

INSPECTION REPORT

**HATHEROP CHURCH OF ENGLAND (CONTROLLED)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cirencester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115628

Headteacher: Miss S Davis

Lead inspector: Mrs S E Hall

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th January 2005

Inspection number: 266970

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	78
School address:	Hatherop Cirencester Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL7 3NA
Telephone number:	01285 750318
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Price
Date of previous inspection:	13 th July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hatherop C of E Primary School is situated in rural Gloucestershire. With the equivalent of 78 full-time pupils, the school is much smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the beginning and end of the school year is above average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much lower than is usual. Census information indicates that the socio-economic context of the area is above average. No pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average; most of them have specific learning difficulties. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need. On entry to the school, children have skills that are above average for their age. The school received an achievement award in 2002 for improvement in its national test results, and in 2004 two awards for business and environmental links.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2175 0	Mrs S E Hall	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; Science; Art and Design; Citizenship; Design and Technology; Physical Education; The Foundation Stage.
1311	Dr B Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1330 7	Mr I Hancock	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Information and Communication Technology; Geography; History; Music; Religious Education; Special Educational Needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school. There is a clear sense of a happy and purposeful community. Standards are above average for the age and ability of the pupils and all, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and the most able pupils, achieve well. Teaching and learning are very good as are the leadership and governance of the school. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is an excellent sense of teamwork and enthusiasm in the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher, key staff and governors is very effective.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well because teaching and learning are very good.
- Provision for pupils with SEN and for higher-attaining pupils is very effective.
- The monitoring and evaluation of different aspects of school life are not rigorous enough to identify the small steps needed to bring about further improvement.
- The school week is shorter than national recommendations and this limits the time available for teaching non-core subjects, including religious education.
- Opportunities for enriching the curriculum are very good especially in the arts.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and support their children well.

Since the previous inspection, standards have risen significantly. Short and longer term curriculum planning has improved and is now a strength. The school has established good record-keeping and assessment systems and has defined the roles of subject co-ordinators, but it has not yet provided them with enough time to monitor the areas for which they hold responsibility. Overall improvement has been very good largely because the leadership of the school has become more effective and has focused on identifying how to raise standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those with a similar profile of attainment in the National Curriculum assessments at age seven.*

Overall achievement in this school is **good**. Children enter the school with a very wide range of ability, though most have above average skills for their age. Many have very good social skills; they are confident when speaking and have an interest in the world around them.

Comparisons within and between year groups in a small school are difficult and statistically insecure. Some year groups, such as Year 6 in 2003/4, have a very large proportion of high-attaining pupils, whilst others, such as the current Year 6, have a significant proportion of pupils with identified SEN.

Children achieve well in Reception because they are very keen to follow their older classmates in mastering basic skills. At the end of the Reception Year, standards are above average in all areas except creative development, and a good proportion of children have skills that are well above average in the areas of social development and communicating with others. Because of the differences in the ability of pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 from those of previous years, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), whilst being above average for the age of the pupils, are not as high as in 2004. All groups of pupils, including those identified as gifted and talented, achieve well because they are consistently set challenging tasks.

Provision for personal development is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and school life. Whilst behaviour is good in class, where it is well managed, that of some older boys can be casual and lacking respect for others in less formal activities. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are taught particularly effectively. Staff share high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The planning of many activities is a model for mixed-age teaching and ensures very good levels of challenge in a wide range of activities. As a result, pupils of all abilities learn well. Assessment routines are good and information is used effectively to plan subsequent work. Whilst the teaching of the younger pupils is good overall, it is not as effective as it is for the older ones; at times, dependence on materials produced by adults limits pupils' interest and creativity.

The curriculum is good. The very good opportunities for enrichment, especially in the arts, are a particular strength. The school makes wide and effective use of visits and visitors to bring learning to life. However, the length of the school week does not meet national recommendations, affecting the time available to teach statutory foundation subjects, including religious education. The accommodation and resources are good overall. The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good, as is the provision of support and guidance. Links with parents are very good, and those with other schools and colleges are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The leadership of the very experienced headteacher is very effective. She has a clear sense of purpose and enjoyment for the job, which is transmitted to all who work in the school. This results in an excellent team spirit. Governance of the school is also very good, with governors showing determination to pursue improvements. Governors meet the statutory requirements placed upon them. Management of the school is good. However, some school policies and the school improvement plan require review to bring them up to date and to ensure that priorities are clearly established. Monitoring of the work of the school is satisfactory, but subject co-ordinators have limited opportunities to evaluate the quality of provision in areas for which they hold responsibility.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school, which they readily support, as they do the children's learning. Parents have few concerns, but wish that facilities in the school hall could be improved to extend learning in practical subjects. Pupils like being in school and enjoy the range of formal and informal activities, although a small number have concerns about the behaviour of others.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Extend the rigorous evaluation of the work of the school by developing the role of subject co-ordinators, reviewing school policies and prioritising the school improvement plan.
- Extend the length of the school week to meet national recommendations, so that all subjects, including religious education, are taught in sufficient depth.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils is **good**. Overall standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average, and for some groups of pupils are well above average for their age and ability.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 2 to 6 achieve well in relation to their ability and a significant proportion achieves very well.
- Speaking, listening and reading skills are well above average across the school.
- Pupils with SEN and the most able achieve very well.
- Occasionally, children in the Reception group do not achieve as well as they might when they rely on adult-produced materials rather than producing their own work.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception group alongside pupils in Year 1. The skills and competences with which children enter the school are wide ranging and often above average for their age particularly in terms of their personal and social development, early language skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Attainment on entry has risen since the previous inspection when it was largely average. Children generally learn well in the Foundation Stage because staff work hard to plan a wide range of tasks, including activities where children make choices and where they learn through play. This is effective in ensuring that the younger children are provided with appropriate learning experiences within the mixed-age class. However, occasionally activities are too formal and reliant on adult-produced materials that require little more than colouring in. As a result, children's emergent writing and creative skills are not as high as they might be. Overall, children learn well because they are very keen to do what their older classmates do. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are above the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas except creative development.

