

INSPECTION REPORT

LITTLEPORT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Littleport, Ely

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110637

Headteacher: Mrs J H Willson

Lead inspector: Mr N F Sherman

Dates of inspection: 10-14 January 2005

Inspection number: 267224

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: 5 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 382

School address: Parsons Lane
Littleport
Ely
Cambridgeshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr P Hodson
governors:

Date of previous 17 May 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Littleport, some 7 miles from Ely in Cambridgeshire. The school gained the *Investors in People* award in 2003 and the *Basic Skills Quality Mark* in 2002. The number of pupils attending the school is 382, which is above average in size. Plans are well established for the school to move into a new building in 2006. The level of pupil mobility¹ in some year groups is quite high. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is low and most pupils are of White British ethnic origin. A few pupils are members of the Travelling community. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 11 per cent, although this is not a true reflection of the socioeconomic factors that underpin the school community. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with a statement of special educational need, is above the national average. The nature of special educational need covers social and behavioural, communication problems and other general learning difficulties. The attainment of children when they start school varies each year and in some years it is well below average. Overall, it is below average.

¹ Mobility refers to pupils who join the school after the usual time of admission to the Reception year or who leave before the end of Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16493	N Sherman	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Art and design Design and technology.
11414	A Bennett	Lay inspector	
22147	A Holland	Team inspector	Science Music History Geography Foundation Stage.
20714	M Carter	Team inspector	Special educational needs Information and communication technology Physical education.
14732	E Korn	Team inspector	English Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education, and there are a number of notable strengths. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Attainment is strongest in mathematics where pupils reach standards that are average by Year 6. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The management of the school is good and the leadership of the school, which is satisfactory overall, has a secure grasp of the issues that need to be tackled in order to raise pupils' achievement still further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- from a low starting point, pupils achieve well in English in Years 1 and 2 and in mathematics across the school;
- the teaching of English in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics throughout the school is good;
- achievement in religious education is too low in Years 3 to 6;
- the school is highly effective in promoting links with parents and the wider community;
- there is effective management of the school on a day-to-day basis;
- arrangements to introduce pupils to the school are excellent and they continue to receive a high standard of care as they move through the school;
- outside play features too infrequently in the everyday learning for children in the Foundation Stage;
- pupils have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology in day-to-day lessons;
- attendance is below average;
- the curriculum is well planned and suitably enriched by an interesting range of visits and visitors to the school;
- pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and much improved since the previous inspection;
- assessment procedures are good.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably and pupils now reach standards as expected for seven and 11-year-olds. The key issue relating to assessment has been successfully tackled and the planning of learning to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are achieving to the best of their ability is now more effective. The school is sufficiently placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	C	E	D
mathematics	E	D	D	C
science	E	C	D	C

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.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The above table shows that in the 2004 National Curriculum tests pupils' attainment in Year 6 was well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools based on how well pupils performed in national tests when they were in Year 2, attainment was below the average of similar schools in English and average in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is below average in English and science and

average in mathematics. The difference between inspection findings and the 2004 results is explained by the natural variation in attainment between year groups. Current standards in Year 2 are below average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are average in information and communication technology in Year 2 and Year 6. However, standards are below average in religious education and the pupils make limited gains in their understanding of different religions. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are learning to become more confident in using English make similar progress to their classmates. The school has a number of pupils who are members of the Travelling community and they too make satisfactory progress. **The pupils' personal development is satisfactory, and there are strengths in the provision for their social and moral development.** Pupils have good attitudes to the school and behaviour is good. Opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a multi-cultural society are missed in some subjects. Despite the school's better efforts to raise the importance of attendance in the minds of parents, attendance is below average. Punctuality rates are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory with a number of strengths. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is a greater proportion of good and very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Strengths in teaching lie in how mathematics is taught and in the way that pupils who have special educational needs, are managed and supported in their learning by both teachers and teaching assistants. The curriculum is broad and supplemented well by trips and 'themed' weeks such as those seen in science and art and design. Children in the Foundation Stage have too few opportunities to extend their learning through outside play. The school has good procedures in place to check pupils' progress and the staff's detailed knowledge of the pupils makes a valuable contribution to the high quality of care they receive. Links with parents are very good and the school plays a full and vibrant part in the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is satisfactory, and there is good management of the school on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher provides sensitive leadership and she is supported well by the senior management team. However, measures to ensure consistency of teaching in all parts of the school are not fully effective. The role of the co-ordinator is not sufficiently developed in some subjects. The governance of the school is satisfactory and the governing body supports the school well. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are very pleased with developments in the school and feel that their children are well taught and cared for. They are equally happy with the range and quality of information they receive. A few parents suggest that bullying is an issue in the school but extensive discussions with pupils and careful observation of both lessons and of the day-to-day life of the school indicate that bullying is not an issue. Pupils enjoy school and value the increasing scope they are given to have a say in the daily life of the school. Year 6 pupils value greatly the chance to wear different coloured uniform to the rest of the school which helps them to see how their behaviour is an important role model for younger pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue with its efforts to improve achievement and raise standards in English and science so that they are as good as in mathematics;
- raise achievement and standards in religious education;

