

INSPECTION REPORT

Lapford Community Primary School

Lapford, Crediton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113182

Headteacher: Ms E. Taylor

Lead inspector: Mrs J. Ikin

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th November 2004

Inspection number: 267184

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: 81

School address: Eastington Lane
Lapford
Crediton
Devon

Postcode: EX17 6QE

Telephone number: 01363 83292
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Mr. K. Worters
governors:

Date of previous July 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lapford Community School is much smaller than other primary schools. There are 81 pupils on roll. The pupils come mainly from the village of Lapford and the great majority are from White United Kingdom backgrounds but other mixed backgrounds are also represented. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The socio-economic nature of the area is broadly average. There is a very wide range of attainment on entry to the school, but overall it is average. There is an above average rate of mobility at the school which is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Their needs include specific and moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural, communication difficulties and physical disability. There are no pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school has an 'Active Mark', a 'Healthy Schools Award' and a 'Schools Achievement Award' for 2000. The school belongs to the local 'Academic Council of Schools' and is a member of the local 'Sports Partnership Scheme'. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for two terms and the deputy headteacher was absent on long-term sick leave.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 3349 | Jacqueline Ikin | Lead inspector | English Information and communication technology Geography History Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage |
| 1329 | Kevern Oliver | Lay inspector | |
| 20671 | Jon Palethorpe | Team inspector | Mathematics Science Music Religious education Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school**. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good, teaching is good and the school is well led and managed overall. The headteacher has high aspirations and the staff and governors are very committed to developing a school that the whole community can be proud of. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with good opportunities for enrichment. Most pupils achieve well and the school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher is a highly skilled teacher and she has given the school a clear sense of purpose and direction, which is strongly supported by a forward-looking governing body.
- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in mathematics, English, history, art and design, physical education and science.
- Pupils are fully involved in the school's work and they make a significant contribution to school life, particularly in the excellent arrangements that the school makes for lunchtime activities.
- Parents give very strong support to the school and there are very good links with the community and other schools in the area which enrich the curriculum and help pupils to learn.
- Pupils do not make enough use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their learning in other subjects.
- The deputy headteacher and subject leaders do not have clear job descriptions and their role is under developed.
- Assessment and planning arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are not as rigorous as they should be.
- Assessment and planning in subjects other than English and mathematics are not as precise as they should be.

The school was last inspected in 1999. The school's improvement since then has been good overall. Most of the strengths of the school have been sustained and there have been improvements in standards. The main issues raised in the last report have been addressed. However, the school's systems to support the needs of pupils with special educational needs are not as rigorous as they were and the role of subject leaders and the deputy headteacher have not been developed to a sufficient extent. The current demands on the school's budget are restricting the school's improvement efforts. However, the school's capacity for future improvement, under the skilled leadership of the new headteacher, is good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| English | C | A | B | A |
| Mathematics | C | B | B | A |
| 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 table shows that the school's results for science were in the top 5 per cent when compared with schools whose pupils attained similar results at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' **achievement is good** overall. Standards in English, mathematics, science, history, art and design and physical education are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well

in these subjects. Pupils in Year 6 do better in English, mathematics and science than pupils in similar schools. Standards are in line with those expected nationally and achievement is good in music and satisfactory in ICT. Children in the reception class achieve well. Standards are average in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are above average in their personal and social development, mathematical and physical development. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils who are higher attaining achieve well. Pupils' **personal qualities** and their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are **very good** overall. Their attitudes to their work are very good and they behave well. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning are **good** overall and some very good and sometimes outstanding teaching also occurs. Pupils are very well managed and there are good strategies for promoting the skills of independent learning. However, there is insufficient use of ICT as a tool for learning across the curriculum. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but it is not sufficiently precise in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teaching assistants, but assessment and planning arrangements lack precision because they are too informal. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and there are strengths in the development of pupils' enquiry skills, enrichment through lunchtime and after-school activities, visits and visitors and the provision of a magnificent sports hall. However, there is not enough planning for the different needs of pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics and the computer system needs updating to support learning in the classroom. Links with other schools and the community are very good. The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils and links with parents are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management and governance** of the school are **good** and have been effective in improving standards. The headteacher provides good leadership, has a very clear vision for the school and sets a very good example by the quality of her own teaching. The leadership and management of the deputy headteacher and the subject leaders are satisfactory overall and there are some good features. However, their job descriptions are out of date and their role in leading the school forward and monitoring and evaluation is not sufficiently developed. Governors are all highly committed and they have played a significant and proactive role in the building of the new school hall. Finances are very efficiently managed and administered to ensure that the school stays within its allocated budget. However, the current demands on the budget have meant a reduction in the funds available for school improvement. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The great majority of parents hold the school in high regard. Pupils like the school and their teachers very much and they love lunchtimes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Formalise procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs and implement them in line with the school's own policy.

- Clarify and develop the leadership and management roles and responsibilities of the deputy headteacher and subject leaders.
- Improve assessment and its use to inform planning for pupils of different ages and capabilities in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve pupils' skills in using ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 **achieve well**. Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, art and design and physical education in Years 2 and 6. Children in the reception class achieve well. Standards are average in communication, language and literacy and their knowledge and understanding of the world, and above average in mathematical and physical development and in personal, social and emotional development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has successfully improved its results in national tests in English and mathematics for most pupils and sustained its very good results in science.
- The provision of an excellent sports hall, very good links with other schools and very good enrichment through lunchtime activities and after-school clubs make a significant contribution to improved standards in physical education.
- Standards in ICT are satisfactory, but pupils do not make enough use of their skills to support work in other subjects.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory rather than good because of weaknesses in monitoring and planning for their specific needs.

Commentary

Key Stage 1

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 17.2 (18.2) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| Writing | 15.5 (15.5) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| Mathematics | 17.2 (17.8) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 28.1 (25.9) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| Mathematics | 28.5 (27.4) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| Science | 31.1 (29.6) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Standards are better now than at the time of the previous inspection. In Year 2 they are well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and mathematics. The results for Year 6 are above the national average in English and mathematics, and well above average in science. Pupils do better in these subjects than pupils in similar schools. The school's Year 6 results for science are in the top 5 per cent when compared with schools whose pupils attained similar results in Year 2. The findings of the inspection are that standards are above average and pupils achieve well in English,

mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6. Factors that contribute to these good standards are good teaching of the basic skills and good use of test data.