2. Tables are not included in the report where there are ten or fewer pupils in such a group. Care must be taken when comparing standards achieved in small schools within and between different cohorts where from year to year, as is well illustrated in Hatherop, there is a wide variation in the proportion of pupils with high attainment or those with SEN. Gender comparisons are also difficult, since some year groups, such as that for 2003/4, contain only boys or only girls.

3. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading and writing that were in the top five per cent of schools nationally and when compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. Standards were also in the top five per cent of all schools in mathematics and very high when compared to those of similar schools. However, data from previous years indicates that until 2004 standards were rarely above average, and in 2002 were amongst the lowest five per cent of schools in the country. In 2004, standards improved significantly. Current

standards are above average for the age and ability of the pupils, and they achieve well, especially when in Year 2.

4. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, pupils in Year 6 attained standards in English and science that were well above the national average and were above average in mathematics. Prior attainment indicators show that pupils made significant progress in Years 3 to 6. Current standards are above average in each of the three subjects. This group of pupils has a higher proportion of pupils with SEN, including those with a statement of special educational need, than many other

groups in the school. Conversely, there is also a group of very able girls who are working at impressively high standards for their age. Because work is well planned to meet their needs, all groups of pupils achieve well in relation to their ability and a significant proportion achieves very well.

5. Standards in English are high because pupils across the school have very good speaking and listening skills which support their learning across the curriculum. Many pupils are very good communicators and often use a wide and mature vocabulary for their age. Pupils also have very good reading skills whose development is encouraged and supported by their parents and carers. Writing skills are not at quite such a high level, because pupils do not have enough open-ended recording tasks in different subjects of the curriculum. Standards in mathematics are well founded on pupils' strong understanding of numbers, shapes, space and measures, and on their ability to handle data. In science, pupils carry out a wide range of investigative and experimental activities confidently and competently.

6. Standards in ICT have improved very considerably since the previous inspection of the school and are now above average, and pupils achieve well. Standards in religious education are average for the age and ability of the pupils; they are not as high as in other subjects, at least partly because less time is allocated to the teaching of the subject than is often found. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory.

7. Pupils with SEN, or who are gifted and talented, reach standards at least commensurate with their abilities and achieve well. Booster activities to help prepare pupils for national tests are particularly effective in raising achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children flourish in their Reception Year and build good foundations for their future education.
- Pupils' attitudes are consistently very good and their confidence and self-esteem enable them to engage enthusiastically in the school's many activities.
- Pupils' good behaviour allows the school to be calm and purposeful, although a few pupils show immature behaviour when not closely supervised.
- Pupils' personal development is influenced positively by the school's very good moral and social education, and good spiritual and cultural education.

Commentary

8. Many Reception class children have had the benefit of pre-school education, and generally, they enter the school with above average skills. They make a flying start to their school lives, and they quickly show confidence and independence in their new surroundings. They want to help in classroom routines, and they build good relationships with the staff, with each other and with other pupils in the school. They respond well to the example set by older pupils in the same classroom. They develop very good attitudes and behaviour, so that they make good progress in achieving their Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.

9. Pupils want to come to school and many arrive early to play with their friends. They have consistently very good attitudes as they try hard in all activities both inside and outside the classroom. As they progress, they gain confidence and self-esteem and want to take increased

responsibility. They initiate their own learning and exchange ideas with their classmates. In assembly, Year 6 pupils confidently show the rest of the school their most treasured possessions, knowing these will be appreciated. They participate enthusiastically in the many clubs, and their competitive instincts enable them to be successful in inter-school competitions.

10. In the classroom, pupils want to please, and their behaviour is good. They usually listen well to their teachers and each other, though some occasionally lose concentration and need correction. Pupils respond well to being valued as individuals. In class, there are very few incidents of immature behaviour, as all pupils are included in all activities, so that those who display more challenging behaviour have little adverse impact on teaching and learning. Around the school, pupils are generally well behaved, helpful to others and self-disciplined. However, a few older pupils show immature and impolite behaviour when not closely supervised. Pupils relax and play safely together without fear of bullying or harassment. There have been no exclusions during the last ten years.

11. Pupils' personal development is good; by Year 6, they demonstrate a maturity greater than that expected for their age. The school gives a high priority to the education of the whole child by providing a rich variety of activities outside the classroom and by helping pupils to understand the values associated with belonging to a community. Pupils are involved with the local church and community activities. They learn about, and have respect for, the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths. Many pupils lose their inhibitions and gain increased self-awareness through participation in the drama club. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and understand the school's expectations for self-discipline. They are taught to share and work together and learn about winning and losing in many team games. Pupils willingly accept increasing responsibilities, and clubs and residential visits ensure that pupils bond together. The school council is an influential part of school life. Pupils have a sense of pride when singing in the church choir or acting in dramas for the community. The school satisfactorily compensates for the cultural imbalance in the school through studies of life in an Indian village, and by welcoming visitors to give pupils effective practical experiences of life in other lands.