- ensure that information and communication technology features more regularly in pupils' day-to-day learning;
- provide more frequent opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to participate in outside play;
- raise the levels of attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. A similar picture is evident in Year 6 in English and science and standards in mathematics are average. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 - 6 is satisfactory overall but is unsatisfactory in religious education where standards are below average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in all other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's starting point when they join school is low. The Reception children achieve well.
- Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 3 – 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory and much improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils in Years 3 - 6 do not achieve sufficiently in religious education.

Commentary

1. The children in the Reception classes achieve well overall, although standards are generally below average for their age. Their achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good, reflecting the strong attention that is paid to this aspect of their learning by the staff. Although the children achieve well, their attainment by the end of the Foundation Stage is below the expected level in communication, language and literacy because of their low attainment on entry. The children have too few opportunities to participate in outside play and this limits their overall progress in this aspect of learning in their physical development.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (12.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.6 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The 2004 national test results in Year 2 show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was average and in writing above the national average. Teacher assessments for science indicated that standards are below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' performance is above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing.
3. The findings of the inspection indicate that standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The difference between inspection findings and the results of the 2004 National Curriculum tests is not attributable to a fall in standards but reflects the variation of attainment between different year groups. Although standards are below the national average, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is

good. This reflects the good teaching pupils receive and the equally good attention given to promoting pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (27.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.9 (26.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.7 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The results of the 2004 National Curriculum tests indicated that standards in Year 6 were well below the national average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When these pupils took the National Curriculum tests in Year 2, standards were below average in English and average in mathematics and science.
5. The inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English and science and average in mathematics. Good teaching in mathematics leads to higher levels of achievement than in English and science where there is more variation in the teaching. Overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in information and communication technology. This reflects the good attention paid by the school to improving provision in this subject since the previous inspection. However, the pace of pupils' learning in information and communication technology is restricted due to the limited opportunities they have in day-to-day lessons to practise and refine their skills. Achievement in religious education is unsatisfactory. Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs and values of other faiths.
6. The pace of overall improvement in the pupils' performance in national tests has been above average. The test data points to the girls outperforming the boys although inspection findings indicate no difference in boys' achievement in day-to-day lessons. The probable reason for the difference may lie in the far higher number of boys with special educational needs in the school compared to the number of girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school as do the few pupils who are learning to speak English and those who are members of the Travelling community.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes towards school and they behave well. Their personal development, including spiritual and cultural development is promoted satisfactorily by the school. Provision for the pupils' social and moral development is good. Although attendance is unsatisfactory, the school is steadily making improvements. Punctuality is very good in the mornings.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A consistent approach to raising standards of behaviour around the school has resulted in pupils having positive attitudes to the school and their learning.
- The school works hard to raise the pupils' moral and social awareness and they respond well.
- There are missed opportunities to develop a greater understanding of multicultural issues.
- Attendance is below the national average.

- Punctuality is very good.