2. Standards are above average and the achievement of most pupils is good in other subjects, except for ICT where standards are average and achievement satisfactory. Pupils acquire a good range of basic ICT skills, but are not given sufficient opportunities to consolidate them through their use in other subjects.
3. Although standards are improving and most pupils are doing well overall, there is room for improvement in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. They receive good individual attention from well trained teaching assistants, but there are insufficient means of tracking their achievement and planning precisely for their needs. The lack of targets and plans for these pupils is a contributory factor to their achievement being satisfactory rather than good. The headteacher has already identified this as an area for development and begun the process of improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school, values and personal qualities are **very good** overall. Their behaviour is good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a happy community whose pupils have very positive attitudes to school life and learning.
- Pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong. They thrive on responsibility and opportunities to contribute to school and community life.
- Lunchtime arrangements are exemplary.
- There are good arrangements for helping pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
- Attendance rates are below average, although the school does all that it can to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Commentary

4. The school's ethos is a strength of the school and has been sustained since the last inspection because of the emphasis that is put on promoting pupils' personal and social growth. The school's values and family ethos are based on developing pupils' respect for themselves and others and are very well embedded into all aspects of school life. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They listen to them and value their ideas and suggestions. As a result, an atmosphere of mutual trust has been created in which pupils grow in confidence, are eager to learn and take great pride in their work and achievements.
5. Pupils' moral development is very good and their social skills are developed very well. This is because pupils are fully involved in school life and given important responsibilities which make a significant contribution to the day-to-day running of the school. For example, older pupils are proud to be members of the 'Lets Make Friends' (LMF) team which helps to ensure that playtimes are really good times for every one. They organise games, keep a kindly eye on younger pupils and go to the aid of anyone who is upset or hurt. They act as very good role models for younger pupils.

Example of outstanding practice

Arrangements for play at lunchtime

The school has appointed an adult play leader who works with a group of older pupils called the "Let's Make Friends" (LMF) team to plan and organise a programme of lunchtime playground activities over the school week. The LMF pupils have had to apply in writing for the job that they do, have been through the process of interview and then given training by the play leader to support them in the skills that they need to work with other pupils and to use the equipment that is involved. The playground is divided into a number of zones and an activity takes place in each. Resources have been organised in boxes so that they are ready for use and easily accessible. Although the play leader is in overall charge, it is the LMF team members who take full responsibility for organising each activity and for getting out and putting away the equipment. The activities are often suggested by the pupils and are designed to appeal to a wide range of interests. They include ball games, line dancing, traditional singing and playground games, dressing up, board games and special competitions suggested and designed by the pupils themselves. The pupils cannot wait to get out to play at lunchtime and the playground is a hive of energetic and happy activity. All pupils are actively engaged, older pupils helping the younger ones. No-one is bored and there are very few arguments or disputes.

6. Pupils' cultural development is good. They develop a very good understanding of their responsibilities in the wider world as a result of taking part in events to raise money for charities. They are very respectful of their own values and traditions and they have a good level of respect for ways of life and traditions that are different from their own.
7. Spiritual development is promoted well through the many opportunities for reflection on feelings and the wonder of world about them which are provided in most subjects. In many lessons during the inspection pupils' eyes opened wide with amazement at the new things they were learning about. These included, for example, seeing a very old television set for the first time and reflecting on the hidden meanings in a Salvador Dali painting.

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| School data | 5.4% | School data | 0.7% |
| National data | 5.1% | National data | 0.4% |

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

8. The majority of parents make sure that their children attend school regularly and arrive promptly. However, a very small minority find this difficult. The school makes every effort to encourage good attendance and there is good involvement of the education welfare service when problems occur.

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White- Irish |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – other mixed background |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Exclusions | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
| 80 | 3 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |

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

9. The above exclusions were the result of the school successfully applying its well-established behaviour management procedures to deal with a particular, behaviour related problem.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides good standards of care. Links with parents and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and very good in Years 3 and 4, where some excellent teaching was also seen.
- There are very good strategies to help pupils to think for themselves and to learn the skills of independent learning.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- Assessment is not precise enough in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Planning for pupils with special educational needs relies too heavily on teachers' informal knowledge of their pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection 30 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (3) | 6 (20) | 19 (64) | 3 (10) | 1 (3) | 0 | 0 |

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

10. Teaching and learning in English, mathematics, science, history, music and physical education are good overall. Teachers make very good use of all the time that is available in lessons. Pupils are very well managed, there are high expectations of what pupils should be able to do for themselves and tasks are set up to encourage the development of independent learning. When weaknesses occur, it is because there is not enough planning for the use of ICT in other subjects. Teaching and learning in ICT are judged to be satisfactory rather than good because of this and because pupils do not readily turn to it to support their learning in other subjects. In the one lesson that was judged to be unsatisfactory it was because weaknesses in planning led to a lack of clarity in what pupils were supposed to be learning. As a result they did not achieve as much as they should have in the lesson.
11. In very good or excellent lessons pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to draw on previous knowledge in order to make sense of new ideas. As a result they are prepared to take risks and tackle work at a higher than expected level and they learn very well.

Example of outstanding practice

A literacy lesson focusing on information texts with a mixed age class of Year 3 and 4 pupils

A five minute session of 'brain gym' in which pupils carried out a range of movements designed to improve their concentration and their coordination preceded the lesson. This contributed to the highly effective climate for learning that was prevalent in the classroom because pupils felt 'warmed up', alert and ready for work. The teacher ensured that pupils had a clear view of what they were going to learn and why it was important in the development of their literacy skills. She used highly skilled open-ended questioning to develop pupils' learning from what they already knew to new understanding. Her use of practical and visual methods to support her explanations and demonstrations ensured that all the pupils had access to learning. She encouraged them to take risks and to try out their new ideas and look upon mistakes as opportunities for new learning. She modelled the learning process to show that it was not always easy and encouraged the pupils to reflect on their answers and to take time to think through their ideas. The children responded extremely well to this and their concentration was almost tangible as they all strived to do their best, working at the edge of their capabilities.