12. Attendance is above average. Since the last inspection, the school's attendance levels have consistently exceeded the national average. The school's attendance procedures are thorough and well communicated to parents, who comply willingly. For the most part, parents do not take holidays during the school term, and unauthorised absence is minimal. Pupils arrive punctually at school and the day starts agreeably and productively.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/2004(%)

Authorised Absence		Unauthorised Absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.2	National data	0.2

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 **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good**. Curriculum planning is **good**. The provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety is **good**. Links with parents are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. The quality and use of assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 2 to 6 is very good because staff have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve.
- The planning of work is often very good and meets the needs of all pupils.
- Assessment routines are good and the setting of individual targets in some classes does much to clarify where improvements can be made.
- Occasionally the teaching of the youngest pupils is too reliant upon commercial worksheets that limit children's creative and recording skills.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5	8	3	0	0	0

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

Commentary

13. The overall quality of teaching is very good and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was good. The teaching of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 is of a consistently high quality. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and they in turn are keen to do well. Assessment routines are good overall and are very good in English and mathematics. Teachers make good use of assessment data to guide their planning, so that they provide challenging activities which meet the needs of different groups of pupils. However, the marking of pupils' work is sometimes insufficiently detailed and does little to help pupils recognise what they have done particularly well or where they could improve.

14. The planning of lessons, particularly for the mixed-age classes in Years 2, 3 and 4 is very good and ensures that different but equally appropriate activities are planned for younger and older, higher- and lower-attaining pupils. The identification of individual targets for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 to work towards is very effective in outlining where more work is needed and encourages the pupils to do even better. The school is wisely considering the extension of such activities across the school. The learning environment for this group of pupils is also very stimulating; bright and attractive displays of information and pupils' work do much to create an interest in learning. The teaching of the older pupils, whilst not planned in such detail, is nevertheless very effective, and the expectations of what pupils can achieve are equally high. As a result, pupils make consistently good progress.

15. Staff have very good subject knowledge and an understanding of the learning needs of pupils from Year 2 to 6. Staff spur the pupils on and offer high levels of encouragement to do well, which raises pupils' confidence. Pupils enjoy the challenging tasks they are set,

which ensures that they make continuing progress in their learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently very good. Parents and pupils speak with pride about the high quality of teaching and learning in the creative and performing arts, although it was not possible to inspect these in full. Support staff are used well in all classes and have a considerable

impact on learning by keeping pupils focused while the teacher provides information to other groups. Teachers use time well so that pupils quickly move to group tasks without losing concentration because of excessively long introductions. Staff insist on good behaviour, which ensures that even the most high-spirited older boys are well focused in lessons.

16. The quality of teaching of the pupils in Reception and Year 1 is good overall but not quite as effective as for the older ones. The planning of lessons is again a strength; it is very detailed and clearly provides different activities for pupils of different ages and abilities. The use of ICT is effective. However, activities for the youngest children occasionally lack impact, as staff make too much use of worksheets and picture outlines, for writing or creative activities, that do little to stimulate children's interest in recording their own ideas. The classroom environment, such as the role-play area, is at times a little bland and does not fully engage the pupils' imagination.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** overall. It is greatly enhanced by **very good** opportunities for enrichment, including a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Resources and accommodation are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities to enrich the curriculum are very good.
- High priority is given to English, mathematics and the performing arts where high standards are attained.
- Provision for SEN is very good.
- The school week in Years 3 to 6 is shorter than that recommended by the government. As a result, there is not enough time to cover some foundation subjects in sufficient depth and standards in these subjects are not as high as they might be.
- Many curriculum policies have not been reviewed recently.

Commentary

17. The school provides a rich curriculum, to which all pupils have equal access. The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection. Since the last inspection, the priority given to the development of the English, ICT and music curricula has led to good and sometimes high standards in these areas. Nevertheless, the total curriculum time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 remains below that recommended by the government. As a result, some subjects, for instance religious education, do not have enough time for the syllabus to be covered in sufficient depth, and this affects standards. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. The school is aware that many curriculum policies are outdated and in urgent need of review to ensure the curriculum is relevant to the needs of all pupils.

18. Curricular provision for pupils with SEN is very good and has improved since the last inspection. This is because the curriculum is properly adapted to ensure that their needs can be met through detailed specific targets in individual education plans (IEPs). The school goes to considerable trouble to monitor and measure the progress both of pupils with SEN and those who are gifted and talented.

19. High priority is given to the provision of pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). Many aspects of personal development are effectively integrated into discussions

during regularly timetabled PSHE lessons and class discussion times. The approach to sex education, relationships and drug awareness education is well suited to pupils of this age. Transition between year groups is seamless, and pupils are very well prepared for each stage of their education.

20. The number of teachers and assistants is sufficient to deliver the curriculum. They work hard and give time freely to provide activities which enrich the curriculum, organising a variety of different visits which contribute to the development of pupils' social and personal skills. There is a strong programme of visits to a number of different venues which develop and promote social and personal skills. There are also many extra-curricular activities, both inside and outside normal teaching time, that provide a very good range of opportunities for supporting and enriching pupils' learning and experience. Numerous visits enhance and broaden the curriculum, whilst special focus weeks, such as the successful science week, widen pupils' awareness and knowledge. The governors have worked hard to improve the accommodation and resources since the last inspection, and these are good overall. Significant improvements have been made to ICT resources, and laptops are used very effectively to support pupils' learning. The governors have plans to build a new hall and are considering extending the arrangements for cleaning and maintenance of the school and storage of excess equipment.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives **good** support to all pupils through effective care, welfare, and health and safety procedures. It provides pupils with **good** support and advice.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pastoral care of pupils is a strong feature of the school, and most pupils have total trust in adults to help them if they have problems.
- Despite focusing well on the care of its pupils, the school does not review systematically support, guidance and welfare policies and procedures.
- Pupils settle into school quickly and soon feel part of the school family.
- The headteacher and staff have a detailed knowledge of their pupils' academic progress, but the records of pupils' personal development are not comprehensive enough.

Commentary

21. The headteacher, staff and governors give a high priority to the care of their pupils. They have improved some aspects of support, guidance and welfare since the last inspection. However, the quality of pastoral care is better than is indicated by the written policies, which are only satisfactory and show little evidence of recent review. Staff are dedicated and caring, and have a good understanding of procedures in their school which they implement competently with only limited support from outside professional agencies.

