

INSPECTION REPORT

**INSKIP ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
(VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Inskip, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119531

Headteacher: Mrs J Porter

Lead inspector: Mrs C McBride

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th October 2004

Inspection number: 267104

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	50
School address:	Preston Road Inskip Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR4 0TT
Telephone number:	01772 690438
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Kings
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Peter's Church of England is a very small school situated to the north of Preston in a rural area. Families are predominantly from agricultural backgrounds and of white, British heritage. Fewer pupils are entitled to free school meals than in most primary schools. Eleven pupils (25 per cent) of those in Years 1 to 6 are identified as having special educational needs and, of these, 1 has a statement. Pupils' needs are varied and include both physical and learning difficulties. Most pupils do not experience nursery education, but attend a playgroup attached to the school before joining the reception class at the start of the year in which they are five. When they start school, the attainment of most children is similar to that normally seen at this age. The 50 pupils on roll are taught in 2 classes: reception children and those in Years 1 and 2 in one class, and those in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 in another. In the last twelve months, the school has admitted nine pupils to classes other than reception; in relation to the size of the school, this is a higher than usual proportion.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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32657	Mr N Thompson	Lay inspector	
1065	Mr J Hagan	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Science History Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Good teaching ensures that most pupils achieve well and reach at least average standards by the ages of 7 and 11 years. The school is efficiently managed; the headteacher, key staff and governors accomplish much as a strong team. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the time they leave, pupils have achieved really well in science and swimming; some pupils reach high standards in music;
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school and to each other are excellent;
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their difficulties;
- The school nurtures and cares for its pupils well;
- Handwriting and presentation of work are below average in the junior classes;
- The accommodation restricts teaching and learning in some lessons;
- The school's systems for assessing pupils' progress and tracking it from year to year are not yet rigorous enough.

Prior to the previous inspection, the school had been weakened by a long period of instability but since then it has gone from strength to strength and gained in popularity. Teachers have now got to grips with planning work for the wide range of ages and abilities in their classes. They have also moved a good way towards assessing pupils' progress and setting targets for their work, although there is still more to be done here. Pupils have many more opportunities to develop their skills of investigation and enquiry and all subject areas are now well led and managed. The school's accommodation has vastly improved and it offers a much more attractive learning environment.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards are at least average, and sometimes better, in Years 2 and 6 in most subjects. Test results need to be treated with caution; the number of children in the year groups is very small and the performance of one or two children can affect the results disproportionately as they did in 2003. Pupils' achievement often reflects the level of staff expertise in the school; in subjects where it is strong, such as science and music, pupils do even better. Those with learning difficulties make very good headway against the targets set for them, although they do not always reach the average level in tests. Standards in handwriting and presentation of work are below average for junior pupils; although they can write neatly when they try, too often their work is carelessly presented. Pupils who join the school at different times settle quickly and also do well. Children in the Foundation Stage (the

reception year) achieve well; they reach the goals they are expected to achieve by the end of reception; their personal and social development is particularly strong.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Attendance levels are above average and children are punctual. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are both excellent. There have been no exclusions in the last academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good in both classes. Relationships between teachers and pupils are of a high order; pupils are motivated and keen to learn because lessons and activities are related to their interests. Classroom assistants play a major part in supporting pupils with special educational needs and they work skilfully alongside teachers. Specialist staff teach music throughout the school and science in the junior class. This is having a strong impact on learning and in these lessons pupils' progress in developing knowledge and skills is rapid. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory but is more detailed and better organised in some subjects than others. The school gives pupils a secure grounding in literacy and numeracy skills, whilst providing them with worthwhile experiences in all other subjects. Whilst handwriting is taught satisfactorily, lapses in neatness are not picked up rigorously enough through marking of work in the junior class. The school's links with the community and its good use of the locality to support pupils' learning means that there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn from interesting, practical experiences. The school works hard to overcome the limitations of its somewhat cramped accommodation, but this still places some restrictions on teaching and learning in lessons such as physical education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Governors are highly effective; they fulfil their statutory duties and look ahead, tackling difficulties in a positive way. The headteacher gives a strong steer to the work of the school and manages it well despite a heavy teaching load. The organisation of staff to cope with the wide range of pupil ages and abilities in the two classes is very effective. Responsibility for taking subjects forward is shared sensibly between staff and some of this work has a significant impact on school development and the quality of provision for pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in high regard; they give the highest praise for the way in which it teaches their children to show care and concern for each other. Pupils feel very positive towards school and new arrivals comment on how well they are helped to settle and how welcome they are made to feel.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in the older pupils' handwriting and presentation;
- Improve arrangements for assessing and tracking pupils' progress;
- As funds allow, improve the suitability of accommodation and resources to meet learning needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well and reach average standards in most subjects; they exceed the average in those where teachers' expertise is greatest.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their difficulties;
- Standards are above average and the achievement of the junior pupils is best in science, music and swimming;
- Infant pupils reach better than average standards in reading, writing, music and information and communication technology (ICT);
- Junior pupils could achieve more in handwriting and presentation of their work.