12. The quality and range of assessments are satisfactory overall. They are used well to track pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and in other subjects assessment indicates broadly what pupils have achieved. However, this information is not precise enough to inform planning for the different ages and capabilities and this often results in most pupils in the same class doing similar work in subjects other than English and mathematics. Tracking and assessment information is used well to set targets for writing. However, individual targets are not set in reading, mathematics and science and so pupils do not always know what is expected of them in these subjects.
13. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Although pupils receive good individual day-to-day support from teachers and the teaching assistants, there are no specific targets for these pupils and no individual education plans to support their achievement over the longer term.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**, with good opportunities for enrichment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and it is enriched by a good range of additional activities.
- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs relies too much on informal methods of identifying their needs.
- The new hall is an excellent facility, especially for physical education, but outside provision for the reception age pupils is unsatisfactory and there are some weaknesses in ICT resources.
- Cross-curricular links are not embedded in planning.

Commentary

14. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements, including those for religious education and personal, social and health education and citizenship. The balance has improved since the previous inspection and more time is now given to literacy, numeracy and religious education, without detriment to any other subjects. Pupils are well prepared generally for the next stage in their education. They receive the best curricular experiences where planning takes into account their different needs and capabilities, for example in English

and mathematics. However, pupils with special needs do not always receive an appropriate curriculum due to weaknesses in assessment and a consequent lack of information to inform planning. As a result, their needs are not always fully met and they achieve only satisfactorily. There are very effective arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship.

15. Activities at the end of the school day, together with the excellent lunchtime arrangements, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. There are very good opportunities for sport and pupils benefit from the opportunities to compete with other schools. A wide range of visits and visitors is used very well to enrich the curriculum and make learning interesting. The use of staff expertise, for example in music, is having a positive effect on improving standards.
16. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall but there are some significant strengths and a weakness. The new hall and library area are an excellent facility and are already having a positive impact on teaching and learning, especially in physical education and music. The library is having a positive impact on reading and research skills. The outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage is too small and consequently they do not have the daily opportunities that they need to explore on a larger scale than is possible indoors. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses in ICT provision, for example, many machines are old and slow and new programmes will not run on them. They are not networked and there are not enough computers in classroom. This contributes to the limited use that is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
17. There is very good use of themed weeks or days, which are well planned to link subjects together and to make learning relevant for the pupils. However, there are many missed opportunities to link subjects together to help pupils to consolidate what they have learned in one subject by applying it in another. ICT is a good example of this.

Care, guidance and support

Overall judgement

The school has **good** arrangements for looking after pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Its monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is satisfactory. There are very good arrangements for involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors and all staff pay good attention to the care and welfare of individual pupils.
- The school depends too much on informal methods of monitoring pupils' progress.
- The school really values pupils' ideas and opinions about ways of making it a better place in which they can learn and play.
- There are very good arrangements for bringing new pupils into school.

Commentary

18. Lapford School is a family-centred community which has the interests of each and every one of its pupils at heart. There is good first aid care and there are regular health and safety inspections of the whole site. Good risk assessment procedures are in place. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection arrangements. All other staff is properly briefed and there are good links with all the appropriate local agencies.
19. Lapford is a small school in which pupils' personal and educational well-being is a priority for all staff. The teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils very well and this gives them a good informal understanding of their achievements and development. However, the lack of systematic procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development, as well as their achievements in subjects other than English and mathematics, leads to the particular needs of some pupils, especially those who have special educational needs, not always being met.
20. Processes for seeking pupils' views and involving them in all aspects of school life are very effective in helping pupils to feel secure and comfortable in their surroundings and in giving them the confidence to raise issues that are of concern to them. The headteacher, staff and governors value pupils' judgements and use the school council and day-to-day informal contact very well to gather information and, where appropriate, act upon it. The pupils were involved in the interviewing process for the appointment of the headteacher, for example, and recent changes to the playground's quiet area and lunchtime queuing arrangements are other examples of the way that pupils exercise their influence.
21. There are very good arrangements for bringing new pupils, parents and carers into Lapford. There are close links with the on-site pre-school group and briefing and taster sessions. There is careful attention to families and pupils' particular needs. Whatever their ages, those who arrive during the school year are given similar support.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have every confidence in the ways that the school is helping their children to learn and mature.
- There are very good arrangements for keeping parents informed of their children's progress and for involving them in their children's learning.
- The Parent Teacher Association makes a significant social and financial contribution to the school.
- Pupils' learning and social development benefit from the number and variety of ways in which the school is involved with other schools, the village and wider communities.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their transfer to secondary schools.
- There is insufficient involvement of parents in reviews of the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

22. Parents really approve of Lapford School. They are confident that the headteacher, staff and governors are helping their children to learn, grow up and play in a good school, which has a caring and family-centred environment.
23. Arrangements for keeping parents informed of their children's progress are good. There are consultation meetings, which are very well attended, and a comprehensive annual report which includes targets for improvement. Formal documents such as the prospectus and governors' annual report are very good. A steady stream of notices and letters helps to keep parents in touch with what is happening in school. Regular informative newsletters are sent out weekly. There is an 'open door' policy with the headteacher making herself available to parents whenever she possibly can.