22. Child protection procedures are secure, and the school is vigilant in respect of pupils causing concern. Health and safety procedures are effective. The school undertakes regular audits of the school premises and risk assessments are in place. The key issue in relation to the reporting of accidents which was raised at the time of the last inspection has been satisfactorily addressed.

23. The family environment in a small village school leads to the headteacher and staff having a very thorough knowledge of their pupils and families. Older pupils mirror the school's ethos of care,

and they are sensitive to younger pupils' needs. Staff give a high priority to the pastoral care of all pupils and this feature of the school is strong. They are sensitive to pupils' needs when they have problems, and most pupils feel secure that they can trust the headteacher and staff to listen. However, a small minority of pupils stated in the pupils' questionnaire that they did not have this confidence. During the inspection, there was no evidence that this is a real problem for the school.

24. The induction of pupils new to the school is good. Very good contact is maintained with the largest local pre-school groups prior to admission. Children are introduced into the school over an extended period, so that they become part of the school family. Parents are appreciative of the efforts to give their child a flying start to their school lives, especially when successive generations of their families have passed through the school.

25. The school shows all pupils that it wants to treat them maturely and to listen to their ideas for developing their school. The school council is an essential feature of school life, and elected pupils take their duties seriously. They have developed ideas for a house points system for behaviour and for toys at playtime. Older pupils are developing an understanding of their targets in mathematics and literacy, and for citizenship, and realise that these can influence their performance. However, the tracking of pupil's personal development is informal and is too reliant on the teachers' accumulated knowledge of individual pupils; records are inadequate. However, teachers' very good knowledge means that they can discuss in detail any concerns that they have with the headteacher and develop tailored plans for the individual pupil.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school and the education of their children.
- Parents help and support the school and their children's education.
- The school's good communication with parents ensures that they have a good understanding of their children's progress and of the school in general.
- The good bridges that the school builds to the local community and other schools contribute to pupils' experience and learning.

Commentary

26. Since the last inspection, the partnership with parents has been maintained for the benefit of pupils' education. Parents are highly satisfied with the school in all respects, and many make a long daily travel commitment to be part of the school. They applaud the headteacher's and the staff's commitment to the school and approve of their educational vision. They all feel part of the school family in a small village school. They realise that their parental role is valued and that they are equal partners in their children's education. Satisfaction levels are extremely high and there are no areas of significant dissatisfaction. The inspection team endorses the favourable opinions of parents.

27. Although the school's aims do not mention parents and there is no parents' policy, the school's daily actions show that it wants to build up the partnership with them. Parents actively support good attendance and punctuality, behaviour and homework. Parent helpers support a wide range of activities and clubs. The school listens to parents, and staff

are active at either end of the school day, engaging with parents in productive, informal conversations. Parents make known their views through consultation evenings where they help to set their children's targets. Complaints are minimal, and the school always deals with them quickly, involving the governors as appropriate.

28. The quality and range of information for parents is good. The prospectus and governors annual report to parents are very good; they are interesting and reveal the personality of the school. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory. They are comprehensive statements of what pupils can do in all subjects, but give little feedback on their progress in respect of past targets, though they do suggest future target areas. Parents are not requested to give written feedback, but they feel very comfortable with the opportunities they have to discuss progress. The parents of pupils with SEN are involved in developing their children's IEPs, so that the continuity between learning at school and at home is extended. Parents receive clear and useful newsletters and the website is increasingly informative.

29. The school is an active supporter of village life and enjoys good relationships with the local community. Pupils are proud of their roots and benefit greatly from their close community ties. Relationships with the local village church thrive. Local villagers help in the school with reading and fund-raising. The village educational trust has granted use of a nearby field, so that the school's limited resources are expanded. The village facilities are all important resources for the practical teaching and enrichment of the curriculum.

30. The good relationships with local pre-school groups enable reception children to make a good start at the school. The school has developed a mutually beneficial relationship with similar local village schools. Pupils' cultural activities are enriched through greater opportunities in sport and a joint residential visit every two years. Together, the schools have purchased the services of a handyman, as a cost-effective measure to help with maintenance. The school benefits from the use of a joint computer technician. Parents receive knowledgeable and informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches, and detailed information is transferred to the new school, especially for pupils who are more vulnerable. Consequently, pupils and parents make a mostly anxiety-free transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is very well supported by her staff. The management of the headteacher and staff with responsibilities is **good**. Governors make a major contribution to the school's success in raising achievement, and the governance of the school is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher sets high aspirations and has created an excellent team who gives her every support.
- Governors provide very strong backing and have clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The role of the co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed in monitoring teaching and learning.
- Insufficient attention is given to monitoring school policies and the school improvement plan.

Commentary

31. The headteacher leads the school very well and has high expectations for its continued success. She has created an excellent team of staff who are fully involved in the decisions she takes and provide very good role models for teaching and learning. All staff feel valued and are fully committed to the school's aims for constant self-evaluation and improvement. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked hard and successfully to address the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Standards have risen in English, mathematics, science and ICT and planning; assessment and record keeping have improved.

32. The leadership of other key staff is also very good, in that they have set to work with enthusiasm to provide a very good quality of education for the pupils. There has also been a drive to improve many other aspects of the school's work, such as SEN provision, the overall ethos of the school and links with parents and the community. The hard work and commitment shown have resulted in substantial improvements being made. As a result, pupils are making better progress than they were.

