

INSPECTION REPORT

KENNETT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newmarket

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110613

Headteacher: Mrs N Hector

Lead inspector: Mr G D Timms

Dates of inspection: 11-13 October 2004

Inspection number: 267129

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	62
School address:	98 Station Road Kennett Newmarket Suffolk
Postcode:	CB8 7QQ
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Rev Anne Haselhurst

Date of previous inspection: 1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kennett Primary School has 62 pupils, six of whom attend on a part time basis. Although there is a range of ability, and it can differ from cohort to cohort, overall the attainment of children when they enter the school is below that which is typical for their ages. There are 10 pupils on the register of special educational need. This is broadly in line with schools nationally. Two pupils have a statement of special need providing them with extra support. The main needs are specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds but none who has English as an additional language. This is well below average. Over six per cent of parents claim their entitlement to free school meals at present and this is below average. The socio economic background of most children is broadly average.

The school was been awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003 and Investor in People status in 2002. In addition, the school is taking part in an interactive whiteboard expansion project which has provided resources and training. The headteacher has been at the school for one year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21038	Mr G Timms	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
9399	Mr R Watts	Lay inspector	
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	English Religious education Geography History Personal, social and health education Special educational needs English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective and improving school offering pupils a good quality of education. Achievement is good and standards are often above average. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a good proportion that is very good. The leadership and management are good and the headteacher, and her staff, have made great strides in improving the provision over the past year. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- achievement is good overall except in mathematics and dance;
- the parents have excellent opinions of the school and are very supportive of their children's learning;
- there are insufficient planned opportunities for the use of literacy skills in other subjects;
- the provision for the youngest pupils is very good;
- although leadership and management are good overall, more time for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate their subjects needs to be found;
- the school works hard to ensure there is no racial harassment or bullying;
- the marking of pupils' work is not based on clear learning objectives and targets and is unsatisfactory.

The level of improvement since the last inspection has been good. The key issues raised then have been largely addressed. The provision for the Foundation Stage has been greatly improved and pupils' social development and their writing skills are now being very effectively developed. The outdoor play opportunities have been much improved. The teaching is monitored more closely by the headteacher and good performance management procedures are in place. However, the subject co-ordinators' role in monitoring is still in the development stage. The timetable has been reviewed and it now provides an appropriate balance between subjects. In addition, health and safety procedures have been improved and the school improvement plan contains better success criteria.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The comparisons from year to year in the above table are affected by changes due to the very small size of the cohorts. For example, in 2003 only six pupils took the tests in Year 6. The results in 2003 show that in the English tests the results were very high, putting the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In science, results were well above average when compared with all schools nationally, while in mathematics they were average. When they are compared with similar schools, the English result again put the school in the top five per cent. In science, they were well above average when compared

to such schools, while in mathematics the results were well below average. The early indications from the 2004 results are that, the high standards in English and science have been maintained while mathematics results have improved. Remedying this has been a focus for action recently, both in the school improvement plan and as an objective for individual teachers to address. This needs to continue.

In the 2003 Year 2 tests, results showed that reading was above average, writing was well above average and mathematics was broadly average, when compared with schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, the results were below average in reading and mathematics, and well above average in writing. These results were a good improvement over those found in the three previous years, and the early indications from the 2004 tests are that the reading standards in Year 2 have been maintained. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in mathematics was much improved but still below the national average for the higher levels, although this represents good achievement given the pupils' attainment on entry to the school. In writing, standards in Year 2 were not maintained and were below average. The current standards evident during the inspection show that the achievement in the Reception year is very good. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good overall. Current standards in Years 1 to 6 in English, mathematics and religious education are broadly average, while standards in science, information and communication technology and personal, social and health education are above average. Standards in dance are below those expected. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in the Foundation Stage and good throughout the rest of the school. Attendance is good. **Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual moral, social and cultural development, is good overall.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. In the majority of lessons, relationships are good between pupils, and between pupils and adults. All pupils are appropriately challenged by their work. The teaching assistants have a very positive impact on learning and they are well deployed by the teachers. In the few lessons where the teaching is weaker, relationships are less positive, lesson objectives are unclear and time in lessons is badly managed. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Throughout the school the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are very well cared for and the links with parents are very good; links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory and improving. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school is developing its self-evaluation skills through a rigorous system of monitoring teaching, learning and overall performance. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The work of subject co-ordinators is at an early stage of development and they do not have sufficient time to monitor the work in their subjects.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents have an excellent opinion of the work of the school. They think the school is very well led and managed. They feel that the school is very approachable and that it considers parents' views. The pupils like school. They are enthusiastic about the activities offered to them and are especially keen on the school trips and the improved resources for information and communication technology.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise achievement in mathematics, especially for the more able pupils, and in physical education, especially dance;
- identify sufficient opportunities to practise literacy skills across the curriculum;
- develop the role of the subject co-ordinator particularly with regard to monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning;
- improve the marking of pupils' work so that they are clear about what they have done well and how they can improve in the future.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good overall. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and achieve very well. In Years 1 to 6 the good achievement continues due to the good teaching of the mixed age classes. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average, but there are weaknesses in mathematics compared to the other subjects, which the school is working hard to address.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6, standards are above average in science, information and communication technology, and personal, social and health education.
- Achievement in mathematics and in dance is not high enough.
- Achievement is very good in the Reception year.
- Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

Commentary

1. The overall attainment on entry of many of the children is below that typically found, although it varies from year to year and there is a range of ability. During the Reception year, the children make very good progress due to the very good teaching they receive. Almost all are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the school year and a number are likely to exceed them.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.4 (14.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.8 (12.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.4 (14.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The small cohort sizes make comparisons between year groups insecure. Even so, the improvement from 2002 to 2003 in the school was very good. This was due to improved provision and better intervention with pupils needing extra support. In the tests in 2003, standards in Year 2 in writing were well above average when compared to schools nationally, while in reading they were above average. In mathematics, standards were broadly average. When compared to schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, however, standards were below average in reading and mathematics, but well above average in writing. These results represent a good level of improvement over previous years when results were regularly and consistently well below average.

