time. When children start school their attainment is broadly average. However, there is a wide range of attainment and experience. A significant proportion of children have well-developed skills in all the areas of learning. A lesser proportion has difficulties with speech and language.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy school; they are settled and happy, and respond well to school routines.
- Relationships are good.
- The majority of children are likely to meet or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.

Commentary

43. Relationships between children and adults are good. The teachers and teaching assistants provide good role models for children, who get on well together and respond very well to the opportunities provided. Children are happy and settled in school. They play together happily and are good at sharing toys and resources. They take turns in games and enjoy shared activities. Children respond well to class routines and know how they are expected to behave in class and in the school. They listen well to one another and are becoming sensitive to the needs of others. The majority of children are likely to attain or exceed the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the Reception year.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have well-developed speaking skills.
- Teaching of reading and writing is good.

Commentary

44. Children start school with a wide range of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. A good proportion of children are confident and fluent speakers when they start school. For example, when looking at a picture of a mud-built house in the story *Handa's Surprise*, one child commented, 'How on earth does it all stick together?' Children speak confidently in a range of situations. They have good hand control and their writing skills are developing well. Children listen well to one another in class discussions. They have good knowledge of sounds and are making good progress in writing. They recognise initial letters and their writing skills develop well, although they have limited opportunities to write independently. Reading skills are taught well,

and children are making good progress. They are developing a good knowledge of sounds and relate this knowledge to printed words. Children enjoy stories and are happy to spend time reading. The majority are on course to attain or exceed the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of learning by the end of the Reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics is good.
- Children make good progress in their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

45. The majority of children count confidently to 10 and most can count accurately beyond this. At registration time, they can count on and back from a given number to check how many children are present. The mathematical focus during the inspection was pattern making. Children used tiles and pegboards to make repeating patterns using two colours. They also enjoyed making fruit kebabs with alternating pieces of fruit. Other children were looking at patterns on African clothing and then colouring their own patterns based on what they had seen. Children make good progress in the development of mathematical vocabulary. Most are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for mathematical development by the end of the Reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are developing an understanding and appreciation of another culture through stories.
- Opportunities for investigation and independent learning are not well developed.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress in learning about other cultures. Through listening to the story *Handa's Surprise*, they know that Africa is a hot country and that many different fruits grow there. They talked about the differences between Handa's life and their own. Children have access to computers, although these were not used often during the inspection. One or two children used a 'paint program' to make pictures. The classrooms do not offer children many opportunities to explore and investigate, and some of the activities are too closely directed by adults.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use small art and craft tools confidently.
- The outdoor learning area is currently being developed so that opportunities for children to use wheeled toys or practise their climbing and balancing skills are limited.

Commentary

47. Physical activities are limited by the lack of climbing apparatus and a space for wheeled toys, although plans are being made to remedy this. At times, the activities in the outdoor area are not well planned to promote physical development. Children enjoyed playing in the sand but some of the play was rather aimless. In classroom activities, children have average writing skills, and use scissors, glue sticks and brushes confidently. Most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for physical development by the end of the Reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good experiences in music with a visiting teacher.
- Opportunities for role-play are limited.

Commentary

48. The school employs a visiting teacher who specialises in teaching music to children in the Foundation Stage. Children greatly enjoy these lessons and make good progress. They enjoy listening to music and singing a range of songs. In the classrooms they have opportunities to draw and paint but are sometimes over directed in what they should do. The opportunities for role-play are not well developed. The classrooms do not provide many opportunities to stimulate children's imaginative play and to reach this Early Learning Goal.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 (YEARS 1 TO 6)

Unless otherwise indicated, the pupils with SEN achieve well. They are given good support, particularly by the teaching assistants. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' progress closely and regularly reviews their specific needs. The school makes good provision to include pupils in activities and at the appropriate levels. Pupils who speak English as an additional language do so well, and make good progress, in line with fellow pupils.

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**, as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of reading are above average throughout the school.
- Standards attained in writing by Year 6 pupils are above average.
- Pupils speak confidently and listen well through the school.
- Achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2, although satisfactory, is less well developed.