33. Management is good overall. Performance management is good; professional targets are agreed openly and supportively at performance reviews, where further training is encouraged to develop both teachers' own professional needs and those of the school. The school uses self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement, and these are incorporated into the school improvement plans. However, too many issues are identified to be manageable and no clear order of priority has been established. Assessment procedures are very well established in English and mathematics, and this information is used effectively to improve performance and to adapt teaching strategies. However, the headteacher acknowledges that the role of subject co-ordinator is an area

for development. At the moment, they have insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in order to raise pupils' achievements further in all curriculum subjects. In addition, many school policies have not been reviewed for some time in order to evaluate their relevance and effectiveness.

34. The governing body supports the school very well; it examines critically the school's record of achievement and proposals for development. Governors visit the school regularly, are well informed and have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher and chair of governors work very closely together, and the chair of the finance committee regularly monitors that the school is meeting its statutory requirements. The information provided to governors is sufficiently detailed to ensure that they can make responsible decisions about the school's administration. The school makes good use of specific grants and additional funding for school improvement and SEN. The school has a healthy carry-forward which is appropriately targeted to improve accommodation and as a contingency against the effect of falling rolls. Day-to-day financial arrangements are good, and the school applies the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services. The school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year 2003 to 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£249,604.00
Total expenditure	£258,897.00
Expenditure per pupil	£3,807.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£36,101.00
Balance carried forward to the next	£26,807.00

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Children are keen to start school and do what their older friends and siblings do. Children enter the school with skills that are extremely widely ranging, covering the full spectrum of early learning. Overall, the majority of children have skills that are above average for their age, especially in their personal and social development, speaking and listening, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

36. The curriculum is very carefully planned. The format used is a model for teaching children in a mixed-age class; it is detailed and very useful in identifying what activities are to take place. The content of the curriculum and the areas covered are appropriate. However, there is an over-reliance on adult-produced materials that stifle children's imagination. The accommodation is good overall, particularly the outdoor play facilities that are well used. The indoor learning environment is satisfactory but lacks the vibrancy often seen for children of this age and does little to stimulate creativity. The quality of teaching is predominantly good. Effective use is made of classroom support staff to work with the Reception group, which ensures they are well supported especially in their personal development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to join in with the full range of activities.
- They learn to take responsibility, work independently and take a full part in school life.

Commentary

37. Children achieve well in this area where teaching and learning are good. Children are on course to exceed the targets for this age, and several initially quiet children achieve very well in this area. Most settle to school happily and try hard in an environment where their efforts are valued. Staff work effectively to help children overcome any shyness and support those with less confidence or less well-developed language skills. Regular routines and staff's clear expectations of good behaviour help to develop children's social skills. Most learn to take turns when speaking, and listen carefully to others, although some are extremely keen to share their ideas at every opportunity. Children develop good self-care skills and most can dress and undress themselves for physical activities and outdoor play. Staff are keen to develop children's independence and have established opportunities where they choose from a variety of activities; this helps to develop self-confidence. They aim to develop children's skills even further by providing more structure and purpose to the activities. Most children develop good concentration and form good relationships with those around them, helped by themes such as 'caring for each other'.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have lots of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- They are keen to learn to read.
- An overuse of commercial writing formats limits children's interest in emergent writing.

Commentary

38. Teaching is predominantly good in this area; children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the targets for their age. A significant proportion of higher-attaining children have skills that are well above average. Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Many have a well-developed vocabulary for their age and are confident communicators. Staff provide a good range of discussion activities, where children are encouraged to offer their ideas and experiences. Teachers use directed questions well to draw the quieter and less confident children into discussions. Children have opportunities to develop their speaking skills further in role-play activities, but these are not structured as well as they might be and sometimes lack an evident purpose. Many children are very keen to learn to read like the older children. They are well supported in school and at home, and many make very rapid progress in this area, becoming very competent readers. Children enjoy phonics activities and often learn letter sounds quickly, which enables them to tackle unfamiliar words with growing confidence. Children are also keen to learn to write and most are able to write their name and familiar words unaided. However, the use of some commercial writing formats does little to interest the children or develop their emergent writing skills. Some of these activities require too much colouring in of related illustrations at the expense of pupils developing their own independent writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy outdoor play activities where they learn about numbers.
- Children count confidently.

Commentary

39. Good teaching leads to effective learning in early mathematical development. Children achieve well and most exceed the targets for their age. Good attention is paid to devising play activities which link closely to the whole-class introductory sessions in order to consolidate learning. Good use is made of the outdoor area, even in the coldest of weathers. Specific activities for the Reception group are carefully planned to make good use of the good range of large equipment. This is used well in purposeful activities such as ensuring that children park their tricycles in the appropriately numbered bay in the playground, and using sets of skittles which they learn to count accurately. Children

become confident in counting numbers as part of whole-class numeracy activities and, whilst numbers to 100 may mean relatively little to them at this stage, such activities are made to seem important and emphasise to the children how valuable such a skill is. They become familiar with patterns and shapes and learn positional words when using a range of objects.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a lively interest in the world around them.
- Children become confident users of computers.