Commentary

7. Attitudes to learning are good and pupils like school. In lessons, they work hard, are mostly interested in what is taught, and show good levels of enthusiasm. During discussions, pupils stated that they appreciated the friendliness of teachers and support staff. In many lessons, when the teaching is well planned and stimulating, they are attentive and keen to offer ideas and answer questions. In all lessons, pupils displayed respect for their teachers and generally made considerable effort to improve. They particularly enjoy trips they make with the school and remember fondly those occasions when they have dressed up, for example in plays and for a Victorian day.
8. Behaviour is mostly good in lessons, assemblies, the dinner hall, and on the playground. There were a few instances during the inspection when individual pupils did not behave as well as the others but the numbers were small and insufficient to detract from the good behaviour of the majority. There have been no exclusions this year and the pupils are working in an environment that is kept free from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment. Pupils are very clear about procedures to deal with these issues and any incidents are rare and dealt with swiftly. This contributes to the calm ethos that prevails throughout the school. There is a clear behaviour policy which is shared by all and pupils have the opportunity to devise their own classroom rules based on these guidelines. They accept this as fair and reasonable. Methods for maintaining good behaviour are very effective, and rest on the good relationships between pupils and staff.
9. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, which is well promoted by the school's ethos of caring for others. Assemblies support this. Pupils are aware of racism and very clear about why it is wrong. However, more opportunities are needed to help pupils to live in a multicultural society. Although pupils are aware of the differences and similarities between different faiths they have limited day-to-day contact with those from different cultures. Music is used well to support their general cultural development. Relationships between pupils, teachers and all support staff are good.
10. Pupils accept the responsibilities offered, for example in the school council, by acting as playground friends for younger children, and in various activities around the school. The school raises pupil's social awareness through the personal, social and health education lessons. Older pupils are also involved in making decisions about the distribution of harvest produce. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
11. The school is making steady progress in improving attendance, but the level is still below that of other schools nationally, because of the number of pupils taken on holiday during term time. The school explains that for most this is because of the nature of their parents' work. Monitoring and promotion of full attendance are much improved since the previous inspection. The number of unauthorised absences is in line with that in other schools nationally. Punctuality to school in the mornings is very good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.8
National data:	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.2
National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is good overall. The day-to-day care of pupils is very good. This is very successful in developing links with parents and with the local community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is variation in both subjects and different parts of the school. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 – 6. Assessment procedures and the use made of the information gained to plan pupils' subsequent learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good, although too few opportunities are provided for children to learn through outside play.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, and effective attention is paid to promoting pupils' confidence in learning and applying their basic skills.
- While there is some good teaching in Years 3 – 6, teaching quality is varied.
- The teaching of religious education in Years 3 - 6 is unsatisfactory.
- Across the school, the pupils are managed well ensuring that many lessons have brisk pace.
- Teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to demonstrate points of technique.
- Good use is made of assessment information to plan pupils' subsequent learning.
- There are missed opportunities in lessons for pupils to use information and communication technology to extend their learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (16%)	20 (40%)	19 (38%)	3 (6%)	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.

12. There has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. The monitoring of teaching is now much more regular, although the overall quality of teaching in Years 3 - 6 is not as consistently good as that seen in Years 1 and 2. The shortcomings identified in the last report in relation to making greater use of assessment information to plan pupils' learning, and to ensure that learning for higher-attaining pupils is planned more effectively, have been

successfully tackled, Teachers work well together as a team in all year groups, and shared planning ensures that pupils in different classes in the same year group enjoy the same range of learning opportunities.

13. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good overall, although they have too few opportunities to develop their learning through outside play. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and plan interesting activities which enthuse and motivate them well. Good emphasis is placed on promoting the pupils' personal development and children are given regular opportunities to play and interact with one another. Basic skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics are taught well. Teachers achieve a good balance between activities that are directed by an adult and those which necessitate the children to develop their understanding of skills and concepts through first hand play.
14. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. In English and mathematics, teachers skilfully plan pupils' learning by providing them with fitting opportunities to practise their skills both in specific lessons for English and mathematics and also across the curriculum. Good emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' vocabulary and many lessons provide them with good opportunities to explain their thinking and refine their ideas. Those few pupils at the early stages of learning English benefit from this approach as they gain in confidence in speaking aloud to a wider audience. Teachers provide the pupils with practical equipment to help reinforce their learning and this is of particular benefit for those with special educational needs who can find the learning of new ideas more difficult. Teachers manage the pupils well and many lessons are characterised by teachers sprinkling words of praise and encouragement thoughtfully which helps to boost the pupils' confidence in learning.
15. Although there is some good and very good teaching in Years 3 – 6, the overall quality varies. Teaching is most effective in mathematics where good teaching enabled the pupils to consolidate knowledge and to achieve well in learning new mathematical ideas and concepts. Teachers consistently share lesson objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and refer back to these in the concluding parts to lessons. This practice enables the pupils to share with others what they have learned and what they have found more difficult to grasp. In most classes, lessons proceed at a good pace, but there are times when teachers are not always confident in their subject knowledge. This is particularly evident in some teaching of religious education and art and design which leads to missed opportunities to extend learning. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Both support staff and teachers when working with pupils who have special educational needs, and members of the Travelling community, enable them to play a full part in lessons and strive towards achieving their individual targets.
16. In all classes, teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to demonstrate and clarify for pupils how to proceed with their work and their confidence in using such equipment is very apparent. Such approaches successfully develop the pupils' perception that information and communication technology is not just about using computers. However, the good use of such equipment is balanced by the missed opportunities to incorporate the use of classroom-based equipment to support and enrich pupils' learning. There are occasions, for example, when more creative use of information and communication technology would help to move pupils on in both consolidating and extending the learning of new ideas.
17. Good progress has been made by the school since the previous inspection in improving procedures to assess the pupils' academic progress. This commences

when children first enter the school in the Foundation Stage. It is broadened further in Years 1 – 6 to include assessment of pupils' progress in all subjects of the curriculum. The pupils themselves are closely involved in the setting of personal targets for improvement and many pupils say that these targets are both challenging and achievable. Those with particular learning needs are identified early and support given accordingly.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall and plans provide for a well balanced and relevant educational experience for the pupils. Statutory requirements are met. Provision for extra-curricular activities and enrichment is satisfactory. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Long-term curricular planning is good, providing much support for teachers when they are planning in the medium term.
- Links between subjects are clearly planned, although computers are not used enough to support learning in a range of subjects.
- The curriculum is suitably enriched through trips and visitors and by 'theme' weeks in certain subjects.
- Resources are satisfactory overall, having improved since the last inspection.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is generally good.

Commentary

18. The curriculum has been improved since the previous inspection, and is now guided by a good long-term plan that provides much support for teachers in the main areas to be taught. The plan makes clear links between subjects and provides well for personal, social and health education. Furthermore, it outlines where teachers may find detailed parts of the schemes of work and what opportunities exist within the curriculum for pupils to progress in skills of speaking and listening. The plan is well regarded and well used. However, with the exception of speaking and listening, it provides little to promote detailed progression in skills and understanding.
19. All statutory requirements for the curriculum are met. For example, the school has daily collective worship, religious education lessons and compliant policies for sex education and drugs misuse. The time allocated to the teaching of subjects is close to that found typically. However, checks on this, particularly in periods when subjects are taught in alternate half-term blocks, are not consistently rigorous. The school is rightly concerned that every pupil has an equal chance to learn and it works hard to track the progress of individual pupils. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good, although the outdoor area is under-developed in providing opportunities for each area of learning.
20. Pupils with special educational needs have their progress charted both against their individual targets and against the National Curriculum Levels for English and mathematics. The curriculum for these pupils is good and is guided by their individual education plans. The support they receive is of generally good quality. However, the targets set for pupils at the earlier stages of special educational needs are not always

clear enough. There is an appropriate amount of specific support out of the classroom and consequently some pupils are able to overcome their difficulties.

21. The provision for pupils of high capability is not as strong and relies heavily upon the class teachers, who do not always provide sufficient challenge in some subjects. The curriculum is suitably enriched by a number of extra-curricular activities and through special events, such as art and craft and science weeks. A good feature is the residential visits for older pupils in Years 5 and 6, one of which is specifically designed to elevate the pupils' self-esteem. There are also opportunities to learn a foreign language and for instrumental tuition. However, the opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects are limited and opportunities are not exploited enough. Classroom computers are under-used. Nevertheless, the long-term plan provides much good guidance for teachers about making links between other subjects.
22. The school's accommodation is generous in the amount of space provided in classrooms and there are good outdoor areas. However, in some rooms there are particular difficulties with ventilation. The school has some facilities, such as a swimming pool and gymnasium that are beyond that typically provided for the age group. Resources have improved and are now satisfactory. Those for information and communication technology are much better than at the previous inspection. Many classrooms have inter-active whiteboards that are well used and there is a computer suite as well as computers in each classroom.