3. It is likely that the 2004 national tests for Year 2 will show better results in reading and especially mathematics. However, fewer pupils attained the higher levels in writing and in mathematics than was the case nationally.
4. The table for Year 6 pupils is omitted, as there were fewer than ten pupils who took the tests and this makes comparisons insecure. However, the overall picture for the 2003 tests showed that the pupils had very high results in English, putting them in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In science, results were well above average, while in mathematics they were broadly average. When compared with schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, results were still very high in English and well above average in science, but were below average in mathematics. This indicates that the pupils are achieving well in English and science compared to others from similar backgrounds but that there is some underachievement in mathematics. If the results are compared with schools where the pupils scored similarly in Year 2, again those English were very high and for science well above average. This suggests that the pupils in Year 6 in 2003 were achieving much better in English and science than the majority of pupils with similar capability when in Year 2. However, the mathematics results were much worse than similar schools showing insufficient progress from Year 2 to Year 6 and strongly point to underachievement in this subject at that time. This picture of below average standards and progress in mathematics was quickly recognised by the headteacher and over the past year a lot of effort has been put into remedying the weaknesses through training, resources, intervention groups and input from external advisers.
5. This work has had an impact on standards and achievement in mathematics. In the 2004 tests, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is very high, and well above average even when compared with similar schools. English results in the 2004 tests also have a good proportion attaining the higher levels but a below average proportion attaining the expected level, due to a very small number of pupils with special educational needs. It is a similar picture in science.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as they go through the school, with a significant number achieving the nationally expected levels in English, particularly in reading. Pupils, including those with statements, are well supported and achieve the standards of which they are capable. This is because work in class is at a suitable level, and they are supported by effective teaching assistants. The class teacher writes individual education plans, with support from the special educational needs co-ordinator and with the full involvement of parents. Targets are relevant, and school data indicate that pupils achieve them well. Pupils know what their targets are and are fully involved in termly reviews.
7. Current standards in Year 2 show that pupils' personal, social and health education is above average given their ages. Standards in Year 2 in English, science, and religious education are broadly average, but the pupils are achieving well and almost all of them are working to their potential. Standards in dance are below average due to weaker teaching. Standards in mathematics are broadly average overall. In Year 6, standards are above average in science, information and communication technology and personal, social and health education. They are broadly average in English, mathematics and religious education. The pupils in Year 6 are working to potential and have done as well as can reasonably be expected in English and science and most

of them have done so in mathematics. It was not possible to judge standards in other subjects as insufficient evidence was gathered.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes and their behaviour is good. The school provides well for their moral and social development. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Pupils form very warm and supportive relationships with one another.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to celebrate cultural diversity.
- Overall attendance is above the national average and hardly any pupils are late each morning.

Commentary

8. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour allow the school to function purposefully and inclusively¹, even though they are in mixed age classes. They are very co-operative and understand the variety of grouping arrangements necessary to ensure that work is targeted at the appropriate level. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 also understand the need for the school to use their room as an assembly hall and dining area, and routinely clear their tables for dinner and move back tables and chairs for whole-school physical education. Behaviour is good, except where the teaching is weaker, and there have been no exclusions for poor behaviour.
9. In all classes there is a strong focus on promoting pupils' social development and encouragement to work together in different groups according to ability and experience. Pupils are keen to contribute in whole-class sessions when required to do so, and generally listen attentively to each other's contributions in discussions. When teaching is stimulating, pupils strive to demonstrate what they know, show good interest in lessons, and persevere with tasks. Members of staff are consistently encouraging and positive about pupils' contributions.
10. Pupils show good levels of care and support for one another. There is a harmonious, caring atmosphere in the playground and around the school, pupils chat together happily and share games, for example playing marbles together. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and contribute enthusiastically to class discussions when required to do so. They are not afraid to make mistakes, confident of a positive response from all the staff. Those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are largely well managed in class. Members of staff are aware of pupils' individual education plan targets and pupils are reminded of them to help improve behaviour.
11. Pupils' moral and social awareness are good. Religious education and assemblies focus well on personal responsibility. The recently introduced "buddy" system and "buddy bench" are helping them to be aware of each other's well being in the playground. The assembly programme enhances this work. For example, in the week of inspection pupils were encouraged to demonstrate the qualities of a "Good Samaritan" in their own conduct. Pupils are given some involvement in the school's decision-making processes through the school council representatives who take their responsibilities very seriously and conscientiously. For example, older children have argued a case for learning mentors and for improved decoration of the toilets. Other pupils readily accept the responsibility for performing tasks around the school.
12. The school does not offer pupils enough opportunity to celebrate the cultural diversity of its own and the wider community. Though pupils study world religions in religious education, there are few other opportunities planned for them to understand the contribution of different cultures in all areas of learning.

Attendance

¹ The term "inclusively" refers to the procedures adopted by the school to meet the educational needs of all pupils, whatever their gender, ability or background.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
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.

13. Members of staff take registers correctly and are rigorous in obtaining reasons for absence. Unauthorised absence is broadly average. Parents seek permission for holidays in term time and good attendance is rewarded. The school follows security guidelines on the need to contact parents on the first day that a pupil is absent without explanation. Attendance monitoring procedures are thorough.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The teaching is good, overall. The curriculum is satisfactory and is appropriately broad and balanced. The pupils are very well cared for and the links with parents are very good. The links with the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are examples of good and very good teaching throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Teaching assistants are very good and are well deployed by teachers.
- Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards.
- Weaker teaching often results from badly managed lessons.
- Marking does not always help pupils see how they can improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	3	13	4	0	1	0

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

14. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and some is excellent. The members of staff are knowledgeable and have built very good relationships with the children. The teaching assistant and other adult helpers are well deployed and their contribution adds greatly to the children's learning. The lessons are very well planned and imaginatively resourced. The teacher makes very effective use of the recently introduced interactive whiteboard in many of the lessons. The planning also ensures very good use of the outdoor areas.