24. Lapford School is a close, family-centred community so therefore parents' ideas and suggestions about what is best for their children constantly filter into the school through day-to-day informal contact, as well as the more formal school meetings. Governors are known to parents and go out of their way to inform, listen, discuss and consult with them.
25. Parents are very supportive. They listen to their children's reading and encourage homework. A group of new parents is enthusiastically learning, through a course run by the local college, about their children's education. This course has been very well received by the parents involved and has resulted in them setting up a group to provide assistance in classrooms. A small group comes regularly into school to help in and around school and run after-school clubs. School productions and events are packed out and 'parent power' days produce teams of volunteers who are delighted to help smarten up the school. The very successful Parent Teacher Association, through a number of fund raising and social events, contributes to the quality of school life and makes a valuable contribution to the purchase of learning resources.
26. The school is very closely involved in Lapford village. Through the Lapford Looking Forward project it is contributing to community plans for the future. The village and wider community sponsor school activities and provide practical help. Local involvement and support during the construction of the excellent new sports hall, even though its use is restricted to strictly educational activities, is an excellent example of the community's generosity.
27. The Academic Council provides very good links with local primary schools and the secondary schools which directly benefit pupils' learning across the curriculum. A comprehensive programme, which starts in Year 5, of visits and advice sessions for pupils and parents ensures that all of Lapford's Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school. Everyone's needs and anxieties are attended to.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall.

The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The management of the school is **satisfactory** overall. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision, a sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school.
- The governing body is well informed, very supportive and committed to school improvement.
- Although the management of the school is judged to be satisfactory overall because the roles of the deputy head and subject leaders are under-developed, there are some good features which have been effective in raising standards.
- Financial control and administration are very efficient, but current budgetary constraints are a barrier to improvement.

Commentary

28. The leadership and management of the school are similar to the time of the last inspection. The school benefits from the strong and principled leadership of the new headteacher, who is a highly

skilled teacher in her own right and very committed to the school and its community. She has a very clear vision for the school and has high expectations for the achievement and behaviour of pupils. This has been effectively shared with all staff and governors and is evident in the clear sense of educational purpose and direction of the school's work and its good standards and achievement.

29. The governing body has considerable strength. Governors are highly committed to the school and the community and are an active driving force for improvement. An example of this is their role in providing the school with an excellent new sports hall. Individual governors use their expertise very well for the benefit of the school and many are actively involved in many aspects of the school's life, for example in running after-school clubs.
30. The deputy headteacher and subject leaders have produced effective action plans for their subjects and set a good example by the quality of their own teaching. Their leadership and management are judged to be satisfactory rather than good because they do not have the time they need for all their leadership and management tasks, for example monitoring and evaluation. In addition, their roles are not sufficiently defined and job descriptions are out of date. The school improvement plan is good and ensures that raising standards is at the heart of the school's work.
31. There is a good policy for special educational needs, but the aims are not implemented, especially with regard to the provision of individual education plans. The school is committed to inclusion and pupils with special needs make at least satisfactory progress due to the hard work of teachers and teaching assistants. However, in some cases, they are working without sufficient information on the nature of the special need and without clear, short-term targets. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory rather than good because of this.
32. Finance is very efficiently managed and administered and the principles of best value are applied well in regard to placing contracts and purchasing goods. The funds available to the school, including monies for special needs and additional government grants, are targeted to support the school's overall aims of providing the best education that it can for its pupils. However, the governors are keenly aware of the fact that the budget is now stretched to the limit and that the current financial constraints have slowed down the school's improvement efforts. They are actively considering a number of options to resolve the situation.
33. Notwithstanding the financial difficulties referred to above, the school is still well placed for future improvement. This is because of the strong vision and purpose of the headteacher, good teaching, a forward looking governing body, supportive parents and the very good attitudes of pupils. It gives good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 277,714 | Balance from previous year | 22,666 |
| Total expenditure | 291,907 | Balance carried forward to the next | 8,473 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,138 | | |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Provision is **good** overall and most children are well prepared for Year 1 of the statutory curriculum because of the good teaching they receive. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, except for in physical development where they have improved. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and soundly based on the national guidance recommended for young children to ensure that all the areas of learning are fully covered through a range of well-planned, practical activities. Visits to places of interest and visits from local people are used very well to help children to learn. Although resources are satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses in the provision of materials and equipment to promote learning through play and the area allocated for outdoor play is too small. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory overall. Where there are weaknesses, they are in the arrangements for assessing children who have special educational needs. The teacher has a good understanding of their needs as a result of the information received from the pre-school playgroup and from her own good observations. However, there are no formal procedures in place to set specific targets based on their needs and there are no individual education plans. Although they receive good support from the teaching assistants and are fully involved in all activities, the achievement of special educational needs children is satisfactory rather than good because of these weaknesses in assessment arrangements. The very good links with parents, which include a very useful course on how they can support their children's learning at home, are a significant factor in pupils' good achievement in the reception class.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths

- Very good induction procedures ensure that children enjoy learning and feel secure and confident from an early stage.
- There are good opportunities for children to learn how to work together and to take responsibility.
- The very good support given by older pupils in the school makes an important contribution to the personal and social growth of the children in the reception class.

Commentary

35. Children achieve well in their personal and social development and standards are above average by the end of the reception year. This is a result of good teaching and a good scheme of work to develop children's personal and social skills. The very good links that the school has with parents contribute very well to the support that they are able to give to their children in this aspect of their development.
36. Teaching and learning are good. Classroom routines are carefully explained to the children when they start school and they settle quickly into school life because they know exactly what is expected of them. They are helped to feel secure by the positive and supportive response they receive from the teacher and the teaching assistants. Formal and informal

activities are presented to the children in ways that engage their interest and consequently they develop positive attitudes to learning. There are clear procedures to help children to work independently and, as a result, they begin to make sensible decisions and choices about the activities they take part in and the resources they will use. Many of the activities that are provided are designed to encourage children to work together and consequently they develop a growing awareness of the needs and feelings of others. They are taught how to listen carefully to each other and to take turns in conversation, which helps to develop their understanding of how to use speech for social purposes. The school's procedures for linking older children to younger ones, through paired reading and through the 'Lets Make Friends', system ensure that the children in the reception class always have someone to turn to if they are feeling lonely in the playground. They enjoy playtimes, are fully involved in lunch-time activities and learn from the very good role models set by the older pupils.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The early skills of reading and writing are taught well.
- There are good strategies to promote children's interest in books.
- There are not enough resources to promote the imaginative use of language through play.