Care, guidance and support

The members of staff know their pupils well and pay very good attention to their care, welfare, health and safety. Teachers offer timely support and guidance and the school has excellent arrangements for pupils starting school. This area of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive a high level of care as they move through the school.
- Very good use is made of the skills of the child and family worker.
- Pupils' progress is very well monitored as they move through the school.
- Arrangements to ensure that all pupils are inducted into the school are excellent.
- Pupils' questionnaires are evaluated but not in enough depth.

Commentary

23. Staff in the school work together very well in the way they care for pupils. The headteacher has a very good overview, and is making very good use of the child and family support worker and other support staff to provide targeted support and to liaise with parents. This improves communication and helps teachers to have a more complete understanding of their pupils and enables them to provide very good support and guidance in the classroom. Pupils are known well because staffing is relatively stable, and support staff work flexibly within school and at lunchtime. Good records are kept of pupils' achievements, and improved use of assessment means that the pupils' work is carefully monitored and that realistic targets are set for them.
24. The health and safety matters arising from the previous inspection report have been dealt with well. There is now a thorough annual monitoring process using risk assessment criteria so that items are prioritised for action. Governors are actively involved in the review, and their valuable external perspective would be enhanced if their visit took place whilst the building was in use. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place. Good care is taken of pupils who are injured or unwell during the school day, although the location of the lunchtime first aid post is inappropriate.
25. Pupils new to the school receive an excellent induction² programme into the Reception class which helps to ensure that they settle quickly and rapidly become aware of the school's routines. Pupils' views are sought, and older pupils are given responsibility through the school council and other duties. The school's pupil survey was evaluated, but some of areas of concern have not been fully followed up. Linkages between some of the results were not fully investigated and issues for specific classes or year groups may have been missed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very effective and the school is making very good use of its own resources, its community and outside agencies. Links with other education providers are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school communicates well with parents.
- Reports for parents could be more consistent.
- The school provides and hosts an extensive range of courses for parents and members of the local community.
- There is very constructive involvement of a wide range of community groups.
- The school has forged very good links with other schools and colleges which impact well on pupils' learning.

Commentary

26. Communication between parents and the school is much improved since the last inspection. Significant work has been done to re-focus on learning and on families. The school asks questions, listens, and replies to parents' concerns. Those parents

² Induction refers to the arrangements to receive pupils who are new to the school, helping them to settle into school routines and to make friends.

who were spoken to felt well informed and confident about approaching the school. Areas of concern in the previous inspection report have been dealt with.

27. Written information for parents is good. Class teachers send home information about what is being learned, and parents know about homework expectations. Pupils' annual reports are very thorough and give good detail about what the child knows, understands and can do in each subject. Most also give clear suggestions for improvement in English and mathematics. Some teachers also give parents valuable information about their child's standards compared with expectations for their age, but this is inconsistent.
28. The school is making exceptional provision and is using a wide range of community providers to help parents support their children in every way. These go beyond information sessions and encourage families to have fun together and family members to develop new skills and interests. Some courses are specific to school, like "keeping up with the children" but others are of value to new parents, like developmental milestones, weaning, teething and first aid in the home. The school building is the venue for adult education, and the agenda for learning is much wider than parents supporting their children with homework.
29. The excellent links with pre-school settings contribute substantially to the high quality induction process. There are successful partnerships with other schools through the local cluster group and the local secondary school with specialist business status, to which pupils transfer. The latter is both practical, providing a relief caretaker, and supporting learning for older pupils in information and communication technology. Pupils say they feel well prepared for secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school by the headteacher and of the senior staff is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The management of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the key issues from the previous inspection have been successfully accomplished.
- Performance management systems are effective and support the priorities of the school well.
- The school demonstrates a strong commitment towards inclusion and ensuring that all pupils are included in what the school has to offer.
- The school has yet to establish how recent national reforms of the workforce are to be introduced.
- The school does not evaluate teaching and learning in Years 3 - 6 with sufficient rigour.