15. Teaching throughout the rest of the school is good overall, but varies from poor to very good depending on the teachers' subject knowledge and expertise, and on how well lessons are planned and managed. Where the teaching is weaker, this results from a lack of effective management of the behaviour of pupils, a lack of focus on the objectives for the lesson and a lack of confidence in their own subject expertise. The marking of pupils' work does not always make clear what they have done well or how they can improve their work in the future. This is not tied in closely enough to the lesson objectives or to individual and group targets.
16. Overall, however, teachers provide good lessons that result in pupils making effective progress in most subjects. A real strength of the teaching has been the way the members of staff have begun to make effective use of the interactive whiteboards and laptop computers which, although very new to the school and to the staff, are having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers make very effective use of new technology to resource, plan and deliver lessons.
17. Planning is largely effective and the use of resources is good. Teachers have worked hard to raise standards in mathematics. The school has provided training, resources and external advice on good practice. Although this is yet to be reflected fully in standards, it does indicate how willing the members of staff are to strive for the best for their pupils. The use of support staff, and volunteer helpers, has a positive impact on learning. There is good communication between the teachers and their support, and the teaching assistants take a very effective role in, for example, supporting the less able pupils in whole class teaching times. They have good relationships with the pupils and this encourages them to be willing to answer questions and try to solve problems.
18. Very good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. Work is planned at an appropriate level to allow them to make good progress. The co-ordinator for special educational needs checks that individual education plan targets are reflected in the lesson planning, and pupils' progress is assessed and monitored very carefully. Teachers use teaching assistants well and brief them fully about their role in each lesson. In this way, pupils achieve the lesson objectives or personal targets well. Two pupils are given additional support from the local authority, which allows them to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is generally good in Years 1 to 6, and very good in the Reception year. Planning takes good account of the mixed-age classes. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The general curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by good personal, social and health education.
- Opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy skills are not fully exploited in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Planning for all subjects is supported by approved schemes of work and organised in a two- and sometimes three-year cycle to avoid repetition of topics covered.

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Accommodation is restricted by lack of a hall but the school uses its space well.

Commentary

19. The school follows nationally approved schemes of work for all subjects, and plans work in two- and sometimes three-year cycles to take account of the mixed-age classes. These plans indicate that all relevant subjects of the National Curriculum, and religious education and personal, social and health education are covered. Lessons in all subjects, but particularly English and mathematics, are carefully structured to ensure that pupils learn progressively as they move through the school. Pupils at different levels of attainment are well supported by teaching assistants who make sure that they achieve the lessons' learning objectives and, for those with special educational need, their personal targets.
20. Work in books indicates that pupils do not get enough opportunity to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in religious education, history, and geography books there is a preponderance of worksheets which offer little opportunity for pupils to develop their writing skills. They do not have enough opportunity to write in depth, using the appropriate and conventional styles of writing for specific tasks.
21. There is good commitment to educational inclusion. All pupils in Years 1 to 6 are offered a full and equal access to the curriculum and achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, the gifted and talented, and those with special educational needs are equally supported by the generally good teaching and very good work of the teaching assistants. Much work with pupils with special educational needs is provided outside the classroom, where highly focused speaking and listening can take place. Although this is the pattern required by the local authority, it means that the good work of the specialist teacher from the local authority is consequently not modelled routinely in classrooms, which would build up every staff member's expertise.
22. The strong ethos of the school is well supported by the very good personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are encouraged to work well together and with consideration for each other's needs. This is supported by the school cook, who knows the pupils well, and encourages them to make good choices and enjoy their mealtimes. The development of strong relationships and positive values is further supported by the good example adults demonstrate in their work with pupils and with each other.
23. The school offers a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons which contribute to pupils' personal, social, and creative development. There are opportunities each year for older pupils to go on a residential visit in which they are involved in adventurous outdoor pursuits and on a range of computer projects. There are a limited number of visits and visitors to complement classroom work across the curriculum. The local minister is involved through the assembly programme and other church activities.
24. The school has enough teachers, including two days of teaching from the headteacher, to cover all classes, and benefits from a member of staff who is a music

specialist. The curriculum is planned so that all pupils benefit from her expertise. However, the timetable of one class which includes recorder practice for a few pupils in general teaching time is not the best use of time for the rest of the class.

25. Accommodation is satisfactory overall but restricted by the lack of a hall. This means that the largest classroom is used for assembly, physical education and as a dining-hall. The school manages this very effectively, and works hard to minimise the impact on the children involved. There is a library in the entrance hall which is also a teaching base for small group work. It is therefore difficult to offer pupils regular opportunities to develop library skills and independent study habits. This is a particular shortcoming, since, through talking with pupils, inspectors were made aware that few pupils visit a public library. The school benefits from a swimming pool, which it uses in the summer term, and the use of local playing fields, as well as a good adventure play area.
26. There is a good range of resources to improve pupils' learning in all subjects. The school is also able to borrow resources from other local small schools. The information and communication technology resources in each class, including laptops, make sure that the curriculum is taught well. The recent provision of an interactive whiteboard in each classroom is already enhancing pupils' learning and will be exploited further as teachers become more confident in their use. For example, teachers will be able to use the electronically scanned texts they have recently bought to draw pupils' attention to important features of grammar, punctuation, and structure in the books they are studying.

Care, guidance and support

Health and safety procedures are very good and members of staff have very good relationships with pupils, which promotes good pastoral care. The school gives good support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievement. It involves pupils well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety, and the child protection procedures, are very thorough.
- Pastoral care for Individual pupils is good and they can turn to someone they trust for advice and support.
- The school council is effective in promoting wider learning experiences and allowing pupils to express their views.

Commentary

27. The school has introduced very thorough risk assessments of the premises and off-site activities. Governors, school and local authority staff regularly monitor the site. Governors then discuss remedial action and are kept up to date with progress by a good tracking system. Teachers assess risks when pupils leave the site for educational activities and take precautions to avoid them. All members of staff are trained in child protection procedures and there is a secure system for referral to the designated teacher. Members of staff are trained in first aid care for pupils who are ill or who have accidents. Pupils are confident and secure.