Commentary

1. There were only 8 pupils in Year 2 and only 10 pupils in Year 6; therefore the national test tables for both groups, usually included in inspection reports, are not shown.
2. The size of the school makes it difficult to identify trends in its performance and national test results present an inconsistent picture of pupils' attainment. In some year groups, numbers can be as low as three and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs can be greater than in other years. Pupils joining the school in the junior class also make it difficult to compare test results at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Inspection findings show that pupils achieve well and some do particularly well given their starting point.
3. Skilled teaching in science and music underpins the very good achievement and higher than average standards reached here by older pupils. Science is leading the way in the development of investigative work; methods used by the school to assess pupils' progress in science are highly effective and therefore work is always challenging because teachers can pinpoint exactly where pupils need to improve. In other subjects, this varies. In mathematics, for example, where assessment is not as strong as it could be, higher attainers could go the extra mile in some lessons if they were more consistently challenged. Pupils' skills of research and enquiry are developing well, although there is still more work to be done.
4. Foundation Stage children reach the national goals set out for their age; they exceed these in personal and social development. Given their starting point, having had little pre-school experience, they also achieve well in reading, writing and skills in ICT. Infant pupils also develop these skills well.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the school has a carefully organised means of supporting them. There is excellent communication between the specialist part-time teacher who sets up their work programmes, and the school support staff, who act as a lynch pin for their work and keep a daily check on their

progress in lessons and with homework. The school has identified a very small number of pupils as gifted and talented. They thrive well because their individual strengths are recognised and carefully nurtured.

6. Pupils who join the school after the normal time of arrival achieve well because they quickly gain confidence and are well supported by classroom assistants and other pupils.
7. The school's increased roll has caused even greater pressure on the accommodation in the junior classroom base and in the hall. Standards in gymnastics are consequently below average, because pupils have too little space to practise skills or take on greater physical challenges. The school is trying to offset this by reducing the number who use the hall during lessons. Swimming lessons are also provided each year for all the junior pupils; they achieve really well and most exceed the national expectation by the time they leave. Over half of the pupils on roll have musical tuition and some reach much higher than average standards in performing. Provision for outdoor games is good.
8. Curriculum opportunities are balanced well so that pupils enjoy a worthwhile range of experiences in all subjects; they therefore achieve at least satisfactorily, and sometimes better. For example, in history and geography pupils' skills of interpreting what they see and explaining why things are as they are, develop really well because the school uses fieldwork and visits to give them practical experiences.
9. Pupils do not reach high enough standards in handwriting and presentation of work in the junior class. Standards have slipped since the last inspection because teachers have given their attention to improving other areas of work and have taken their eye off the ball. Aware of this weakness, the school has introduced a new scheme of work and handwriting is taught systematically. Any lapses in neatness, however, are not picked up rigorously enough through marking.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance levels are very high in comparison with other schools. Pupils are punctual for school; their behaviour and their attitude to learning are both excellent. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and their learning;
- They show tremendous care and respect for each other;
- The mentoring by older pupils of younger ones is a credit to the school;
- The pupil's behaviour both in and out of class is excellent;
- The school could do more to help the pupils appreciate cultural differences.

Commentary

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.5	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. The high attendance justly reflects the pupils' and the parents' enthusiasm for the school. One parent described how her son enjoyed school so much that he wanted to return a week before the end of the school holidays. Parents are conscientious and quickly inform the school of any sickness absences and ensure children arrive at school promptly. If a pupil is absent without prior warning, the school will contact parents the same morning to find out where the pupil has got to.
11. Pupils participate enthusiastically in school activities. They enjoy their lessons and, when asked, were hard pressed to identify any subjects they did not like. They work well together and the mature approach of the older pupils in their care for the younger ones is an outstanding feature. Staff involve pupils in decisions about the future of the school. When families were surveyed for their opinion of the school, Year 6 pupils analysed the responses and produced charts and graphs to show what the findings were. Pupils also had a hand in designing the new outdoor play area.
12. Pupil's behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Behaviour management and reward systems are regarded as effective by 96 per cent of families who were surveyed by the school. The pupils could not recall any incidents where bullying had taken place. Storage space in the school is at a premium. As a result, corridors have to be used and this does in some parts cause restrictions to the ease of movement around the school. Pupils rise to this challenge well and move about in a particularly orderly way. They are mindful to tidy up after themselves and keep corridor areas as clear as they can.
13. The school promotes good relationships and awareness of the local community. It encourages the pupils to be concerned about less fortunate children overseas through fundraising and an annual charity appeal in which they enthusiastically participate.
14. Pupils are encouraged to respect others. This is a school where pupils are able to flourish as individuals because the ethos is such that their opinions are valued and they are expected to take the views of others into account. Although the school has links with a city school with a large ethnic population, more could be done to help pupils develop a clearer understanding of the diverse cultures representing modern British society.