Commentary

30. The headteacher has provided satisfactory leadership with good features in that she has successfully established good teamwork amongst the staff who are well motivated. She enjoys the strong support of the governors, parents and the pupils. She has shown clarity of vision and a sense of purpose in her commitment to the inclusion of all the pupils and the wider school community and in ensuring that the school's ethos is one where all feel welcome and valued. Improvement in relation to the key issues from the previous inspection has been good. There has been a substantial improvement in the pupils' attitudes to learning and in their behaviour and

the climate for learning is now good. Assessment is now good in English, mathematics and science and is securely established for all other subjects.

31. However, the leadership of the school has been less effective in raising standards in Years 3 – 6. There is some good teaching in Years 3 – 6 but there is also some unsatisfactory teaching. There is regular monitoring of teaching, which is not always sharp enough in identifying and tackling the shortcomings evident in order to raise the levels of pupils' overall achievement. There is however, a greater sense of urgency in terms of tackling this issue. The below average speaking and listening skills demonstrated by a significant number of pupils when they enter the school are a long acknowledged barrier to learning and to further raising standards. Improving these skills has only recently become a school priority, however. Training to develop the class teachers' skills and planning to incorporate improving pupils' speaking and listening skills into the curriculum has recently been introduced and is in evidence in some of the teaching.
32. The leadership provided by the other key staff is satisfactory. The monitoring of the teaching by the senior management team and reviewing the pupils' previous work is well established in English and mathematics but less so in other subjects. Assessment and monitoring data is available and targets are set annually in English, mathematics and science but co-ordinators are not using this to rigorously analyse standards between two classes or from one year group to the next in order to guide subject development and provide priorities for improvement.
33. The school has a full set of committed governors, whose roles and responsibilities are well defined. The governors' knowledge of the main strengths and weaknesses within the school is good. Governors are rigorous in ensuring that the school fulfils all of its statutory responsibilities. They provide good support to the senior managers within the school in the areas of finance and premises, where the governors play an active part in shaping the direction of the school. In other aspects of the school's work, the governors are over dependent upon the headteacher. For example, progress towards the *Workforce Agreement* is at an early stage of development and governors have only recently been made aware that reshaping the workforce is an urgent school and a national priority. This dependency reduces the governors' ability to challenge the leadership and management of the school and to further shape the vision and direction of the school.
34. The school improvement plan is satisfactory and it is used well to guide the work of the school. The priorities for improvement are clear and appropriate, but the success criteria are not sufficiently succinct in terms of being linked to measuring improvements in standards. This restricts the governors and the senior staff from analysing how effective the school has been in meeting its priorities.
35. The management of the school is good on a day-to-day basis. The size of the school building does not make the management of the school day easy. However, it is testimony to the strong sense of teamwork established by the headteacher that movement around the school is smooth and unobtrusive and all members of staff understand well the day-to-day routines of the school. The retention of staff is very good and there is a very low rate of staff absence. The initiative of staff is encouraged. The monitoring the pupils who need additional support and implementing specific training for these pupils is helping to improve standards. The school is efficiently organised and roles and responsibilities are clear. Performance management is good and well established for both teaching and support staff. Staff development is

managed well by the deputy headteacher and this supports the school priorities and individual needs in a well balanced manner. Evaluation of the impact of this training is at a relatively early stage of development.

36. The good financial management identified in the previous inspection has been maintained. The school uses its budget wisely to support its priorities for development and the expenditure is carefully monitored. Decisions for spending follow principles of 'best value'. At the present time care is taken to spend money on resources that can be used in the new building whenever possible. This is carefully balanced against ensuring the health safety and learning environment of the pupils currently in the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 – 2004

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>		<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Total income	816,717	Balance from previous year	45,707
Total expenditure	806,268	Balance carried forward to the next	56,156
Expenditure per pupil	2,110		

COMMUNITY PROVISION

Provision made for the community is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links benefit both the school and the community.
- The school works very well with other agencies in multi-disciplinary initiatives to support the community.
- There is a clear commitment to increasing and improving these links.