28. Members of staff discuss personal issues with pupils regularly in personal, social and health education lessons. They know their pupils well and have an open and friendly relationship, which allows good pastoral care. Members of the support staff play a vital role in this, which helps make playtime a good social experience and kitchen staff help the pupils to make healthy choices at dinnertime. Parents have no concerns about bullying and there was no sign of any conflict during the inspection. Pupils said that if there are any problems, they are quickly and effectively resolved by staff and that recent action by the school, such as the box where pupils can leave notes about concerns and the trained pupil mentors, have greatly improved the situation. Although pupils are set personal academic targets these are not well understood by pupils and have insufficient impact except for the pupils with special educational needs.
29. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and are carefully tracked to monitor progress, and additional support is provided when necessary. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and liaison with outside agencies is good. The school makes great efforts to ensure that these pupils receive a high level of care from the school's own staffing resource. Two pupils with statements also receive additional support from specialist teachers as outlined in their statements of educational need.
30. The recently formed school council acts as a good sounding board for pupils' views and recommends action to improve the school. Representatives canvass the views of their class and feedback on what has been discussed and decided. Such good practice not only gives pupils a greater sense of ownership of their education but also widens their experiences and enriches their learning. The process of election and representation is a good preparation for citizenship.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents have a very good opinion of the school.
- Parents provide very good support at home for their children's work.
- Liaison with other schools gives additional support to staff in such a small school.

Commentary

31. The questionnaire completed by parents before the inspection was very positive, as were parents' views at the parents' meeting. The very strong support for the leadership is a tribute to the hard work that the headteacher and staff have put into fostering good relations with parents. Parents are given good information, both when their child begins school, and throughout their time there, about what is taught, and how it is taught. Regular newsletters keep them up-to-date with practical information. The annual pupil reports meet statutory requirements but sometimes give too little information on progress and do not always describe how the pupil

needs to improve in a way that parents can support. The reports describe pupils' personal development well.

32. Most parents hear their child read at home and give appropriate support with homework. Virtually all parents attend the formal consultation evenings when their child's work is discussed with the teacher. Parents help in school regularly. The parent-teacher association organises social and fund-raising events which contribute both additional resources and to the community ethos of the school.
33. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational need are kept fully informed about how their children are progressing, and are always invited to attend review meetings. Governors fund supply teachers to allow class teachers to be freed from teaching responsibilities to be fully involved in these very important meetings.
34. The school has strong links with the local church through the chair of governors who takes weekly assemblies in the school and whose church hosts regular services for children. Senior citizens from the village use the school for monthly afternoon teas and support the history curriculum. People from the village use the swimming pool in summer. Local businesses contribute funding and some equipment but there are a few links that might broaden pupils' and staff experience of the world of work outside school.
35. Many staff benefit by sharing experience and training with those in similar roles in other local schools. This is an important and necessary function for supporting staff in small schools such as this. The organisation of cultural and sporting events to extend pupils' experiences is also shared between local schools. Good bridging courses are organised that smooth the transition to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory and improving. The leadership of the headteacher is good, while that of key staff is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a clear leadership that is well focused on raising standards.
- The management of provision for special educational needs is good.
- The school has a very good commitment to continuing professional development.
- The budget is linked effectively to improvement and is well monitored.

Commentary

36. The headteacher has worked hard since her appointment to improve the performance of the school and to develop the perceived areas of weakness. This hard work has been rewarded by the improvements now evident in the school. A particular strength has been the growing use of available assessment information and data to analyse the strengths and weaknesses, and to target support where it is most urgently needed, such as is happening at present with mathematics. This work has resulted in the good improvements in provision since the last inspection although inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching remain.

37. The overall leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. This has resulted in great improvements since the last inspection, in resources, accommodation and in the quality of the teaching. Subject leadership is improving and is recognised by the school as an area for improvement. Co-ordinators have been able to see other teachers' planning but there has been little opportunity to observe other teachers or to scrutinise pupils' work.
38. Performance management² is being effectively used as a tool for improvement. All members of staff, including non-teaching staff, have a role in the system, and there are changes to practice now in place because of this work. The objectives set for improvement tie in well with the school improvement plan, and with the very good provision for professional development available to all staff. The improvement plan is a good, very detailed document with action plans that provide a good basis for school improvement.
39. The governing body is satisfactorily involved in the life and work of the school and building a satisfactory knowledge of its effectiveness. Communication between the headteacher and the governors is satisfactory. Governors have a good idea of the school's strengths and offer the school a lot of support. They are less secure with their knowledge about areas for development, but appreciate the need to improve the role of critical friend. The understanding of the test data and other assessment information is growing.
40. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator forges very close links with teachers, teaching assistants, parents, governors, and outside agencies to ensure that pupils are given a high level of support. Pupils are set realistic and attainable targets for improvement, and enjoy a strong sense of achievement. This is particularly enhanced by their personal involvement in review meetings, where progress with individual targets is acknowledged. The school is directing further attention to raising the self-esteem of pupils with special educational need. This objective is effectively promoted by the personal, social, and emotional curriculum and the full inclusion of pupils in all aspects of lessons.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	212,841	Balance from previous year	27,848
Total expenditure	214,914	Balance carried forward to the next	25,775
Expenditure per pupil	3,570		

41. The school budget is well planned and administered. The administrative officer monitors spending well and keeps the headteacher and governors well informed. The

² Performance management refers to the systems used by the school to evaluate and improve the quality of employee's work, particularly teachers.

school seeks best value in all transactions. The large amount carried forward is earmarked for staffing costs during a period of falling rolls.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The majority of the children have had some pre-school experience. They work alongside pupils in Year 1 due to the small cohort sizes. They start school on a part time basis but quickly begin to stay full time. This is done sensitively and some children remain part time until after the first half term. The induction³ procedures are appropriate and parents are well informed about their children's needs and school routines. Attainment on entry to the school is largely below typical levels, as it was at the time of the last inspection, although this varies from year to year.
43. There have been significant improvements to the provision since the last inspection. Weaknesses were found in children's personal, social and emotional development, and in their writing skills. The outdoor play facility was unsatisfactory. These issues have all been very well addressed and the overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good.
- Children behave very well.
- Children are encouraged to be independent learners.