Commentary

40. Teaching is predominantly good in this area, as is learning. Most children exceed the targets for their age and a significant number have very good understanding. Some children enter the school with a wide and varied general knowledge and are inquisitive and interested in finding out why things work. In geographical activities, children identify the features of a fictional island and contrast these to the features of their local area around Hatherop. They recognise what types of transport are used on the island and know that a boat would not be a lot of use in their own village. Children become confident users of computers through regular usage of laptops in a range of carefully planned activities. In science activities, children find out about materials by sorting them into those that are hard or soft. This area of the curriculum is planned well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular and effective use is made of the outdoor area to help develop physical skills.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning are good in this area and children exceed the targets for their age. They are generally well co-ordinated and enjoy using the good range of outdoor play equipment in regular activities even in the coldest weather. Children are able to control tricycles and scooters well. Photographic evidence shows good use of the large-sized adventure play equipment, where children learn to scramble up a climbing net and manoeuvre themselves in and out, and up and down the equipment. Children also have lots of opportunities to handle small tools such as scissors and pencils, which help develop their range of physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overuse of adult-produced formats for their work limits children's creativity.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area, and children achieve satisfactorily. Children take part in a satisfactory range of activities designed to stimulate their imagination and creative skills. They enjoy using the role-play area, currently a travel agent, to book their next holiday. However, the area is generally bland and not particularly inviting or stimulating, and staff miss opportunities to make the most of the talents of colleagues and parents to help develop such areas. Some of the art and design tasks children undertake are too closely directed and lack vibrancy, and this limits the effectiveness of the experience. The sample of children's work on display shows that too often children have to do little more than colour in outlines produced by adults. Templates and stencils are used when it would be better for children themselves to draw a range of people, animals and items in order to develop their skills further. Children and parents spoke with pleasure about the musical and performance activities the children take part in, but it was not possible to observe these during the inspection.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

43. In the case of very small schools, care must be taken when comparing the standards reached with those of previous years or those of similar schools, as the small numbers can make statistical comparisons invalid. In Hatherop, some year groups contain a higher-than-average proportion of pupils recognised as gifted and talented, whilst other groups contain much larger proportions of pupils with recognised SEN. Some year groups, such as Year 6 in 2003/4, had changed considerably over the four years and contained only girls. As a result, gender comparisons were not possible and the progress made from Year 2 was difficult to estimate.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching ensures that pupils achieve consistently high standards in English.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well.

Commentary

44. Since the last inspection, standards in English have improved considerably, due to the consistently high standards in teaching throughout the school. Inspection evidence shows that current standards in English are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, despite the significant proportion of pupils with SEN. Based on their prior attainment all groups of pupils have made good progress and are achieving well. Higher-attaining pupils are given challenging tasks which enable them to produce work commensurate with their ability. Pupils with SEN and those who are less confident achieve well because they are well supported in small groups by teachers and classroom assistants.

45. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils develop these skills well as they move through the school. Younger pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and they respond well to instructions. Older pupils are eager to answer questions and enjoy participating in class discussions and debates. They are given many opportunities to practise their skills through class assemblies, 'hot seating', drama and school productions. As a result, the majority of pupils speak confidently and are articulate, and many higher-attaining pupils use a rich, extended vocabulary in discussion.

46. Pupils' attainment in reading is well above average. They make good progress in reading as they go through the school because they are taught thoroughly and systematically and are encouraged to practise their skills. As a result, most pupils enjoy reading and their progress is fully monitored by their teachers. Those with SEN make good progress because they receive very good support. Numerous opportunities are provided to read in school, including silent and guided reading sessions which are reinforced by regular reading at home, encouraged by parents. Most pupils are confident and fluent readers by the time they leave the school.

47. Writing standards are above average. Pupils write in a wide range of genres and develop good writing techniques. Higher-attaining pupils produce very good quality extended writing containing lively and interesting ideas. Handwriting standards are good because of regular handwriting sessions. Many pupils structure sentences accurately from an early age. Good spelling, grammar and neat, joined handwriting are often the norm. Pupils plan their stories well and delineate character to interest the reader. The quality of their stories and poetry is often very good.

48. Teaching and learning are very good because teachers plan very carefully to cater for the needs of different abilities and age groups. Most lessons are delivered with pace, challenge and very skilled questioning that seeks to push pupils' thinking forward. Teachers are enthusiastic, have very good subject knowledge and communicate their ideas very well. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support learning, particularly with those pupils with SEN. As a result, pupils are interested, well motivated and produce quality work. Good use is made of the information gleaned from regular and thorough assessment to inform planning. However, teachers' comments on written work are not helpful enough in indicating to pupils how they might improve it.

49. Leadership of the subject is very good. The subject leader is very knowledgeable and competent. She has a clear idea of the many strengths in the subject. Management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is keen to develop her role further by monitoring teaching and learning more frequently and rigorously in order to improve provision across the school still further.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. The development of literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum is good overall. Teachers plan a wide range of activities to enable pupils to apply their developing skills in other subjects. Pupils have good research skills, enabling them to access information on the internet, and they use their word-processing skills to improve their work and its appearance. However, the use of worksheets in subjects such as religious education, geography and history occasionally limits opportunities for pupils to write effectively and imaginatively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good, and staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- From Years 2 to 6, pupils have very good understanding of all areas of mathematics.
- In Years 2, 3 and 4, the planning of lessons is particularly apt for mixed-age classes.
- Targets for improvement are clearly identified.
- The subject co-ordinator does not have enough opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in the subject.

Commentary

51. The results of the 2004 national tests for pupils aged seven indicate that standards were in the top five per cent of schools nationally and were very high when compared to those of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. Standards were also above average the previous year but, prior to this, they had been lower. The results of the 2004 national tests for pupils aged 11 indicate that standards were above the national average, and, based on prior attainment indicators pupils made marked progress. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently

above average, and a good proportion of pupils are on course to achieve well. Both of these year groups contain more pupils with recognised SEN than the previous year. Standards have risen in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection and have been maintained in Years 1 and 2. Overall achievement is good.

52. Pupils throughout the school have strong and secure understanding of numbers, which they use very confidently for their age. They are able to use this understanding in a wide range of increasingly complex calculations, so that by Year 6 several gifted and talented pupils are working on the Key Stage 3 program of study, usually taught in secondary schools. Pupils in Year 2 develop a good range of strategies to add together several numbers by recognising pairs of numbers, which make 10, or adding doubles and near doubles. Pupils also have a very good understanding of shapes and space, as was demonstrated by Year 6 who were able to construct a range of quadrilaterals using only a compass and protractor.