Exclusions

15. There were no exclusions in the current year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well. The school's curriculum gives pupils a good grounding in literacy and numeracy, but not at the expense of other subjects. Care for pupils is high on the school's agenda and it has very good relationships with its parents, other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching meets the needs of pupils well;

- Teaching assistants provide invaluable support for pupils with special needs;
- In lessons taught by subject specialists, the rate of pupils' learning rapidly accelerates;
- More attention needs to be given to picking up on careless or untidy work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 11 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	3	6	0	0	0

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

16. Teaching seen during the inspection week was not typical for the school as one member of staff was absent and a temporary teacher was brought in to teach the older children. Scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' assessments shows that over time teaching is effective in helping pupils to progress well. Teachers manage the wide range of ages and abilities within classes successfully.
17. The school's strategy of employing extra teachers on a part-time basis to create smaller groups in the junior class for literacy and numeracy has paid off. As group numbers are smaller for these lessons on two days of the week, pupils receive more individual attention and the problem of meeting the needs of such a wide spread of age and ability is lessened. Nonetheless, work is still not matched closely enough to their needs in all lessons because assessment, whilst satisfactory, could be better. Marking has improved since the last inspection; it now challenges pupils to think about how to improve their work. However, it still needs to be even more thorough as some careless presentation and handwriting in the older pupils' work still slips through the net.
18. Classroom assistants play a major part in supporting pupils and they provide a valuable pair of extra hands in lessons. This is especially useful as 26 per cent of pupils in Years 1 to 6 are identified as having special needs; they can be given extra help and are closely supervised. Teachers and assistants work as a strong team and relationships between pupils and adults are excellent; there is a purposeful atmosphere in lessons, often punctuated by good humour. There is an expectation on the part of all staff that pupils will work hard and this is met in full as pupils quickly settle to tasks and produce a tremendous volume of work. This work ethic soon rubs off on pupils who are new to the school and they quickly adapt to the pace of work. Older newcomers commented that they have to work hard, but that they enjoy their new school and particularly like the amount of support given to them in lessons.
19. The work of teachers who have strong subject knowledge is having a significant impact on the progress of pupils throughout the school. Science lessons in the junior classes, for example, are of high quality and are characterised by adventurous teaching, which requires pupils to think for themselves and raise questions related to what they are doing. It is no coincidence that, when asked, pupils say that science is their favourite subject. In the infant classes, pupils learn skills in ICT at a fast pace because the teacher has the skill and confidence to set challenging tasks, which pupils find exciting and absorbing. The pace of learning in music lessons is also good because the school buys in the services of a specialist teacher; while pupils are pushed on at a fast pace in learning new skills, they bubble with enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoy making music.

The curriculum

The curriculum is of good quality and it is enriched by many interesting activities. The school successfully balances the amount of time that pupils spend developing literacy and numeracy skills with time spent on the other subjects of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of enjoyable learning experiences keeps pupils motivated and interested;
- The school's accommodation is becoming increasingly cramped as numbers swell.

Commentary

20. Since the last inspection, the school has got to grips with the issue of providing a curriculum which meets the needs of such a wide spread of age and ability within two classes. This has been accomplished through a combination of careful timetabling and organisation, and much improved planning of what will be taught.
21. All the subjects are taught in sufficient depth to give pupils a meaningful experience. Art and the creative and practical subjects of the curriculum are represented to a good degree; pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their creative ideas. Where staff expertise has not been so strong, the school has compensated by making good use of outside agencies. Input by sports coaches and peripatetic music teachers, for example, helps many pupils to enjoy success in these areas. Pupils in the junior class also have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language (French). Their enthusiasm is very evident as the teacher uses puppets, poems and action songs to help them to remember everyday words and phrases or to count.
22. Pupils and parents comment that learning activities are interesting; this springs from the school's efforts to make links between different subjects and to help pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills across their learning. The school draws well from local resources to enliven the curriculum and add sparkle to topics. For example, during World War 2 the school buildings played an important role as a naval 'listening post'; this is skilfully included in the pupils' study of this period.
23. The curriculum enables pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress by providing a good range of opportunities for them to work at individual weaknesses. For example, a small group of pupils experiencing problems with co-ordination that affect their writing have extra practice to develop fine control and typing skills with a touch-typing course.
24. The school's accommodation is broadly satisfactory. Staff and governors have not made the lack of space an excuse to narrow the curriculum; rather, they have sought solutions and taken positive action to secure the best possible benefits within limited resources. Realising, for example, that the school hall limited the range of indoor physical education lessons, staff decided to split classes to give more room for smaller numbers of pupils to practise skills during lessons. This is an improvement but the space for suitable gymnastic equipment is still insufficient. The school strives, with commendable success, to compensate for this by providing greater access to swimming lessons, resulting in higher standards than seen in most schools.
25. Space in the older pupils' classroom has recently come under more pressure because of the school's growing popularity. The accommodation restricts the way in which teachers can organise resources or arrange groups to work. Whilst the staff are inventive in their approach to this problem, there are still occasions when groups are limited in what they can do because noise may disturb others working close by or equipment cannot be spread out. Led by governors, the school raised enough money in