Commentary

44. Children achieve very well due to the very good teaching they receive. Progress is very good and children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the year. The start of the day provides a very good opportunity for helping children develop positive attitudes towards school and each other. Staff ensure they are available to meet with parents and this enables any concerns or worries to be quickly resolved, and for staff to be very aware of children who may need extra support for any reason.
45. A lot of the activities provided are to develop children's social skills through working and playing together. This is very successful and the children have very good relationships with each other and with the adults. Good examples of children helping each other, playing together and making suggestions to each other about their activities are widespread. For example, the new outdoor toy house enabled children to act out the story of Goldilocks in small groups involving a great deal of co-

³ Induction refers to the arrangement for receiving pupils who are new to the school, helping them settle into the school routines and make friends.

operation. Clear routines are set by staff and they are also clear about their expectations of children's behaviour, which is very good overall. There is a good balance of teacher-directed and independent activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress due to very good teaching.
- Letter sounds and early reading skills are well taught.
- Speaking and listening skills are being very effectively developed.

Commentary

46. Children have a wide range of ability when they enter the class, but their communication and language skills are often not very well developed. However, because of the well-planned activities and very good teaching they make very good progress and achieve well. It is likely that by the end of the Reception year, the majority of the children will achieve the national goals for early learning. The children enjoy books and develop good reading habits. They can follow a story using the illustrations and retell it in their own words. They handle books correctly and with care, and enjoy sharing them with an adult. Early learning of letter sounds is well taught and linked effectively to the weekly topic or theme. For example, children learn the 'b' sound while reading about the three bears. They can sequence the events in the story accurately using pictures.
47. Members of staff provide enjoyable activities to develop children's writing and spelling skills. When learning to read and spell words children are given a very good level of support. This enables them to understand when they make mistakes as, for example, when the whole class knows that they often miss the 'n' out when writing 'went'. The teaching assistant's deliberate mistakes also help to make the activities enjoyable and fun to complete. Writing skills are being very well developed, often using whiteboards and markers before working on paper, tracing or copy-writing. The adult support ensures that all children are focused on the tasks and their writing skills improve on a daily basis. Almost all activities are used to help develop children's speaking and listening skills, and the quality of conversation, whether in role play activities or with adults in the classroom, is good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very effective and progress is made by all children in lessons.
- Very good use is made of a well-made number line.
- Children have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes.

Commentary

48. The very good teaching results in very good achievement by the majority of the children. They make very good progress and are on course to attain or exceed the

national goals for early learning by the end of the year. Very effective use is made of a well-prepared number line to support children's recognition of number order to 10. The extension of this for the Year 1 pupils to 20 meant that more able Reception children have a good opportunity to develop their learning further. Although all children counted together at the end of the activity, this was only done by counting up to 20 and the opportunity to begin counting back from 20 was missed.

49. The topic during the inspection was on the recognition of two-dimensional shapes. Very good use of the interactive whiteboard and associated software enabled the teacher to prepare and deliver a very good activity to consolidate children's recognition of a variety of such shapes. Children showed real delight at giving a correct answer, and one American boy was especially happy to have recognised a pentagon. Children develop good sequences using both shape and colour.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of computers and other information and technology equipment is very well developed.
- Children have designed and made very good card houses.

Commentary

50. The teaching is very good and this results in very good achievement in most aspects of this area of learning. Most of the children are likely to attain or exceed the national goals by the end of the year. A major strength is the confidence children have when using computers or the interactive whiteboard. This begins early as the teacher uses the whiteboard for children to self register at the start of the day. They use computers for a range of activities including software to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as art software for drawing and filling. Children have also developed early word processing skills and can edit their own writing about a holiday. In design and technology work, children designed and made a house using boxes and card. These were very good quality.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The much improved outdoor areas provide a very good resource for physical development.
- There are no large wheeled toys available for children to use.
- A lot of activities help develop children's control over small apparatus and equipment.

Commentary

51. The teaching is very good and this results in very good achievement. The very good adventure play area, in addition to the class outdoor space and the school's hard play surface, all offer a good resource for children's physical development. However, the lack of any bicycles or other wheeled toys on which children can ride means they miss out on some important opportunities to develop their control of such equipment. Children have good opportunities to develop their skills using large balls, hoops and beanbags. They are able to throw the beanbags accurately at a target. Very good and imaginative opportunities are found to provide children with a range of media and materials for them to handle and experiment with. For example, as the topic theme was Goldilocks, the sand tray was replaced with one filled with porridge oats, enabling children to handle them, fill containers and explore how they reacted. The use of small construction kits also provides children with very good opportunities to develop their control of materials.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

52. Little teaching was observed in this area of learning. However, the evidence available points towards good provision. In one very good lesson, children used pastel crayons to draw autumn leaves and fruits from direct observation. They used the crayons well to create appropriate colours. Children have opportunities to draw, for example, book characters. They use autumn leaves for collages and to make models of hedgehogs. The available evidence indicates good achievement. The outdoor area enables more messy work to take place, such as the on-going experimentation with spray painting.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **good** and pupils achieve well. Reading and writing are taught well and pupils make good progress. There are not enough opportunities for speaking and listening built into lesson planning. Leadership is effective. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Good use of assessment data is helping to raise standards and identify support where necessary.
- Highly focused leadership ensures that members of staff work to clear priorities.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunity to develop literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

53. Considering their below average attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Standards are average overall, though there are still some disparities in achievement between reading and writing, which the school is remedying through its improvement work. Planning results in support being given to the wide range of learning needs in each mixed-age class, including those of pupils with special educational need and the higher attainers. Good support is provided by the effective teaching assistants, especially for less experienced and the

lower attaining pupils. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive additional support and this results in them making progress in line with their peers. The school places a strong emphasis on literacy, which has resulted in rising standards, particularly in 2003. The basics of spelling, handwriting, and grammar are taught systematically in the mixed-age classes to ensure that pupils build up their skills progressively.

54. Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is generally good. Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils listen well in lessons and contribute ideas from their own knowledge. Personal contributions are well received by staff. While some opportunities are provided for pupils to talk to each other and discuss ideas before a general feedback to the rest of the class, this practice is not yet fully embedded in lesson planning. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to discuss ideas at an appropriately challenging level. This kind of opportunity would allow fuller involvement of every pupil as the lesson unfolds. Some good questioning by teachers encourages pupils to explain their ideas and indicate how well they understand the new concepts presented in the lesson.
55. Achievement in reading is good. Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand how punctuation and an author's vocabulary choices bring extra meaning to a text. Guided by teachers they understand a change of voice is required to indicate the difference between dialogue and a linking story line. Higher attaining pupils are able to infer that a character is lazy, for example, from reading a description of his behaviour. They are able to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words from the overall sense of a sentence, and their knowledge of phonics is good. By the time they are in Year 6, these skills have developed significantly. Pupils understand that characterisation can be suggested using a number of sources and know the difference between a character assessment and a physical description. These skills are supporting pupils' development as effective writers. Writing skills are developing well and are boosted by a good range of intervention strategies, which are likely to see standards rise by the end of 2005.
56. Standards in writing are satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to develop a well formed handwriting style, presenting their ideas in interesting sentences enhanced by good vocabulary choices. They engage the reader by effective use of punctuation. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they are writing confidently, using the appropriate style for particular tasks, for example when reporting conversation and describing events in a sequence. Pupils write complex sentences with appropriate punctuation and organise their writing into paragraphs. They are beginning to express their own views through their writing, which makes it a real communication with the reader.
57. Teaching and learning are good overall. Planning takes account of the different needs of pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed and help their focus groups achieve the lesson objectives and their personal targets. Teachers set a reasonable pace and are very encouraging in the introduction to lessons, where learning objectives are explained clearly. There is less focus on reviewing what has been covered in the lesson and to assess what pupils now know in plenary sessions. The teachers use guided reading and guided writing as strategies to help pupils read with improved comprehension and to build up their skills as effective writers. Teachers'

marking is inconsistent and in many instances is uncritical. While a teacher's comment "good try" is positive, it does not give any information to pupils on what progress has been made in their writing or how work might be improved. Older pupils have personal targets in the back of their writing books and dates when they were achieved, but when questioned they are not clear about what they have to do to improve or what level they have achieved so far.

58. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what the school needs to do to improve based on a detailed analysis of assessment data. Pupils' performance in end-of-year tests is analysed and information used to identify targets and provide support for particular pupils who are not making the expected progress. The achievement of different groups is monitored carefully and, from this, action in specific areas of the curriculum for particular pupils is planned. For example, the school has monitored the impact of intervention strategies on particular pupils' achievement and is aware that this extra support needs to be more tightly focused on specific pupils to have a greater impact than was achieved last year. New systems are in place to level samples of pupils' unaided written work. From this, targets will be set and work planned to allow pupils to achieve them. The headteacher takes the lead in monitoring teaching and learning and achievement through classroom observation and the checking of pupils' work in books. The school's action plan places an appropriate emphasis on aspects of written work that require improvement.

Language and Literacy across the Curriculum

59. The use of language and literacy skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory and is an area for improvement. Planning does not incorporate enough opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas in small groups before feeding back to the whole class. The scrutiny of pupils' books shows that pupils are not given the opportunity to transfer their literary skills in other subjects. For example, in religion, history, and geography they are expected only to fill in gaps in worksheets, rather than use a different writing style to complete more challenging tasks. Where pupils do write more fully, teachers' expectations for high standards in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and general presentation are not as high as in the literacy books.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** and improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not as high as they could be.
- The school has recognised the weaknesses in provision and is working to raise standards.
- Analysis of data is well used to improve provision.
- The subject is being well led and managed.

Commentary

60. Standards are broadly average among current pupils. In Year 6 in 2004, a well above average proportion reached the higher level in the tests. Although the cohorts are

small, and just one or two pupils can make a big difference to the overall figures, analysis of the progress made in 2004 from Year 2 to Year 4 shows that only two out of eight pupils achieved the level predicted by their attainment on entry to Year 3, while the other seven underachieved. Progress from Year 4 to Year 6 is better and only two of six pupils underachieved, and one of those had special educational needs.

61. The school has recognised the weakness in this subject and is working hard to improve things. This includes setting up intervention groups for pupils who are seen as underachieving. Analysis of these groups shows that they do have a beneficial impact on standards. The headteacher has an input into this by teaching small intervention groups and even more support is planned for the coming year.
62. The school makes good use of an analysis of test results linked to that of the science tests in Year 6. For example, this showed weaknesses in reading and interpreting graphs and scales in science, which clearly has a direct link to the mathematics curriculum. There was also confusion over some mathematical language. The school has addressed this through ensuring more time is spent on these skills and standards have improved, as is evident in pupils' books. They have used scatter graphs to show the relationship between size of feet and length of jumps and can read scales on a Celsius thermometer. Year 6 pupils are able to use co-ordinates to draw and translate shapes in four quadrants. This is very neat, good quality work.
63. In Year 2, pupils are familiar with two-dimensional shapes and are able to create good patterns. By the end of the year they are familiar with larger numbers and able to solve money problems and add to one thousand.
64. The teaching is good overall, but there are weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work. This does not give them sufficient understanding of how to improve. In Year 2 there is little evidence of sufficient differences in the work provided for the pupils of differing abilities, and this is partly why higher attaining pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. The teaching assistants work well with less able pupils and their support enables them to take a full part in, for example, mental sessions at the start of lessons, and to follow the whole class input when new work is explained. Teachers do not use the group work parts of the lessons to focus their attention on one group's specific needs and this is an aspect that would enable them to focus on the higher achieving pupils and to provide them with sufficiently challenging work.
65. The leadership of the subject has been positive since the present co-ordinator took over one year ago. Once the weaknesses in the subject had been recognised, she has worked hard, together with the headteacher, to raise the profile of mathematics throughout the school. A numeracy week was held for parents, including a talk from a local authority adviser regarding the numeracy strategy. Parents have also been informed in writing of the written methods used by the school so that they can help their children at home. An appropriate action plan has been drawn up and the teachers' planning has improved. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning through observing lessons. A governor has visited to look at the subject as it is a focus of the school improvement plan and reported back to the governing body on the outcomes of the visit.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Numeracy skills are used well in science, but are less evident in other subjects. Findings of experiments are recorded in a range of graphs. For example, in one piece of work a scatter graph is used to show the relationship between foot sizes and the length of a jump. They also use line and bar graphs to present data.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6.
- Too few Year 2 pupils attain the higher levels.
- The school plans to develop the use of technology further.
- Marking of pupils' work is underdeveloped as a tool for their progress.