Commentary

49. By the time pupils reach Year 2, they achieve well in reading and many make very good progress. However, because a greater proportion of the current Year 2 have SEN, the very high results attained in the 2004 national tests are not evident in current work. Although many pupils make reasonable progress in writing, the impact of the larger number of pupils with lower capability means that progress is slower; even so, standards are in line with those expected. National test results for Year 6 in 2004 were affected by the high proportion of pupils having SEN, but school records show that despite a decline, the vast majority of pupils had nevertheless achieved well.

50. Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is good throughout the school. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to instructions, have confidence to ask questions, discuss problems with their partner or group and respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions.

51. Pupils achieve well in both reading and writing by the time they reach Year 6. The standards reached are above those expected nationally. Pupils read well throughout the school, often due to the commitment and organisation of the teaching of reading. Throughout the school, pupils have focused group reading sessions in which their progress is regularly assessed. Independent reading is encouraged and homework is used very effectively as a means of promoting enjoyment and achievement in reading. As a result, pupils of all ages enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about their reading preferences.

52. Pupils throughout the school also have very good attitudes towards writing. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, they are confident writers. The quality of handwriting is above average throughout the school. Some younger pupils require support to structure and punctuate their work, and the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the expected progress in their writing. All staff work well together to identify pupils who may be underachieving. They ensure that they get the extra help they need, either in class, or in special groups.

53. The quality of teaching is good overall, and evidence from pupils' books indicates that teaching is sometimes very good. Teachers' expectations of older pupils for presentation are very high and the quality of marking of their books is often exemplary. The teachers have good relationships with their pupils, who are responsive and productive. Lesson planning is good, ensuring that a wide range of literacy skills is taught, including the direct teaching of spelling and punctuation. Action has been taken to improve achievement in writing across the school, especially in the infants. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are placed in ability 'sets' for writing and one session each week is devoted to creative writing throughout the school. The pupils have also been introduced to a new approach to help them structure their writing more effectively.

54. Assessment is used well so that teachers have targets for their class and track their progress accurately and constructively. All pupils have individual targets. Older pupils plan their work and prepare well for writing tasks through discussion, stories and reading. When, for example, Year 6 pupils had to write a story that included a 'flashback', they tackled the task with energy and enthusiasm.

55. Subject leadership is good. A colleague who is responsible for speaking, listening and drama aspects supports the co-ordinator effectively. During the inspection, the role of co-ordinator for the infants was vacant. However, the headteacher and other key staff are ensuring that priority developments are continuing. The co-ordinator for the upper school is a leading literacy teacher, recognised by the local education authority, and is a good role model for teachers.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The use and promotion of literacy across the curriculum is good overall, and particularly in history, religious education, and personal and social education. Pupils use and apply their literacy skills including research, note-making, report writing and writing in role. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce literacy skills, notably, in science where there is too little evidence of independent writing. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through role-play and debates.

MATHEMATICS

The school's provision for mathematics is **very good**, as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress, and standards by the end of Year 6 are well above the national average.
- The quality of teaching in the subject is good.
- The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is good.
- Very good use is made of assessment to monitor individual pupils' progress.

Commentary

57. Pupils enter the school with above average number skills and this has a positive impact on the progress they make as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, standards are above the national average and by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average.

58. Pupils are grouped by ability for mathematics throughout the school, and inspection evidence confirms that this is having a positive effect on achievement. Significantly, it allows higher attaining pupils to be set work that is more challenging: frequently this is one year ahead of their chronological age and in one case two years ahead. Pupils who are less competent receive a higher level of support through the same system. Overall, pupils are very confident in their number work, and their mental agility is particularly good in Years 5 and 6. The range of work is very broad, and the pupils are confident when investigating problems. In Year 1, pupils counted confidently in tens, knew the term 'multiples' and knew that numbers such as 99 had nine tens and nine units. In Year 6, the higher attaining pupils studied probability, for example, and knew terms such as 'equally likely' when assessing the outcomes of events. In Year 5, pupils measured the perimeters of shapes and calculated their area confidently and accurately.

59. Teaching in mathematics is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good classroom management skills. A significant factor that helps pupils make good progress, despite sometimes satisfactory teaching, is the very high level of motivation and the very good behaviour of pupils. They work very well both independently and co-operatively, without the need for frequent reminders from their teachers. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, the very positive relationships and support for the higher attaining pupils led to a very high level of interest. The teacher's use of a visual presentation on a computer to illustrate probability was inventive, liked by the pupils, and improved their learning.

60. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. Assessment results are analysed in detail and inform amendments to the curriculum. Assessment in the subject is very good; in addition to the detailed analysis of test results and trends, pupils are monitored individually as they move through the school. As a result of this analysis, pupils are given individual

targets and are grouped for activities according to their competence. Additional support, such as booster maths lessons, is also provided. The quality of subject leadership has improved significantly since the previous inspection, and the co-ordinator is a leading mathematics teacher for the local education authority.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils make good use of their mathematics skills in subjects such as science, where they interpret graphs and information on evaporation rates, for example, and in design and technology where they practise their measuring skills. Data handling occurs in ICT lessons where pupils collect both factual and numerical data about their local area.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. The school has improved the good standards found in the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding are well above average.
- Teaching in science is good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

62. Standards attained by 11-year-olds in national tests have been well above average over the past four years. Pupils have a good understanding of scientific processes. In recent years, the curriculum has focused on pupils learning scientific facts. Pupils show very good knowledge of materials and their properties, and of physical processes. Work in pupils' books shows that they make good use of their reference skills to research topics, although teachers tend to rely heavily on published worksheets to check pupils' knowledge. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in science. They use different graphs and tables to present the results of their investigations, and can explain their reasons for doing so.

63. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils showed a high level of understanding of the effect of air resistance on moving objects. They greatly enjoyed planning an investigation using spinners, and discovered how changing aspects of the investigation affected their results. Pupils showed good understanding of the principles of fair testing. They recognise that they need to change only one variable in order to obtain reliable results. Year 5 pupils were very enthusiastic in their investigations of expanding gases. They enjoyed adding different amounts of water to effervescent tablets and timing how long it took the gas to pop the cap from a small film canister.

64. There is little recorded evidence of work for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Much of the work is in pictorial form, and it is not always clear what the task has been. Pupils are beginning to record their work using bar charts. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed good understanding of the uses of electricity in the home. They knew that batteries powered some appliances and that others use mains electricity through plugs. They are able to identify possible hazards such as trailing leads.

65. Teaching in science is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and place emphasis on teaching pupils to use scientific vocabulary. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan a good range of scientific experiences for pupils. They encourage them to predict what they think will happen in their experiments. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and enable them to work productively. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the reliability of their test results and they understand that sometimes they need to repeat tests to check their results; they are also encouraged to consider the most appropriate ways of recording their findings in graphs and charts.

66. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has good knowledge of the primary science curriculum and supports colleagues well. She recognises that the curriculum has recently been too theoretical and is concerned to support colleagues in developing a more practical and investigative approach to science teaching. She has provided support and advice to colleagues and monitored pupils' work. She has had limited opportunities to observe colleagues teaching. The science curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and visitors. For example, pupils have visited the Science Museum in London. Good links have been established with a local grammar school to enable pupils to use its science facilities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**. The school has improved its provision since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned.
- Pupils enjoy their ICT work, and they are well behaved.
- The co-ordination of subject is good.
- The limited resources are used effectively through the school; even so, most pupils have relatively infrequent access to computers.

Commentary

67. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, in Years 1, 4 and 6. Discussion with pupils, as well looking at their past work, also gave an insight into pupils' progress.

68. The youngest pupils enjoy their work in ICT and achieve satisfactorily. They use the school laptop computers with confidence and operate simple programs to add numbers. They use the computer's simple functions and the on-board mouse effectively. In a Year 1 English lesson, the pupils used a program to construct a simple story using the letters 'ch', for example. Their past work indicates that they reach appropriate levels in using computers to produce artwork and simple word-processed stories such as *The Three Bears*; they use CD-ROMs to find out information. In discussion with them, they have a good knowledge of how ICT can help to operate everyday items such as televisions and washing machines. The pupils are enthusiastic users of computers and readily explain their functions and value to others.

69. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are also confident users of ICT. They reach the expected standards and achieve satisfactorily. They continue the progress they have made and, by the end of Year 6, use the computer to word-process and research the internet; and they develop audiovisual presentations using commercial software. In a Year 4 lesson, the pupils developed simple questionnaires about their area and used a program to help them to process the information. They have also produced their own newspaper, *The Hartley Times*, using word-processing techniques effectively. Pupils in Year 6 use ICT to communicate information imaginatively. They have developed audiovisual slide presentations for younger pupils, for example, and varied them by using a range of different fonts, styles and backgrounds. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their work and behave very well. They share resources, such as the laptop computers, and treat them carefully when they take them from room to room. The pupils with SEN and English as an additional language are supported where necessary by additional helpers and achieve well.

70. The teachers enhance pupils' learning by integrating the ICT work well into most areas. They make the best use of the current resources, although these are at the minimum level. Despite the teachers' best efforts, the day-to-day use of computers is relatively infrequent for many pupils. The provision of newer resources such as interactive whiteboards, for both the pupils' and teachers' benefit, is below the level found in most schools.

71. The curriculum is planned systematically. It provides a step-by-step programme which is linked well to other subjects. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has a thorough knowledge of the subject. The improvements since the last inspection have been gradual and have been brought about by the involvement of staff, so that the change is both workable and lasting.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used satisfactorily through the curriculum. Most pupils use computers to help develop skills in most other subjects where possible, despite the number of machines available. Each class has two computers and some have three; during the inspection the frequency of their use varied between classes. In Years 1 and 2, there are examples of computers used well within art and literacy work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils used computers to word-process newspapers and digital cameras to record evaporation work in science. The oldest pupils have researched the internet in connection with a redevelopment project and have produced good audiovisual presentations for younger pupils.

HUMANITIES

73. No **geography** lessons were taught during the inspection. **History** and **geography** are planned for certain times of the year. Evidence for geography was gained from teachers' planning and pupils' work, but it is not possible to make a judgement about provision. Three **history** lessons were observed during the inspection. Year 1 pupils learned about the difference between modern houses and those built in earlier times. They showed good understanding and ordered pictures of houses from different times on a timeline. Pupils in Year 2 learned about the Great Fire of London and wrote stories about Samuel Pepys. Only one lesson was observed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 5 were learning to gather evidence about the past from using artefacts. They showed interest in looking at the artefacts and made sensible suggestions about their possible use. However, the pace of this lesson was very slow, and little new learning took place. There is little recorded work in **history**, as Year 6 pupils have not yet studied the subject in this academic year. Work from the previous Year 6 showed that pupils had studied ancient Greece, for example. Although the work included many worksheets, there was some evidence of pupils using research skills. Useful links had been made with citizenship, as pupils had discussed the differences between a dictatorship and a democracy.

Religious education

The school's provision for religious education is **good**, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time pupils leave the school they reach standards better than those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- The quality of teaching in the subject is good.

Commentary

74. Two lessons were observed, one in Years 1 and 2, and one in Years 3 to 6. Several whole-school assemblies were attended. This evidence, in conjunction with a scrutiny of pupils' books, demonstrates that by the end of Year 6 standards are above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

75. Year 3 pupils were writing an account of one of Jesus' parables for Year 1 pupils to read, and Year 5 pupils studying Sikhism were writing a 'postcard home' to describe their visit to the Golden Temple of Amritsar. In both lessons, their literacy skills were reinforced. Teaching was good and was characterised by the teachers' good subject knowledge, high expectations and very good relationships. Teachers clearly value pupils' contributions and, as a result, pupils offer their own ideas confidently and make good progress. A scrutiny of past work indicates that each year pupils throughout the school undertake a range of work designed to develop their knowledge and understanding in the main aspects of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

76. Regular, whole-school assemblies make a significant and positive contribution to pupils' understanding of the Christian religion. As the co-ordinator had only taken over responsibility for the subject a few weeks prior to the inspection, it is too early to make judgements about the quality of leadership and management. A scheme of work written by the previous co-ordinator provides good support and guidance for the non-specialist class teachers. Resources are satisfactory and are well utilised.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. It was possible to observe only one lesson in **art and design**. Four activities were seen in **music**. None were seen in **design and technology** during the inspection, so that it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the provision or the quality of teaching. However, pupils' work was examined, together with teachers' planning. Subject leaders were also interviewed. In **art and design**, teachers follow a nationally produced programme of work that they modify to take advantage of local opportunities and to make the best use of links with other subjects. Displays of pupils' work around the school show that they are given opportunities to work in a variety of materials and that they have experience of a range of skills including three-dimensional work, printing, collage and textiles. Pupils often use the work of well-known artists as a starting point for their own work. Year 5 pupils produced their own designs in the style of William Morris, for example. The subject leader does not have regular non-contact time in which to develop the subject. Nevertheless, recent innovations have included the introduction of arts weeks, establishing an art gallery in the hall to celebrate pupils' good work and the introduction of 'visual ideas' books for pupils to collect and try out ideas. The portfolio of work being assembled by the subject co-ordinator to illustrate progress is helpful, although there is very little formal assessment in the subject.