Commentary

37. When children enter the school standards of communication, language and literacy are a little below average. Standards are average by the end of the reception year. This represents good achievement in relation to their starting points on entry. The children are actively encouraged to look at books, to recount the stories and to make their own attempts at writing. There is good attention to teaching letter sounds. As a result, most can read books with simple texts and compose and write down, with help, short, simple statements and sequences of ideas by the end of the reception year. Higher-attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three-letter words. Children with special educational needs are given individual attention from the teaching assistant and this ensures that they make satisfactory progress.
38. Teaching and learning are good. The children enjoy sharing stories and poems with their teacher because of the lively and interesting ways in which they are presented. Follow-up activities, which include acting out the main events of the story, extend their enjoyment and contribute to the children's understanding of the characters and sequence of story lines. The teacher and teaching assistants make good use of illustrations in books to help the children find deeper meaning in the stories that they hear. The higher-attaining children enjoy looking at books, comment on the illustrations, recognise letters of the alphabet and associate them with the sounds that they make. This enables them to read words in simple texts by the end of the reception year. The school celebrates 'World Book Day' and children's understanding of authors and literature is further extended by enjoyable opportunities for them to dress up as their favourite story book character and to listen to story tellers. Opportunities for the children to take books home to read with their parents also make a significant contribution to children's learning and their love of literature.

39. The children enjoy making up their own imaginative stories when writing with their teacher, when working independently in the role-play area and when using small toys which represent the real world. However, there are limited resources with which to extend these aspects of their language and literacy work and these limit opportunities for the children to acquire new words to name and describe the things they see or hear about.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to solve problems and to use their knowledge of number in practical activities.
- There are limited resources to promote children's mathematical development through outdoor play.

Commentary

40. When children enter the school standards of mathematics are similar to those expected for children of a similar age. Standards are above average by the end of the reception year. This represents good achievement in relation to their starting points on entry.
41. Teaching and learning are good. There is a wide range of opportunities for children to count in different ways. Children are taught how to write numbers correctly and this helps them to develop the skills that they need to record their own calculations. Higher-attaining children begin to make up their own 'sums' using number cards, addition and equal signs. The children successfully learn to identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles and triangles and, by handling three-dimensional mathematical blocks, acquire a growing awareness of some of the properties of these shapes. Singing games, practical activities and real life opportunities are used well to help the children to extend their number skills through problem solving. For example, the children were fully involved in running a stall at the school's 'Summer Fair' and, as a precursor to this, they ran their own class fair complete with a 'Bank', where they could withdraw up to 20p, and stalls which charged participants 5p a go. Role play in the class 'shoe shop' has provided opportunities for children to develop their understanding of money and an understanding of size. The children have made bread, which has extended their early awareness of measure.
42. The large hall is used well for the children to explore ideas of space, direction and speed on a large scale. However, the outdoor play area is far too small for this purpose and this limits the development of pupils' achievement in these aspects of mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's very good links with the local community make an effective contribution to children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- The outdoor area is not large enough to give the children the opportunities they need to explore on a large scale.

Commentary

43. Children's achievement is satisfactory and standards are average by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The children are given a satisfactory range of opportunities to explore the world around them using all their senses. Visits to the local area are used well to develop their understanding of the place where they live. For example, they have taken photographs and can name some of the significant buildings in the village. They have also discussed what they do and don't like about the village and what they would like to see improved, as part of a whole community project on the future of Lapford. A visit from a member of the local community, who brought with him photographs, costumes and artefacts from Morocco, was effective in developing a growing awareness of ways of life that are different from their own.
44. The children gain a satisfactory awareness of the natural and material world as a result of practical activities that are provided both indoors and outside. For example, they have made bread and expressed amazement at how much the dough 'grew' when yeast was added. When working outside in the playground they have released their own 'spinners' and observed their different movements when carried by the wind. They have planted beans, with the support of older pupils, and watched them grow. The basic skills of ICT are taught well and children are quite confident in controlling images on the screen.
45. The outdoor area attached to the reception classroom is too small and this limits opportunities for the children to explore the environment for themselves and so opportunities are missed to build on children's natural curiosity and promote achievement at higher levels. Standards are average and achievement satisfactory rather than good because of this.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills.
- The school hall is used very well to promote pupils' physical development.
- Activities at lunchtime make a significant contribution to children's physical development.
- Although the curriculum for physical development is good overall, the outdoor area limits opportunities for pupils to initiate their own physical activities.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning for physical development are good overall and result in good achievement. Standards are above average by the end of the reception year. There are good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when painting, drawing and cutting. They are taught how to use paint and hold tools such as brushes, pencils and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning.
47. Very good use is made of the large hall for physical education and children learn to move safely with control and co-ordination and they develop a sound awareness of their own space and that of others. The very good opportunities to dance and to play with small games equipment alongside older pupils in the school at lunchtime make a significant contribution to the development of their physical control and coordination. However, the small size of the outdoor area and the lack of equipment mean that children do not have the opportunities that they need to explore their physical movements for themselves on a larger scale than is possible indoors, for example by controlling wheeled vehicles or climbing on large apparatus. This limits the development of some aspects of their co-ordination and their awareness of their own space in relation to that of others.

Creative development

48. One satisfactory music lesson was seen, but no direct teaching of other elements of this area of learning were seen during the inspection and so there is not enough evidence to form an overall judgement about provision. However, the subject was sampled and the evidence suggests that there are sufficient opportunities for children to develop their creative ideas when singing, painting, role-playing and listening to music. However, there are limited resources for extending children's imaginative ideas when using the role-play and small representations of the real world

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 3 and 4, where excellent teaching also occurs.

- There are no formal procedures for setting specific targets for pupils with special educational needs.
- Very good links with other schools contribute to curriculum development in English.
- The subject leader carries out many aspects of her role well, but she does not have the time she needs to monitor and evaluate the subject.