53. Teaching and learning in mathematics are very good. Staff have very high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and set consistently challenging tasks. The pupils recognise the challenge and are spurred on by it, as shown in the sense of enjoyment and achievement at the end of several lessons. The planning of lessons in Years 2 to 4 is of very high quality and ensures that all pupils in the mixed-age class are continually challenged. In these classes, the use of individual targets for improvement is very effective, and the staff are wisely considering adopting this strategy across the school. Teaching of the older, most able pupils is also very effective; booster sessions prior to national tests ensure that pupils approach these with confidence. All staff give clear explanations and manage pupils well so there is a clear sense of purpose to learning. Pupils of all abilities learn well because tasks are set at the right level for them to make progress. Assessment in the subject is very good, and all staff use data well to guide them when planning lessons.

54. Leadership of the subject is very good. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject; planning, target setting and the use of assessment are all of a high order. However, the management of the subject is no more than satisfactory, as the co-ordinator has had very few formal opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, which makes it difficult to identify the small steps necessary for even further improvement, including in Year 1.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good, although often incidental rather than purposefully designed to boost skills. Pupils have opportunities in science, history and geography to use measures and handle data. Computers are used to support learning, although not on a regular enough basis.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to carry out experimental and investigative activities.
- From an early age, pupils have good levels of interest in the world around them.

- The subject co-ordinator has insufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of learning from Year 1 onwards.

Commentary

56. Teachers' assessments in Year 2 indicate that in 2004 standards were very high. National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 show that in 2004 standards were well above the national average. When compared to their prior attainment pupils made significant progress. Current standards are above average in Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. However, both year groups have a higher than usual proportion of pupils with SEN, and overall standards are not as high as last year. Inspection findings indicate that standards have improved since the previous inspection. In Years 3 to 6, where, previously, no pupils exceeded the expected level, a good proportion of pupils are on course to exceed the expected level in national tests. Standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2.

57. Pupils have lively and enquiring minds and a natural curiosity about the world around them. They have good factual knowledge for their age about all aspects of science. Pupils develop high levels of confidence in their ability to carry out experimental and investigative tasks. Older pupils are able to make hypotheses, carry out observations, conduct experiments and draw conclusions. The sample of recent work shows that Year 2 pupils have above average understanding of what types of food we need to keep our bodies healthy. They were able to predict and investigate which year group in their class had the most teeth. However, when they came to investigate the difference between the hardness of different rocks and how they could test this, some pupils struggled to understand how to make their tests fair. Year 6 pupils investigating how seeds germinate, understood that they needed to alter factors such as the amount of water and heat given to the seeds, and make regular observations of what happens. Their planning indicated that they had a good understanding of the possible variables in such tests.

58. It was possible to observe only one lesson of science as no others were planned during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of a full sample of pupils' work throughout the year shows that teaching is very good. The planning of lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4 is very detailed and highly effective in identifying what is to be taught to groups of pupils of different ages and working at different levels. This ensures that all pupils are offered a consistently high level of challenge. Whilst planning for the older pupils is not so detailed, the high level of challenge remains. Occasionally, however, teachers do too much for pupils by providing recording formats in which they add their observations, at the expense of using headings from which pupils could record their findings in their own words. Assessment systems and the use of information to guide planning are good.

59. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked effectively with colleagues to extend the program for investigative activities, whilst maintaining a balance in other areas of the subject. Management of the subject is satisfactory. As in other subjects, the co-ordinator has few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, and particularly in Years 1 and 2. This makes it difficult for her to know whether issues such as planning, target setting and the use of classroom computers are addressed consistently.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because a good range of ICT activities is planned.

- The co-ordinator has made a considerable contribution to improving provision by using her expertise and knowledge very effectively throughout the school.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

60. Standards are above expectations throughout the school and pupils' achievement is good. Significant improvements have been made to provision since the last inspection. The school has invested in new laptop computers which are extensively used throughout the school. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills when combining text and graphics. They are familiar with the computer operating environment and skilfully use the mouse, keyboard and on-screen menus to select programs, save their work and print out copies. Pupils are confident when searching the internet for information and make effective use of search engines to accomplish these tasks. They can send e-mails to each other and use the digital camera to record events. Pupils' data handling skills are well developed and older pupils confidently identify formulae and enter results onto spreadsheets.

61. Teaching and learning are both good. Teachers have increased their subject knowledge and are confident in using ICT in their lessons. Planning is detailed; challenging activities capture pupils' imagination and ensure they have positive attitudes and are keen to succeed. Pupils with SEN are given laptops to support their learning, and teaching assistants are often on hand to help them. However, in lessons where it would have been entirely suitable, classroom computers were not used, thus limiting pupils' ability to practise the skills they were learning. Assessment activities are not as yet fully effective.

62. The leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has detailed knowledge of the subject, and the school makes good use of her expertise by arranging for her to teach all pupils throughout the school. As a result, standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has encouraged colleagues to take more responsibility for teaching the subject and has helped to improve their knowledge and confidence, though further training is still necessary. Management of the subject is good but there is room to extend monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Information and communication technology across the school

63. Very good use is made of ICT to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils used their control and monitoring skills in science when devising a program to light an electric bulb. They enter data to produce various graphs in mathematics and use paint packages to support work in art. Older pupils used their skills very effectively to produce a high quality multimedia presentation on Tudor exploration as part of their history work. Most pupils have good levels of competence in word-processing, which they apply to their work in many subjects, including English.