the last few years to refurbish parts of the existing accommodation and to build a library area. This is undoubtedly contributing to the improved standards in reading and research skills seen since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives very good care, guidance and support to its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- This is a close knit school where staff know pupils well and pupils' emotional care is of particular concern to staff;
- Parents and children benefit greatly from the induction programme for children entering the school;
- The views of pupils are taken seriously.

COMMENTARY

26. The governors, headteacher and all the staff work well together to ensure the children's safety and well being; as a result, this is a caring school. All the appropriate procedures to underpin this are in place and staff and pupils are aware of these. Due regard is made to first aid and work is swiftly undertaken to rectify any potential hazards.
27. All the staff know the children well and talk to parents frequently. A suggestion box has been introduced into each class, which children are encouraged to use, not only for suggestions but also if they don't feel able to talk directly to an adult. As a result, teachers usually know if pupils are experiencing problems; they have a good understanding of how best to guide pupils and to help them make the most of their time at school. When asked, parents say they feel that any problems are dealt with effectively and quickly.
28. There is a substantial induction programme including information and visits to the school both for children entering the school at the Foundation Stage and also for children who move from other schools. The use of the building for a playgroup means that the transition to the Foundation Stage class is smooth and far more natural; the whole of the last year's intake at the Foundation Stage was from the playgroup. Everyone who responded to the school's family survey agreed that their children had a happy start at St Peter's.
29. Pupils are consulted and able to contribute to school developments. They were keen, for example, to show inspectors the new outdoor climbing equipment that they were directly involved in choosing from a budget over which the school gave them significant control.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains very good links with parents. There are good links with the local community and very effective liaison with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with the school;

- Parents offer very good support to the school through fund raising and through direct involvement;
- The school has developed good community links and its local partnership with other small schools is particularly valuable.

COMMENTARY

30. Over three quarters of the parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 93 per cent returned questionnaires. All their contributions were very positive; they had no criticisms to make and no suggestions for improvement. When comparing their experience of the school now and five years ago one parent wrote 'I cannot believe the change in the school since then.'
31. The school regularly sends out well presented, informative newsletters and requests for specific practical help result in a good response. Parents feel welcome when they visit, adding that they have sufficient opportunities to discuss their children's progress with members of staff.
32. The commitment of the 'Friends of Inskip' and the governors is very good. Previously, visitors had commented that the school looked like a farm building. The refurbishment and new roof paid for by the money raised by parents, 'Friends' and governors has led to a huge improvement and has had a significant impact on the increasingly positive view of the school in the area.
33. The headteacher and governors work hard to ensure the school is very closely linked to the community; good links have, for example, been made with Preston North End football team and pupils benefit from coaching activities. The school is very active with a cluster of other small schools in the area and has made very good use of joint training initiatives such as the shared appointment of a special needs co-ordinator. Good use is also made of its partnership with one of the secondary schools in the area by using training opportunities and access to technical support with computers. There are strong links with the local church and the chapel; members from both places are actively involved in leading assemblies on a regular basis; the vicar, for example, is a governor and a frequent visitor.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governors and staff are meeting the challenge of increasing the school's roll successfully;
- This is a close knit school community where everyone's efforts are valued;
- The school needs a better way of drawing together information to track pupils' progress from year to year and to show their achievement.

Commentary

34. Since the last inspection, governors and staff have combined their efforts successfully to improve the school's standing in the local community. The governors are active and effective in their efforts to overcome some of the barriers posed by its size, using their expertise and interest to support the school and improve conditions. The Chair of Governors for instance, has been very much engaged in overseeing building work and

refurbishment of the school. This has had a direct impact on halting the falling roll by improving the accommodation; prospective parents now feel that the school is a more attractive proposition and are drawn to the pleasant working environment.

35. Governors also take practical steps to raise standards. Having discovered that families were taking children on holiday during term time, they wrote to parents pointing out the disruption that this caused to pupils' education.
36. Whilst staff undoubtedly know pupils well and have a reasonably good overview of their progress, systems for tracking individuals are too informal in some subjects. Test results are analysed and weaknesses in learning are noted; however, the way in which this information is organised makes it difficult to spot the finer details of how well pupils are doing from year to year.
37. Good leadership by the headteacher has brought a greater degree of stability to the school. She has the confidence of the parents and governors, and has drawn a strong team around her. The amount of responsibility carried by staff in overseeing subject development is immense. Guided by the headteacher, the staff have risen well to this challenge and the situation has much improved since the last inspection. Performance management is well organised; each member of staff can show a strong line of continuing professional development through training courses. This is tied closely to the school's development priorities so that everyone is successfully aiming for common goals. Subjects such as ICT have benefited from good leadership, coupled with a determined programme of staff training.
38. The headteacher is an excellent example for everyone in her relationships with the whole school community and this sets the tone for the school's caring, family atmosphere, which is so highly valued by families. This is a school which views its relationship with parents and pupils as its main priority. It consults with them, puts great store by their opinions and responds well to their needs and suggestions.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	218,968
Total expenditure	202,096
Expenditure per pupil	4,709