Commentary

49. The findings of the inspection are that most pupils achieve well and standards in reading and writing are above average in Years 2 and 6. They have improved since the last inspection and more pupils are now attaining at the higher levels. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well. Most pupils become competent readers because of the emphasis that is placed on reading from an early stage. Pupils are taught the skills they need to work out unfamiliar words and are heard to read regularly, both in groups and individually. This ensures that individual progress is monitored and any difficulties are quickly dealt with. Very well planned literacy sessions are effective in teaching pupils how books work and, in the best lessons, highly skilled questions are very effective in deepening pupils' understanding through the analysis and evaluation of text. Many parents regularly hear their children read at home and this makes a significant contribution to achievement. Pupils have the skills they need to use information books well and these contribute to their knowledge and understanding in other subjects of the curriculum. The well organised school library is run by the older children, thus contributing to their personal and social skills as well as helping them to understand how libraries work. Pupils make competent use of ICT to find information in the course of homework; however, the school computers are not well used for independent research and this limits the scope of their enquiries.
50. Pupils learn to write for an increasing range of purposes as they move through the school. Higher-attaining pupils produce work of good quality because of the very good attention that teachers give to helping them understand and apply the techniques and strategies that authors use to create different effects. Weaknesses in written vocabulary and the use of complex sentences prevent lower attaining pupils from achieving at the higher levels. Pupils' spelling and handwriting are satisfactory. Pupils throughout the school make good use of their writing skills to support their work in other subjects.
51. The school benefits from the very good links that it has with other schools that belong to the local 'Academic Council'. For example, there is centrally funded joint training for aspects of literacy. A good example is a forthcoming project which is aimed at developing speaking and listening through links with reading and writing. This is an area that the school has identified in its own improvement plans as in need of development.
52. Assessment is satisfactory overall. End of year tests are used well to set group targets for writing. Written work is checked each term, areas for improvement are identified and targets for improvement are identified for each group of pupils. Where weaknesses occur, they are in the precision and use of assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs. Although these pupils receive good individual support from teaching assistants and they are also involved in effective programmes such as 'Reading Recovery', the school does not set specific individualised targets for these pupils and it does not make use of individual education plans. This limits the school's ability to check how pupils are getting on and to plan precisely for the next steps in learning. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory rather than good because of this.

53. The leadership and management of the subject leader are satisfactory overall and good in many aspects of her work. She analyses annual test results and uses this information to identify weaknesses and plan for improvements. Regular opportunities to look at pupils' writing alongside other staff help her to keep an overview of standards. However, she does not have a job description for her role and does not have the time she needs to monitor teaching and learning by observing lessons.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Pupils make good use of their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. A good example of this is in history where pupils have used their skills well in a research project about the village of Lapford, which has resulted in them having a good overall knowledge of the history of the local area.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics.
- Teaching and learning are good and there is good focus on using and applying mathematics.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.
- Although the leadership and management of the subject are broadly satisfactory, there are weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation.

Commentary

55. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards above those expected for their age. This represents good achievement overall in relation to pupils' starting points on entry to the school and is an improvement on the findings of the previous report. Pupils like mathematics because they are helped to understand how it can be useful to them in their everyday lives.
56. The very good relationships between teachers and their pupils contribute to pupils' positive attitudes to mathematics and to the good standards that are achieved. Pupils are well managed and well motivated. They display enthusiasm and very good attitudes and behaviour. There is good emphasis on teaching the basic skills of numeracy, with a particular focus on the application of these skills in a wide range of situations. Pupils enjoy setting their own mathematical challenges; for example, they set up competitions such as 'guess the weight of the pumpkin' and 'estimate how many seeds in a sunflower' to raise money for charity. They also make use of their mathematical knowledge when organising stalls at the school's summer fete. Thorough planning with clear learning objectives and different challenges for pupils of different age and ability ensure that most pupils work at the edge of their capabilities. Well targeted questioning in the brisk whole class introductions ensures that all pupils are involved. Teachers skilfully develop their main teaching points through a series of well structured tasks. Their good subject knowledge enables them to give clear explanations and demonstrations which successfully extend pupils' understanding. The good emphasis on the correct mathematical vocabulary and good opportunities for pupils to talk through their mathematical ideas also make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Although pupils learn how to use ICT applications for mathematics, such as the compilation of graphs and spreadsheets, they make little use of these skills in the course of their everyday work in mathematics, which prevents them from deepening their understanding of these aspects of mathematics.
57. For the most part, pupils with special educational needs are given good support from the teacher and teaching assistants. However, the lack of specific learning targets and individual education plans means that it is difficult to monitor progress and accurately match work to ability. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is judged to be satisfactory rather than good because of this. Good use is made of discussion in pairs to solve problems, making a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently good. Assessment is satisfactory overall. End of unit tests are used to see how well pupils have learned. The results are used for future planning, but not to set individual targets. As a result

opportunities are missed to help pupils understand what they have to do in order to reach higher standards.

58. The subject co-ordinator has formulated a development plan for numeracy and successfully improved the school's results through improvements in pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics. There is no job description to clarify the co-ordinator's role, however, and he does not have enough time to gain a whole school overview of the subject by monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning through observing lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There are many good examples of mathematics being used in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils use their measuring skills when performing experiments and their data handling skills when presenting their results. This contributes to pupils' good understanding of how numbers work and how they can be used in real life situations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average throughout the school and pupils have very good attitudes to their work in science.
- Standards in national tests have been sustained because good attention is given to scientific enquiry.
- Assessment is not sufficiently precise to inform planning for pupils' different needs in mixed age classes.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning.
- The role of the co-ordinator is under-developed.