Commentary

67. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are broadly satisfactory in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In the 2003 tests, results in Year 6 were well above average when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. However, in Year 2 teacher assessments, although the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected level was very high, the proportion attaining the higher levels was well below average. The school has recognised this anomaly and is working to address the teachers' assessment skills. However, there are significant differences between one year and another because of the small size of the cohorts.
68. The curriculum is well planned to provide all pupils in the mixed age classes with sufficiently challenging work, at an appropriate level for their prior experiences and attainment. In one topic on friction, Year 6 pupils measured the force using newtons and recorded findings in tables and then line graphs showing the way friction is affected by different surfaces and by rolling objects down different angles. In the only lesson observed during the inspection, Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils learned about their bodies and the effects of exercise in a well prepared and planned lesson. The teacher created a good range of activities throughout which older pupils checked their pulse rates and others described what they noticed about the impact of the activity.
69. The work provided for Year 1 pupils builds very effectively on their knowledge and understanding of the world in the Reception year. They learn about pushing and pulling forces, through a range of moving toys, and they are able to label the major parts of their bodies. The scrutiny of work in Year 2 shows that there is good curriculum coverage but little evident match of work appropriate to the abilities of the pupils. A lot of the work includes the completion of a worksheet and little opportunity to develop pupils' own methods of recording. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 have observed and investigated horse chestnuts, plums and acorns, and have sown a range of peas and beans in different conditions. This is enabling them to appreciate the needs of growing things. As part of this work, pupils have investigated some of the differences between plants and animals.

70. The marking of pupils' work is not very well developed. There is little evidence of marking that explains what pupils had done well or how they can improve in the future. A good link is created with the main feeder secondary school which gives pupils in Year 6 the opportunity to visit and take part in a scientific enquiry session. In addition, the science co-ordinator at the secondary school has done analyses of the test results to help the school identify where their pupils were weaker and which questions they did well. This resulted in a perceived weakness in reading graphs and scales, and the inspection evidence confirms that this work is now much improved and many more opportunities are provided across the curriculum to interpret such information.
71. Parents praised the work in science, and they feel standards are good, and that their children enjoy the subject. The substantive co-ordinator is on maternity leave, but another teacher is acting in this capacity for the short term. She has monitored the budget and the planning to ensure the correct curriculum is followed but little else has occurred in the subject recently as it has not been a focus for development. One of the priorities for future development is the use of information and communication technology, and this is an area the school needs to improve now that it is so well resourced.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6.
- Teachers make very good use of computers in planning and resourcing their lessons.
- Resources are good and are effectively used in everyday lessons.

Commentary

72. Since the last inspection, the resources available to teachers have been greatly improved. In addition, extra training has given them more confidence and expertise at preparing and using the hard- and software. Although very new, the recent introduction of interactive whiteboards into all classes has extended this provision even further and is already having a very good impact on pupils' learning. Because of this much improved provision, standards are above those normally expected and are steadily rising.
73. The decision to use portable laptop computers due to the lack of space for a computer suite was a sensible one and this enables all pupils to have extensive hands on time with computers on a regular basis. The timetabling of these means that at times pupils have to wait while they are gathered from other rooms and started up, resulting in a small amount of time lost from some lessons. In one lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils used the laptops to rearrange text in a word processing package. They could use return and enter keys to create line breaks in the appropriate places, and were able to change lower for upper case letters accurately, as part of a literacy based task. Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils learned to make good use of the spellchecker

facility when writing text and the more able pupils experienced the use of the facility for correcting grammatical errors. The teacher had produced a good resource of text with deliberate errors, and this enabled the pupils to practise their skills in a meaningful way. Pupils have also written play scripts and used the word processor very effectively to assist the setting out of their work.

74. The teachers make very good use of computers and other resources when planning and resourcing their lessons. This means they offer pupils good role models for the use of computers in the real world. In Year 1, pupils used art software to create a house for the three bears to live in. The teacher used the whiteboard very effectively to model the use of the different tools and the effects resulting from these. The pupils are very attentive and interested, showing excitement at being able to create these effects themselves.
75. The subject has been well managed and led by the co-ordinator. She has organised and attended a range of training for all staff, including the support staff. The teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils using computers, and one has developed her expertise sufficiently to act as a consultant for other staff. Good use is made of the cluster of local small schools to share expertise and ideas at meetings for the co-ordinators.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good. The provision of the interactive whiteboards has given staff the opportunities to use them in almost all lessons taught, both as a resource and as a tool for learning. In art and design, software is used to create a range of patterns including repeating ones. In mathematics, calculators are used appropriately to check some work. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards very effectively in the whole class mental session, or to introduce new work. Commercial resources such as activities on websites or on CD Rom are used appropriately and only when the activity is well linked to the focus of the class lesson.

HUMANITIES

77. No observations of **history and geography** lessons were made during the week of inspection. Curriculum documentation made available to inspectors indicates that an appropriate range of work is planned. The school has adopted nationally approved schemes of work to ensure appropriate coverage of the different strands of the subjects. Planning in mixed-age classes is based on a two-year cycle to avoid repetition of topics. At this early point in the year, there was only limited evidence on display and in books, insufficient to make a secure judgement on standards of achievement. Work in books, however, indicates over-use of photocopied worksheets and teachers' low expectations for the quality of written work.
78. This term pupils in Years 2, 3, and 4 are studying the Vikings, and the period is identified on a timeline. This is an important resource to help pupils set events in a historical context, and particularly important where topics are not studied in chronological order. In Years 4, 5, and 6 pupils are studying mountains, with a particular focus on volcanoes. The use of a large world map at the centre of the

classroom display is again an important subject resource for locating the mountain systems they are studying but also for finding the site of historical events for specific locations in books they read.

Religious education

Evidence from one lesson, scrutiny of wall displays and the work in books, shows that the school is continuing to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils attain the expected levels and achievement is good overall. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Curriculum planning meets expectations well.
- Pupils' attitudes are good.