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	40,947
Balance carried forward to the next	57,819

39. Governors visit the school regularly and form a view of how it is doing; this enables them to contribute knowledgeably at meetings. They show a good understanding of the most pressing issues and, with the headteacher, have taken several wise spending decisions with the aim of improving provision. The appointment of subject specialist teachers is one example of this. In science and music, specialists teach the junior age pupils; it is not surprising, therefore, that in these subjects pupils do better than expected. A part-time teacher with expertise in organising provision for pupils with learning difficulties has also given a significant boost to this area of the school's provision. Governors have been keen to support the headteacher with time for her to undertake management tasks; the employment of part time staff, therefore, releases her from teaching duties for a part of the week and enables the school to run smoothly. The budget surplus is being held to maintain the current staffing levels; reserves are also being built up to further improve accommodation. Although the expenditure per

pupil is much higher than in larger schools, the school offers good value for money; it manages to maximise the advantages of being a small, close knit community against the disadvantages faced by schools of this size.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good induction programme and partnership with parents and carers help children get off to a good start;
- Pupils achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development, early reading, writing and computer skills where the teaching is particularly good;
- Outdoor play resources could be improved;
- The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

Commentary

40. Children enter reception in the September before they are 5 years old. There are 7 reception children this year. They are taught in the infant class with pupils from Years 1 and 2. Both the teacher and specialist teaching assistant teach them as a discrete group for some sessions and at other times they join in with the lessons for Years 1 and 2. They all attended the part time pre school playgroup that uses the school premises for three sessions per week. There is a wide spread of ability on entry but overall it is as you would expect for their age. All of the children are on course to meet the expectations for their age in each area of learning by the time they leave reception, and some will exceed them. The accommodation is satisfactory; whilst there is a good outdoor play space there is no specifically designated area outside for the reception-aged children. The curriculum is appropriately planned to meet their needs. The teacher responsible for the Foundation Stage has a very clear view of the standards children achieve and knows what is working well and what needs to be improved. For example, through a programme of staff development the quality of children's play has been enhanced. The positive features identified in the previous report have been maintained. The teaching is now better than it was judged to be because both staff make a very good contribution to children's learning. The way they operate as a team is a strength.
41. Children achieve very well in **personal, social and emotional development**. They are on course to meet or exceed the expectations for their age. They get off to a really good start because of the many opportunities they are given to visit reception in the term before they officially join the class. The staff also spend time with them in their playgroup and, as a result of these opportunities and experiences, they quickly settle into school routine and feel secure. They are happy to mix with one another and the older children in their class. They learn how to take turns and interact with each other. The excellent teamwork of the teacher and teaching assistant enables children to see the importance of being co-operative, working together in a calm and orderly atmosphere and treating one another with respect. Both staff listen attentively to what children have to say. They give them lots of praise and encouragement and as a result, children's confidence and self esteem grows quickly.

42. In **communication, language and literacy** children achieve well because they are given plenty of opportunities to develop their early reading and writing skills. The teaching of letter recognition and sounds is a high priority. Adults read stories and nursery rhymes in a lively way and this grabs pupils' interest and attention. Children's knowledge and understanding is effectively assessed and enables higher attainers to move on quickly. Some are already recognising and reading a range of the key words they are expected to know at the end of reception year. They are given plenty of opportunities to ask and answer questions and, as a result, are developing the skills of listening and responding to one another. Already some of the children are prepared and confident to take part in the '10 minute teacher session', which involves them taking on the role of teacher and describing to the rest of the class how they, for example, made a model. It provides an excellent opportunity for them to take a lead, share and celebrate their work.
43. In **mathematical development** children achieve well in developing their counting skills and number and shape recognition. Staff are skilled at using a variety of opportunities to support children's mathematical skills and encourage their use of correct vocabulary. In one lesson, the classroom assistant made good use of the photographs children had taken the previous day to identify and learn the names of the shapes they had used.
44. In **knowledge and understanding of the world** children make particularly good progress and achieve well in developing their computer skills; work is challenging and they develop great confidence in using different programs. Staff encourage children's curiosity by making timely interventions to question them about what they are doing and what they are finding out. They provide them with interesting opportunities, such as observing insects with magnifying glasses. The school's provision of a wide range of opportunities and experiences helps children to develop their ideas and learn new facts and skills.
45. In **creative development** children's achievement is satisfactory. They have plenty of opportunities to work with different materials but, on some occasions, adults direct the children's ideas too much when they could be given more of a free hand to experiment. The involvement of adults in children's imaginative play is a strong aspect of the work in this area of learning and enables children to achieve well. Children really enjoy acting. They had a lot of enjoyment and worked well together after listening to the story of 'The Duck Stuck in the Truck'. They used wooden blocks to build a truck and then took on the roles of the different characters.
46. In **physical development** children achieve particularly well in handling small objects, such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes, because they are given many opportunities to use and practise the skills needed to handle this type of equipment successfully. Whilst there is a daily outdoor session, a lack of wheeled toys reduces children's opportunities to practise skills associated with steering and manipulating larger equipment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Listening skills are above average;
- Pupils with special needs achieve really well;
- By Year 6, pupils have developed good reading habits;
- Standards in handwriting and presentation are not high enough.