78. In **design and technology**, pupils tackle a range of design projects, each lasting half a term. Some pupils arrive at their own individual solutions, including a very good example in Year 4, when pupils had to design and make a secret chamber with two security systems. One of these systems had to involve electrical switching. Pupils showed great creativity and ingenuity in their designs. The subject leader is very aware of developments within the subject, including the need to introduce some form of assessment system. In **music**, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 sang well during an assembly and pupils sang well in a whole-class assembly. The release of one teacher in the afternoon to lead musical activities works well. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were in the early stages of planning and composing music to accompany an old silent movie, while in Year 2 pupils learnt the basics of varying the pitch and dynamics of their voice. A range of additional activities such as guitar tuition, keyboard, violin and clarinet contribute to school music, and the orchestra includes a good number of the pupils. Recently, the school choir was invited to play at a local shopping centre. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic and skilled musician who works hard to involve all pupils in music-making.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**. Improvement since the last inspection has been maintained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils experience a wide range of activities.
- Resources and accommodation are good.
- The activities are planned systematically through the school.
- The pupils enjoy the activities provided.

Commentary

79. Only one full lesson and one part lesson were seen in Years 1 and 2. By the time the pupils reach Year 2, they develop a good range of skills in movement. They move with control and are aware of others around them. Pupils balance with confidence and link and develop a sequence of movements with skill and precision. In an outside lesson seen in Year 2, the pupils moved with enthusiasm and awareness of those around them. In the short time before the lesson was abandoned because of the deteriorating weather, they were speedy and controlled, and followed the teacher's direction well.

80. By Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in their activities and skills, and all, including those with SEN, achieve well. This is due to the systematic development of skills gained in previous years. The wide range of activities available, along with the high standard of the pupils' behaviour, helps to improve their learning. Year 6 pupils used their physical skills carefully to develop simple sequences of paired movements in gymnastics. Although these were relatively straight forward, they were of high quality. The pupils' team skills develop well through well-organised teaching and planning, and the oldest pupils throw, catch and move with skill in rugby activities.

81. The teaching is consistent through the school and good overall, enabling the pupils to achieve well and reach better than expected standards. Some very good teaching enabled pupils to make rapid progress. In a Year 3 lesson, high expectations in terms of accuracy and co-operation, allied to a brisk pace, brought an enthusiastic response, and pupils reached good standards of throwing, catching and awareness of space.

82. The subject co-ordination is shared by two colleagues and is effective. They have reviewed the planning carefully to ensure that pupils develop a range of skills in a variety of coherently planned activities. Both colleagues have also promoted a range of extra-curricular activities and have developed good links with local secondary schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The school's provision for the development of pupils' PSHE and citizenship skills is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong whole-school commitment to developing pupils' PSHE and citizenship, and a strong sense of school community.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others.

Commentary

83. This aspect of pupils' education has a high priority within the school and is promoted well by the headteacher and staff. Pupils learn to respect each other and accept that some pupils need special support. Teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, and all the adults working in the school treat pupils with respect. They set very good examples, to which the pupils respond positively. Pupils enjoy equality of opportunity, and the school is inclusive in all its policies and practices. Provision for PSHE and citizenship is both formal, in group discussion times, and

informal, within class assembly discussions that allow pupils to deal with their emotions and feelings. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils. In a very good lesson in Year 4, the teacher helped pupils to share their feelings, while developing other pupils' listening skills.

84. Visits and visitors to the school during the year make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Visitors often use the school's chosen themes, such as 'caring for others', as starting points for their contributions. The school supports a range of charities, often suggested by the pupils. The school council is a thriving and healthy aspect of school life; pupils are enthusiastic participants and feel that their views are acted upon.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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