Commentary

60. Attainment is above average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well. Thorough analysis of test results indicated good factual knowledge, but less proficiency in planning and carrying out experiments. This information was used well and a greater emphasis was placed on scientific enquiry. Pupils enjoy their work in science because they are actively involved in practical investigations and encouraged to ask and follow up their own scientific questions. Older pupils now have a good understanding of how to plan a fair test, from deciding what to do and predicting the outcomes right through to recording results and drawing conclusions. Pupils often work in mixed ability groups and additional support is given to pupils with special educational needs. However, sometimes the work is not suited to their ability because of the lack of individual education plans for these pupils and their achievement is satisfactory rather than good because of this. Assessment is satisfactory in that it gives a broad indication of what pupils have achieved. However, it is not in sufficient detail to monitor the progress of individual pupils and not enough use is made of assessment to set targets and inform planning for pupils' differing needs in mixed age classes. The achievement of some lower attaining pupils is satisfactory rather than good because of this.
61. Teaching and learning in science are good across the school. Some very good subject knowledge enables teachers to present information in an interesting way that captures pupils' imagination. Pupils then work enthusiastically and show very good attitudes, enabling them to learn well. For example, Year 3/4 pupils were enthused about light sources and eagerly set about finding out which torch provided the strongest light, thus learning well about fair testing. The discussions they had about what procedures to follow contributed well to their speaking and listening and their personal and social development. Opportunities are missed to make use of pupils' ICT skills when recording and reporting their results, for example by using data handling programs or a digital camera. This limits the speed and accuracy of their observations. Literacy skills are used well in pupils' written work and numeracy skills used well when measuring and recording data.

62. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable about the subject and has produced a development plan that includes monitoring the implementation of the curriculum but, as yet, a variety of circumstances and a lack of time have meant that very little has been done in this area. There is a lack of a job description to clarify the work of the co-ordinator and insufficient time for monitoring and evaluation work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- The skills of ICT are systematically taught.
- Not enough use is made of computers to support work in other subjects.
- ICT resources are not fully up to date.
- Assessment is not as precise as it should be.
- The role of the subject leader in monitoring and evaluating the subject is not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

63. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who are higher attaining is also satisfactory.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although good teaching was seen during the inspection. All teachers have received effective training to support their work with pupils and all have the confidence and expertise to teach basic computer skills well. The headteacher's expertise and confidence in the subject was evident in a very good lesson where the high expectations that she has of her pupils resulted in them increasing their understanding of how to use ICT in multi-media presentations. The pupils were confidently working at well above average levels, tackling similar work to that being completed in Years 5 and 6. The ICT technician gives very good technical support during lessons and pupils benefit from her clear explanations at an individual and whole-class level.
65. Teachers plan work in line with national guidance and so that pupils tackle progressively more difficult work as they move through the school. Their achievement over time is satisfactory rather than good because opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects of the curriculum are not systematically built into curriculum planning. Weaknesses in resources are a factor in this. Although the computer suite enables the basic skills to be effectively taught, the computers are slow and will not always accept the more up-to-date programs that are available. They are not networked and there are not enough computers in classrooms. Teachers do not yet have access to some of the more up-to-date equipment that is available for classroom use, such as interactive whiteboards. In addition, assessment is not precise enough and insufficient use is made of it to plan for pupils' differing needs in mixed age classes.
66. Overall, the subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader has a satisfactory overview of how the subject is being covered and she has well established plans to develop resources and promote greater use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. However, her role in monitoring standards and achievement is underdeveloped.
67. The school makes good use of the space available to provide a satisfactorily equipped computer suite. It is regularly used for whole class teaching. Although many pupils have computers at home and make good use of them for homework, not enough use is made

of the computers in school for independent study. This limits pupils' achievement in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Whilst the use of ICT across the curriculum is broadly satisfactory, there are important weaknesses. Pupils make satisfactory use of their word processing and research skills to support their work in English, history and geography. This helps them to consolidate their understanding of word processing and the use of the Internet. There is also evidence of spreadsheet work in mathematics and science. However, pupils make little independent use of the computers in the classroom or the ICT suite and do not turn readily to ICT to support their work in other subjects. There are weaknesses in the use of control equipment in design and technology, sensor technology in science and compositional programs in music. These limit standards and achievement in the subject.

HUMANITIES

69. History was inspected in full and is reported on below. No report is made on **geography** because no lessons were seen and there is insufficient first hand evidence to make judgements.

Religious education

70. No lessons were seen in religious education and so it was not possible to make firm judgements on provision, teaching and learning. The subject was sampled by looking at examples of work from pupils of all ages and abilities and by talking with pupils. Better planning and the increased time given to religious education are good improvements since the last inspection.

71. Planning indicates appropriate coverage of the locally agreed syllabus and one hour per week is devoted to the subject. Assessment is developing, but is not yet embedded in planning. Scrutiny of books indicates a good balance between given facts and pupils' own research. There is some use of ICT for research purposes, but there has not been enough development in this area. Discussion with pupils indicates a sound awareness of religions other than Christianity. This has been helped by visits to the local church and a Hindu temple and by visitors such as the local clergy coming into the school. Work in the subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are insufficient artefacts to help bring the subject to life, although good use is made of the library loan service. Subject leadership is satisfactory, although there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they make it interesting for pupils.
- There is a good focus on developing pupils' skills of historical enquiry.
- Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough.
- The subject leader does not have enough time to monitor and evaluate standards, teaching and learning.