Commentary

47. Most year groups in the school have fewer than 10 pupils so interpreting test data is an unreliable means of identifying trends in the school's performance. However, the school's own records and inspection findings show that pupils make good progress and reach average standards at the ages of 7 and 11 years; the picture is broadly similar to that seen at the time of the last inspection.
48. Listening skills develop well; pupils are given time and space to explain themselves and they listen attentively to each other. They build well on each other's ideas and don't cut across what another child is saying. Adults model this 'listening behaviour' really well and successfully set the tone through their own example. Speaking skills are average; older pupils have a reasonable range of vocabulary but do not always transfer this to their writing to make it more interesting or adventurous.
49. Progress in reading is good throughout the school. Pupils achieve well in finding information and in reading for pleasure, and the school has moved a good way to addressing the issues raised in the last report. Pupils' achievement in using research skills and in finding things out for themselves is much better than it was. The new library and accommodation and increased usage of ICT have paid off well by giving increased opportunities for pupils to search for information. Older pupils are enthusiastic readers who borrow or buy books regularly.
50. Writing skills are average at the end of both key stages. Although never less than satisfactory in the junior class, pupils' achievement is not quite as strong as in the infant class; the younger pupils are more confident writers who produce a better volume of work in writing stories and accounts. The school has made a concerted effort to improve assessment in reading and writing; this is enabling teachers to set more precise targets for improvement and it is nudging up standards for the older pupils. Handwriting and presentational standards however are not as good as they were. The school is addressing this issue through concentrated teaching of handwriting, but junior pupils need more frequent reminders when their neatness slips below par.
51. Teaching is good in both classes and the school does well to manage the needs of so many pupils across such a wide spread of age and ability. A good example of this is the way in which younger pupils in the junior class are able to take on the challenge of more difficult reading texts, because older pupils help them out by explaining parts that are complex and discussing what they mean.
52. A strong programme of support for pupils with learning difficulties involves concentrated practice in reading and writing skills; this is often successfully backed up by homework. Classroom assistants come into their own here, as they hear pupils read every day and check that any extra work is completed.
53. Subject leadership has several strong features and has improved since the last inspection. The teacher with responsibility monitors pupil work and test results; she notes what is weak and works with other staff to adjust the curriculum accordingly. For instance, having spotted a weakness in pupils' progress, the school has revised its way of teaching spelling. Pupils now use personal dictionaries to record new or difficult words and this is paying off for junior pupils with better standards.

54. Pupils in the junior class are taught French for one lesson each week, and this was observed during the inspection. Teaching quality in this subject is good and pupils enjoy their lessons as the teacher introduces practical activities, rhymes and songs to help them remember simple phrases and information.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to hone their writing skills in other subjects. Good examples are seen in their history and geography work where they are writing reports and using their skills to research information and record what they find. The school promotes opportunities for reading and writing well through activities such as a Reading Club which is available for children in the junior class throughout the year.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve particularly well in their number work and understanding of place value;
- Pupils with special needs make good progress;
- Pupils work hard and produce a large volume of work;
- Good use is made of homework to support pupils' learning;
- The systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress could be improved.

Commentary

56. There are a small number of children in each year group and this makes any analysis of performance in national test results unreliable. There are variations in the results between pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 but these need to be treated with caution because the school admits more new pupils into the junior class. Inspection findings are that the majority of pupils meet the national average at the ages of 7 and 11 and overall, pupils' achievement is good.
57. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the subject has been led well. Good use has been made of external agencies to support the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Staff are guided by a detailed action plan in rectifying the problems identified and provision is improving. There is now far more evidence, for example, of children using jottings to help them with their mental calculations and problem solving activities. The school has achieved the targets it set itself to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of mathematics. This has improved staff confidence and the quality of teaching and learning.
58. The teaching throughout the school is never less than satisfactory and is often good. A strong emphasis is given to teaching children a range of strategies to support them with their number work. They have a secure understanding of place value and at the age of 11 they can identify the value of each digit in a large number and accurately describe what happens to a decimal number when it is multiplied, for example, by a hundred. The staff expect the children to produce a lot of work and in some lessons children get through a great deal. Resources are used well to support learning and classroom assistants are very effectively deployed to support individuals or small groups. This support particularly benefits pupils with special needs and, as a result,