Commentary

79. Curriculum planning meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and takes account of the mixed-age classes. Topics are planned in a two- or three-year cycle to make sure that pupils are introduced to knowledge and understanding of the main world religions, themes drawing on more than one religion, and responses to the natural world.
80. Achievement is good overall. Work in pupils' books indicates that they are being introduced to a range of world faiths. They understand that Jesus told stories as a way of teaching His followers about the power of God and how they should behave. Pupils identify aspects of their own experience and feelings when considering the message of parables, for example during a whole-school assembly on the Good Samaritan. Pupils are beginning to understand in their own contemporary setting that they can become Good Samaritans, for example by assisting anyone who needs help in the playground, even when that person is not a friend.
81. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They show interest in the topics they study and an ability to make comparisons between current work and previous lessons. They can compare differences between the Hindu and Christian stories of creation.
82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are introduced progressively to the idea that different faith groups have many similar guiding principles on how to conduct their lives and explain the wonders of the world. For example, in the one lesson pupils learned about the Hindu story of creation as one of a sequence of lessons on creation stories in world religions. They were able to compare and contrast details, drawing on the work of previous lessons and from notes in books to build up an awareness of how people of many religions sought an explanation for the wonders of creation and are inspired by the stories enshrined in their sacred writings. However, the follow up work was insufficiently challenging. Most pupils were only expected to colour in a photocopied image of the god Brahma and to record word lists of gifts given to His different creations. Some pupils moved on to read a text on reincarnation without any opportunity to review what they had learned so far or a careful enough explanation of this very complex idea. Talking with pupils about their

work indicated that they were not aware of the significance of the three heads and many arms of Brahma presented in the photocopied image. There was no other resource to enable pupils to discuss the visual details and symbolic meaning of this important Hindu god. Resources and displays are limited.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. **Art and design** was sampled during the inspection but only one lesson was observed. Because of this it is not possible to judge provision or standards. In the one lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils learned about North African and Indian good luck patterns before having the chance to design their own. They did this well, with care and attention to detail. The teacher had good subject knowledge and was able to explain the purpose of the patterns and the media used well. Displays show a developing use of computers in art to devise imaginative and repeating patterns. Very good collages of the seven days of the Creation make a very effective display in the entrance hall. Sketchbooks are being used satisfactorily to make preparatory sketches and drawings or to experiment with colour mixing.
84. In **design and technology**, only one lesson was observed and no judgement can be made about overall standards or provision. Only a small amount of work was on display as the inspection took place near the start of the year. The planning shows that the subject is covered appropriately. In the Years 2, 3 and 4 lesson observed, very good use was made of parent helpers in a well-resourced session about making sandwiches and the safe use of kitchen tools. This resulted in some good learning about the use of knives and graters and pupils made good progress. Older pupils have designed and made musical instruments that they then evaluated and said how they would change and improve them.
85. No **music** lessons were observed during the inspection. Parents were very positive about music standards in the school, although they referred mostly to the productions and opportunities to learn instruments. The singing in assemblies is tuneful and music is played and discussed at the start and end, some of which the pupils are allowed to provide. Choirs have taken part in large concerts with the local cluster of schools, giving pupils a chance to mix with other children, and to take part in large productions. Recorder groups give all pupils a chance to learn an instrument.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is satisfactory overall but has some significant weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Swimming is a major strength of the school.
- Standards in dance are below average.
- The teaching of dance is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

86. Only a small number of lessons were directly observed during the inspection. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory but in dance it is unsatisfactory. In a good

lesson in Year 1, pupils devised good ways of travelling round the room, in different directions and with a good awareness of the movements of others. During this session, one pupil learned to skip for the first time. However, in one poor lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils made no progress in creating dances using a variety of movements. Their poor attitudes towards the work, and the lack of firm control meant that there was too much silly behaviour and no progress in their learning. Older pupils were observed practising netball skills in a well-organised session on the small playground area.

87. The members of staff work hard to provide the pupils with as many of the opportunities they would have in a larger school as possible. A football team has matches against other local small schools. The headteacher has used her expertise to train and run a successful cross-country team. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have a good opportunity to take part in a residential visit to an outdoor education centre, where they can meet and work with pupils from other schools, and take part in adventurous activities such as climbing and archery.
88. The members of staff work hard to overcome the difficulties created by the dual use hall and lack of an on-site playing field. The football club takes place at lunchtime on the nearby village playing field. The school has a swimming pool that was provided by parental contributions in the past. It can be used in the second half of the summer term only but offers good opportunity for all younger pupils to learn to swim. The majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres before moving on to secondary school. The use of a classroom as a hall has a negative impact on the gymnastic work, but the school has improved resources recently with new gymnastic equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Provision is carefully planned into the curriculum.
- Teaching is good.
- There is a strong commitment to this area of learning.

Commentary

89. The arrangements for personal, social, health education, including informing pupils about sex education and relationships education, and the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, are very good. The school has recently invested in training a co-ordinator and has implemented a local authority programme. This is taught as separate sessions, as well as through other subjects where appropriate such as, for example, the importance of healthy diet in science.
90. The adoption of a clear policy and a whole-school scheme of work ensure that knowledge and understanding are developed progressively as pupils move through the school. The curriculum framework directs when aspects are to be taught and allocates teaching and learning time appropriately. This makes a good contribution to pupils' awareness of issues and represents improvement since the previous

inspection. There is a strong commitment from the staff to supporting this area throughout the school day, ensuring that pupils' learning is consistently reinforced in day-to-day interaction with all members of staff. Pupils are reminded of the need to work well together, for example, and to take responsibility throughout the day. This makes a significant contribution to the achievement of all pupils.

91. The quality of the teaching is good. Pupils are encouraged to talk and use role-play to explore ideas presented in lessons. For example, older pupils talked about how they could recognise emotions in other people and considered appropriate responses, while younger pupils considered scenarios in which they might be at risk and talked together about how they could keep safe and reduce the danger when things go wrong. Plans are in place to monitor the new scheme of work and an assessment tool has been introduced to track pupils' progress as they move through the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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