Commentary

72. All pupils achieve well and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, attain above average standards. This is similar to the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire a good understanding of the lifestyles of people in the past. For example, they know that home life has changed over time by looking at original artefacts such as carpet sweepers, televisions and typewriters from the past and comparing them with the equivalent machines and technology we use today. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good understanding of significant people from the past, such as Henry VIII. They also gain a good understanding of how people such as the Ancient Egyptians lived.
73. Teaching and learning are good. Involvement in community projects such as looking at the history of Lapford and considering its future are used well to bring the subject alive for the pupils. Such strategies also make a very good contribution to an understanding of citizenship. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are very good and teachers can engage in open discussion and debate secure in the knowledge that pupils will respect each other's views. This has a positive impact on the achievement of good standards. There is good attention to historical enquiry. For example, in a good Year 1/2 lesson, pupils were encouraged to ask their own questions and to make their own observations when comparing artefacts of the 1950s to those used today. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' reasoning skills are developed well as they are challenged to use pictures and artefacts to find evidence of how the ancient Egyptians lived and then to draw some conclusions from what they observe. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have carried out their own research on buildings in Lapford, such as the church or their own homes. In doing so they used documentary evidence, old photographs and maps. They also devised their own questionnaires for use with local residents.
74. Overall the subject is satisfactorily led and managed. This ensures that the quality of the curriculum that is offered to pupils is maintained. However, the subject leader does not have any additional time for the development of the subject and her role in monitoring teaching, learning and standards is underdeveloped. This limits her capacity to move the subject forward. Although the open-ended nature of many of the tasks in history lessons enables pupils to have access to learning on a range of different levels, assessment in the subject is not precise enough to give the teachers the information they need to plan precisely for pupils' different needs and so the achievement of some pupils, particularly those who are lower attaining, is satisfactory rather than good.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. Music and physical education were inspected in full and are reported on below. Only one lesson was seen in art and design and it was not possible to make firm judgements on provision from this. The subject was sampled by looking at examples of work, including painting, drawings and three-dimensional work, from pupils of all ages and abilities. No report is made on design and technology because no lessons were seen and there is insufficient firsthand evidence to make judgements.
76. Standards of work seen **in art and design** were above average and it is clear from these and from the lesson seen that skills and techniques are taught well. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils have a good range of experiences in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, craft and design work and use a good variety of materials and tools. They also draw on a range of different artistic traditions and this makes a substantial contribution to pupils' cultural development. Teachers ensure pupils take time to carry out

and evaluate their work, often over a series of lessons. There is good attention given to the planning stage of art and design and pupils are encouraged to use sketchbooks to explore and record their ideas. The subject leader is very knowledgeable about this area of the curriculum and sets a very good example by the quality of her teaching. Her role in monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning is under-developed, however.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader has a good level of musical expertise and consequently standards are improving.
- Resources, including a new room, have been substantially improved but there are not enough resources to support the use of ICT in music.
- There are no instrumental lessons or extra-curricular groups.

Commentary

77. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, so a judgement on standards is not possible for this age group. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are average and achievement is good overall. A strength is compositional work in Years 5 and 6.
78. Teaching and learning are good. The headteacher has an expertise in the subject and, as a musician, is co-ordinating the subject well and teaching all pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teaching and learning are good and pupils are catching up on work they have missed in the past, but this has not yet had time to have a full impact on overall standards. The new scheme of work that is being introduced is ensuring that those pupils cover the full range of musical activities. This is having a positive impact on their enthusiasm for the subject and their learning. There is very little assessment at present, although the intentions are for this to follow the introduction of the new scheme.
79. There is now a new library area where music lessons are taken and a substantial amount of money has been spent on improving the number and quality of musical instruments. This, together with good teaching, is enabling pupils to have plenty of opportunities to use the instruments. Particularly good work was observed with Year 5 and 6 pupils using the instruments to compose music to represent sun, wind and rain. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved and included in the lessons. Tape recorders and cameras are used well for recording purposes, but there is a lack of ICT resources such as compositional programs to support pupils' work in music.
80. Activities such as Africa Week provide good opportunities for appreciation of music from other cultures, and create good links between subjects. There are no extra opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments or to sing or play together in groups. Consequently opportunities are missed to raise standards by developing individual talents and widening pupils' musical experience.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6.
- The school governors have played a significant role in the development of the excellent new hall which has enhanced the school's provision for physical education.
- The school's very good links with other schools together with after-school activities make a significant contribution to teaching and curriculum development.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator is not clearly defined.

Commentary

81. Standards are above average and pupils are achieving well. This is largely as a result of the new facilities and training for teachers, which have both had a positive effect on teaching and learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress.
82. At the time of the last inspection, the lack of a hall was posing problems for full coverage of the National Curriculum. The new hall is an excellent facility and is being used very well by teachers to ensure that all requirements are met. In addition to this, new equipment is also enabling pupils to have plenty of activity in their lessons, for example by every pupil being able to use a bat and ball in games lessons. More climbing apparatus is required, but this is in hand. Swimming takes place at a local pool in the spring term and nearly all Year 6 pupils are able to swim 25 metres when they leave the school.
83. Teaching and learning are good. The Primary Link Sports Programme is making a significant contribution to this and proving very beneficial for the curriculum as a whole. In particular, teaching ensures that pupils are given plenty of opportunity to practise their skills, for example in Year 1/2 games lessons by hitting balls against the hall walls. Ongoing coaching encourages the pupils to refine and improve their movements. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the lessons. The Programme is also providing opportunities for pupils to participate in sports with and against other schools, such as the Athletic Challenge and Dance Festival where a large number of pupils from local primary schools performed together. Further curriculum enhancement occurs through after-school clubs where teachers, parents and coaches help pupils to take their skills to a higher level. The 'Let's Make Friends' initiative is very successful in encouraging pupils to take part in a variety of activities at lunchtimes. All this is playing a major part in pupils' physical development and also makes an important contribution to their social and moral growth. Assessment for transfer to secondary school is being trialed and is to be developed throughout the school.
84. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Although the subject leader has done a good job in developing links with other schools and exploiting the advantages of the new school hall to improve standards and achievement in physical education, there is no job description to clarify the role and no time to support monitoring and evaluation in the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the curriculum, so no judgement about overall provision is made. However, teaching in this lesson was good and pupils achieved well. The curriculum that is provided for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good and the ethos of the school makes a very strong contribution to the subject.

86. Pupils are being provided with a number of activities and situations to help them to learn to play an active role as citizens. They know about rules and their rights and responsibilities through the school's code of conduct. They appreciate democracy through their elections for the school council and they attend a memorial service to lay a wreath at the local war memorial. In literacy, they explore how the media present information and write persuasive texts themselves. They look at topical issues in the locality and Lapford Week enabled them to make suggestions as to how they would like their locality to develop. They have a good knowledge of religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom. The most impressive in the list of opportunities for pupils is the fact that a group of them put questions to the headteacher candidates at the interviews earlier this year.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| Inspection judgement | Grade |
|---|----------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 4 |
| 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 (ethos) | 2 |
| Attendance | 4 |
| Attitudes | 2 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 2 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 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).