HUMANITIES

64. **Geography** and **history** were not a focus for inspection and no lessons were seen. No overall judgements can, therefore, be made about standards, achievement, teaching and learning. Discussions with co-ordinators, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, indicate that the school uses an appropriate scheme of work to develop pupils' skills. Visitors to the school and visits to places of interest provide pupils with first-hand experiences which contribute to their learning. Pupils use computers, including the internet for research, but do not have enough opportunities to write at length because teachers rely too heavily on worksheets. Good use is made of ICT, including using the internet to support learning, but opportunities for extended writing are sometimes missed due to the over-reliance on worksheets.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The time allocated to teaching religious education is less than that recommended by national guidelines.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and uses her expertise well to teach different classes.
- Good opportunities are provided for visits to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

65. Standards of work throughout the school are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time, as initially they have limited knowledge of religious beliefs. Standards have not improved since the last inspection, as the time allocated to the teaching of religious education is still insufficient in all classes. Strong links have been established with the local church, where pupils regularly sing in the choir and attend family services. As a result, many pupils have a good understanding of the Christian faith. They learn to compare the symbols and customs of religions such as Judaism and Islam by visiting a synagogue and mosque.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and good lessons were seen during the inspection. In the most successful lessons, teachers' subject knowledge, good relationships, well-structured planning and the valuing of pupils' ideas have a positive impact on their learning and achievement. In such lessons, pupils are encouraged to express their ideas, and attention is paid to the development of their speaking and listening skills. As a result, pupils are interested and eager to contribute their ideas and demonstrate their understanding to others. Most pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Links are often made with other subjects, and pupils use their ICT word-processing skills to record work.

67. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has worked hard to improve resources and develop the scheme of work to help teachers plan more effectively. She uses her own expertise well to teach religious education to different classes and organises visits to places of worship to give pupils first-hand experiences whenever possible. Management of the subject is satisfactory but, as with other subjects, the co-ordinator has few opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning, using identified criteria.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. It was not possible to observe any lessons in **design and technology** and, therefore, it is not possible to make judgements about the overall quality of provision or teaching and learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they have good opportunities to design, make and evaluate a range of items, in a rolling program suitable for their age. Recent work, making movable, battery-powered vehicles, shows that older pupils are aware of the importance of decorating and finishing their models to a good standard. In another class, pupils had carefully considered all the elements they needed to include when designing a torch. The work of younger pupils indicates that not enough attention is given to the design element and too many pieces are made using templates produced by adults.

As with other subjects, the co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

69. It was not possible to observe any **physical education** lessons during the inspection. Therefore, no secure judgements can be made about the quality of provision. However, discussion with staff and reference to planning indicate that a secure curriculum is in place. The staff, who try hard to encourage the pupils to be active and enjoy sport, value physical skills highly. Pupils have carefully planned opportunities to develop gymnastic and games skills, and other skills relevant to the curriculum for their age. Pupils have many opportunities to learn to swim, and several learn to swim quite long distances. A good range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities is provided and pupils can represent the school in a variety of team sports, in which it is often successful. Facilities in school are satisfactory, but the small school hall and lack of a school field are inhibiting factors. However, the school is working hard to improve these and makes good use of an adjacent field for such activities.

70. **Music** was not a focus for this inspection and only one lesson was observed. It is therefore not possible to make firm judgement about overall provision. From available evidence, however, it is clear that standards in singing are above average and pupils have opportunities to sing regularly in high quality school productions.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a very strong and long-standing commitment to the arts.
- Visits and visitors are used very effectively to bring learning to life.

Commentary

71. Standards in art are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in Years 2 to 6. Pupils make less progress in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 than in other parts of the school because their work is too closely prescribed by the teachers and assistants who make too much use of templates. The quality of the older pupils' work has risen since the previous inspection.

72. The school has had a long-standing commitment to the arts over a number of years and staff have ensured that, even with all the pressures on the curriculum, this emphasis and commitment are maintained. Parents, pupils and staff speak with pride about the quality of work and of the range of imaginative activities undertaken. Some very large-scale, bold and imaginative work is displayed attractively around the school. Staff make particularly effective use of visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning and develop specific skills and techniques, including working with professional artists on high quality pieces of work.

73. In Year 2, pupils have recently produced good quality work in the style of Matisse. The very attractive presentation of this work in the classroom and around the school indicates to pupils that their work is valued and helps to raise their self-esteem. The school makes a feature of enabling the pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of different artists and techniques by getting them to work in the style of a range of famous

artists. Much of the recent portrait work done by Year 6 is of a good quality, and some individual work is of a standard often associated with older pupils. Year 6 pupils applied design and technology skills to making hats and headgear; they made plans and produced a paper prototype before constructing a wide and attractive range of hats. Work in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, whilst broadly satisfactory, is too often based on painting, colouring or decorating adult-produced outlines, which do little to extend skills.

74. Due to timetabling restrictions, it was possible to observe only one lesson, but a wide sample of work and photographic evidence suggests that the quality of provision is very good. In the lesson observed, teaching was good. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. From Years 2 to 6 staff have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. They teach specific skills, such as how to draw portraits, and explain clearly the features of well-

known artists' work. They encourage pupils to try out their own ideas, as reflected in the diverse range of designs for hat making. Visits to art collections, and visitors to teach specific skills, are used very effectively to boost the overall quality of teaching. Assessment is developing well in the subject.

75. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic for the subject and provides a very good role model to staff and pupils. However, as with most other subjects, the co-ordinator has few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, which has allowed some weaknesses in the teaching of the younger pupils to occur and persist.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

76. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about provision for PSHE and citizenship. Because of the lack of time available, no lessons were observed. The curriculum for this area, based mainly on a commercial scheme of work, is good. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and consider a wide range of topics including: valuing trust and honesty; whether people are equal; and how to recognise stereotypes. Sex education and drugs and medicines awareness are taught as appropriate. Pupils understand the importance of being healthy and the school does much to promote outdoor play and involvement in sports. The school is also very active in promoting an awareness of global environmental issues. It supports charities and, every day, pupils collect waste materials for composting and re-cycling.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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