they are able to cope with the challenges they face. They gain confidence and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. In most lessons work is well matched to pupils needs and all gain from the activities. For instance in a Year 1 and 2 lesson on shape, different challenges were set for the different ability groups. The older and more able pupils were asked to make a three-dimensional model using a variety of shapes. They then used the digital camera to photograph their shape, download it on to the computer and write a description of the shapes they had used to make it. This activity caught their imagination, fired them with enthusiasm and they gained a great deal of knowledge in a short space of time.

59. The school has rightly identified the need to further develop its procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements. Whilst in most lessons work is well matched to pupils' prior attainment, there are occasions when some of the higher attainers could be better challenged. At present, the assessment and tracking systems do not provide a clear or precise enough picture of where each child is within a level or particular aspect of mathematics.
60. Children enjoy their mathematics lessons and they particularly like the practical activities they are given. Junior aged pupils spoke positively about their homework assignments and could explain how the work given helps them to improve their skills and cope with their lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, they produce graphs to show the results of science experiments and are regularly involved in reading scales and measuring objects to support their work in geography and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well throughout the school;
- Teaching is very good in Key Stage 2;
- There is very strong subject leadership;
- Children have very positive attitudes towards the subject;
- There is a good balance given to ensuring pupils learn scientific facts and develop their skills in experimenting and investigating.

Commentary

62. There are only a small number of children in each year group; the national test results at the age of 11 therefore need to be treated with extreme caution. Over the last four years the school's science results have fluctuated from being in the top 10 per cent of all schools in 2002, to well below average in the following year. In 2003, there were only three children in Year 6 and each one accounted for 33 per cent; one pupil was identified as having special educational needs. Teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 show that most children meet the national average and some exceed it. The

inspection findings are that pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well; most reach the national average level and some exceed it at the ages of 7 and 11.

63. There has been significant improvement in the school's provision for science since the last inspection. The headteacher and governors' decision to appoint a teacher with subject expertise to lead and manage the subject's development and to be responsible for the teaching in the junior class has paid off handsomely. The impact is evident in many aspects of the provision. The support and guidance provided for colleagues in the infant class has given them the confidence to try out different approaches and place much more emphasis on the development of skills through practical activities. The systems the subject leader has established for assessing and tracking children's progress are very effective. The information provided gives a clear picture of how each child is doing across each aspect of the subject. This enables staff to identify any child who is not doing as well as expected, or is doing better than expected; information is used to adjust the work planned for them. The subject leader has a very accurate picture of what the school does well and what needs to be done next.
64. The overall quality of teaching is good and for children aged 7 to 11 it is very good. It enables pupils to make good gains in their learning. This was seen in the very good grasp and understanding they have of the topics studied and in their correct use of scientific vocabulary. A real strength of the teaching is the emphasis given to children understanding the principles of fair testing. The foundations are clearly laid in the infant class and by the time they are in upper juniors, they are confident and skilled to set up their own investigations. A good balance is struck, both in lessons and over time, in the learning of scientific facts and skills. Pupils' skills of predicting, testing and recording their conclusions are moving a long at a fast rate. They are encouraged to ask questions and test out their theories.
65. Children really enjoy their science lessons. They love the practical work, opportunities to carry out their own investigations and the way the teachers value their responses and praise them for their efforts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 2, pupils attain better than average standards in some aspects of their work;
- Older pupils could achieve more.

Commentary

66. The average standards seen during the last inspection have been maintained but this belies the good rate of improvement in provision. The school has ploughed a great deal of energy and resources into staying abreast of ICT requirements. It now has a good ratio of computers to pupils, so that they have more hands on experience than they did. Both classrooms have electronic whiteboards, which engage pupils' attention and make lessons livelier. The quality of teaching has improved because staff have

confidence to challenge pupils with more adventurous work. The subject is led and managed well by a teacher who sets the pace with the skill of her own teaching in the infant class and who offers very good support to others.

67. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 reach better than average standards in some aspects. Their work in mathematics, which requires them to explore shape, is a good example of this. Older pupils are doing much of what would be expected for their age, but not hitting quite such high spots as the exciting work done in the infant class. By Year 6, most pupils work confidently and competently with computers and develop their skills steadily; they are knowledgeable users of the Internet and understand a good range of correct terms. Many say that they use what they have learned in school to practise on their computers at home. The school is still helping some of the older pupils to plug the gaps in their knowledge, resulting from earlier years when they did not have such ready access to computers or skilled teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. This is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning in lessons. Infant pupils, for example, reinforce rhyming sounds in literacy lessons; they challenge themselves and use programs independently. Junior pupils use computers to investigate art techniques and try them out for themselves. They research information as part of their history work; for example they find facts to feed their reports about life in Victorian times. Pupils use ICT well to support their work in mathematics. Pupils in the infant class complete programs that consolidate and extend their learning and in the junior aged class pupils often use the computers to set out their results or interpret information contained on graphs and in pie charts. The Year 6 analysis of the results of the questionnaires sent to each family about the school's work resulted in an impressive range of graphs and pie charts of the findings. However, things could be taken further; for example, with older pupils in designing and making multimedia presentations as part of their work in history and geography.

HUMANITIES

69. No lessons in **history** or **geography** were seen in either the infant or junior class. It is therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Work from the previous year for each class was available to the inspection team. In addition, the school also provided photographs of visits, events and work undertaken. Discussions took place with staff and pupils. The school does all that it can to ensure that both subjects are taught in a lively way, which appeals to pupils' interests. In history, pupils experience a worthwhile curriculum, which helps them to achieve well. The school successfully harnesses the resources of its own community and the local area to enrich lessons and engage pupils with their past. Work in books and around the school shows a strong development of skills and knowledge. Skills of enquiry for instance, are developed during visits to the local graveyard or on walks around the nearby village to look at changes in buildings. Local people responded magnificently to an appeal by pupils for information about life during World War II. Families provided a rich seam of information about evacuation; many were able to tell of its long-term effects, having kept in touch with evacuees since that time. In geography, pupils show much enthusiasm for the subject and achieve well. Again, the school provides them with a good range of 'hands on' experiences and fieldwork to bring the subject to life. Older pupils, for example, trace a local river to its source; they measure its depth at specific points and then track it as far as the estuary. Pupils are making good progress in developing geographical skills such as mapping, and in their understanding of issues such as those related to human impact on the environment.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Only one lesson was observed in **music**, one in **physical education**, and none in **art and design** or in **design and technology**. Reporting on these subjects is therefore based upon evidence drawn from work samples and discussions with pupils. As with the humanities, these aspects of the curriculum are thriving because the school gives them due weight and attention and tries to teach them in a lively way.
71. Pupils reach average standards in art and design; they work with a broad variety of media and develop skills in two and three-dimensional work. Older pupils with a particular interest or talent explore different techniques in the art club during lunchtimes; recent work has included stencil and pattern making. When asked, both infant and

junior pupils could explain how they went about creating particular work and, from their responses, it is evident that they all enjoy art lessons and take pride in their achievements. More permanent reminders of their work are displayed as part of the fabric of the school. The stained glass windows in the hall, for example, are the result of the pupils' involvement with a specialist glass artist.

72. In design and technology, standards are average and pupils' work shows that they cover the full curriculum range. They progress well because skills are taught systematically and teachers spark their ideas with purposeful projects. Younger pupils, for example, designed a moving spider model using a winding mechanism. Older pupils then investigated different techniques for constructing them and used a variety of tools to cut and join the components. The finished models were then carefully evaluated. The subject is linked well with other areas of learning; the junior class had been learning to say a poem about spiders in French. Recent work undertaken by the juniors included the making of shelters. This required pupils to estimate and measure the materials used and to cut them accurately.
73. In music, over 50 per cent of pupils have musical tuition with peripatetic teachers; some reach higher than average standards and enjoy practising and playing together. Especially able pupils are stretched and gain satisfaction from performing at their best. Teaching in lessons is good as the school employs the services of a specialist teacher. Consequently, all pupils develop skills at a good pace and achieve well, particularly in performing and accompanying each other.
74. The lack of suitable indoor accommodation restricts children's progress in physical education. Pupils, particularly in the junior class, do not achieve as much as they might in gymnastics and dance. Led by an enthusiastic teacher, the school has adopted a positive approach to this problem and is doing as much as could be expected to compensate for the weakness in provision. The school's programme has been well designed to ensure that pupils have a good range of quality experiences in other aspects of this subject. The provision for swimming is particularly impressive and through the regular weekly swimming lessons, the junior children achieve better than expected for their age. Additionally, the use of specialist coaches, for example from a local professional football club, enables pupils to receive skilled tuition during games lessons and this helps them to develop their skills at a good pace.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school prepares pupils well for later life and helps them to develop a strong sense of community.

Commentary

75. PSHCE is threaded throughout the curriculum and the school ensures that pupils know how to stay safe and to take care of themselves and others. The pursuit of the 'Healthy School' status means that pupils are taught about healthy lifestyles and the importance of a healthy diet. Time is set aside for pupils to discuss and debate important topical

issues and they have plenty of opportunities to express themselves on issues that affect them. Through work in geography and science, pupils develop a good understanding of environmental issues; the school also develops their understanding of finance. As part of the new adventure play area, for example, pupils were expected to price and budget for the different equipment. A strength of the school is the way in which it teaches pupils to think about others. Parents are particularly pleased with this aspect of the school's work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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