Commentary

37. The school is now the focus of a great deal of community activity. It has made itself a centre where parents and the general community meet and participate in a wide range of activities. This initiative is well supported by the governing body. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has developed very strong links with the pre-school group that meets within the precincts of the school and from which the majority of the Reception year children come. Members of the governing body have also taken a very active part in this involvement; the group has now been granted charity status and the committee is chaired by a member of the governing body. There is a regular '*Messy Play Club*' for toddlers which also meets within the school buildings. This is led by a member of the Family Learning Action Group in conjunction with the Family Welfare Service, there are very strong links established with the local authority health services and the school.
38. A member of the school support staff is employed as a child and family worker as a result of a grant received from the Children's Fund. The grant is available until March 2006. The main aim of this is to raise children's self esteem and to develop close links with families. It is particularly effective in providing a link with parents whose children are very unsure about attending school. The child and family worker regularly visits homes to ensure that the parents and the children are more comfortable about approaching the school with their problems. This has been particularly successful with potential school 'refusers'. The child and family worker also provides a weekly homework club for pupils who find it difficult to do school work at home. A condition of the grant is to establish eight workshops in a year and to submit a report on these. The workshops have varied from music to cycle maintenance and a combined mural produced by pupils, parents, teachers and a visiting artist. The school works very closely with the Cambridge Regional College to establish a lifelong learning centre. A very successful family learning week was held in October 2004 which involved all the agencies, parents, children and teachers and culminated in a family 'Fun Day'. A wide range of evening classes are also available and many of these courses lead to certification.
39. There is a very clear sense of commitment by the whole school to the further development of these services. The school values highly the enrichment activities that have resulted from this community involvement and the parents have become more fully involved in the life of the school. The children are the main beneficiaries of this commitment.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with many good features. Overall, the provision enables the children to feel secure and receive a stable start to their educational life. The school has responded satisfactorily to the national guidance given to schools for provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
41. There are two Reception classes. Teaching is planned in line with the recommended curriculum for children of this age with the exception of activities in the outdoor areas, which are currently underused. In all other aspects, a wide range of activities are planned to support the children's learning. There is a good range of resources in both classes but the outdoor areas attached to both classes are underdeveloped. Members of the support staff are well trained and they make a valuable contribution to the children's learning. Children enter the Reception classes with a wide range of attainment including a small percentage of higher attaining pupils. A much larger percentage have particular needs and overall, attainment on entry is below the average expected for children of this age. Of the children currently in the Reception classes, most are likely to reach the national goals for early learning expected by the end of the Reception Year, higher attaining pupils are likely to exceed these but a significant number will remain well below the standards expected particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children with particular needs are generally well supported and make satisfactory progress.
42. Management of the Foundation Stage is very effective. In particular, the co-ordinator has developed an excellent induction programme for the children, which enables them to settle quickly into the school. Although most children attend the on site pre-school provision, a significant number enter the school from a wide range of pre-school providers within the area. The co-ordinator has established excellent relationships with this wider community and visits each playgroup or Nursery in order to meet the children before they join the school. In addition, children have six visits to the Reception classes before they enter school, there are two meetings for parents and each child has a home visit by their teacher prior to starting school. This greatly facilitates the children's entry to education and establishes very strong community relationships. Children are assessed regularly on a day-to-day basis and this information is used well to build up individual profiles on the children. The provision is evaluated regularly and the outcomes inform further development in teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching and the high expectations set by staff.
- Children have insufficient opportunities to share large apparatus outside.

Commentary

43. Most children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning because of the good teaching they receive. They are developing good attitudes to learning and their independence and self confidence are increasing. They have good opportunities to take turns, to work in groups and to share within the classroom. More extensive use of the outdoor areas, sharing large apparatus, would enhance these opportunities. There is a satisfactory balance between teacher-led activities and those that the children choose. In one class, the provision for this is good. Good strategies are in place to develop the children's understanding of right and wrong and the consequences of their actions. Children enjoy their learning and interact well with the staff. They are familiar with classroom routines and most can sustain good levels of concentration.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some very good teaching.
- Speaking and listening skills are fostered well.
- Higher attaining children make very good progress.
- Less able children would benefit from shorter sessions of focused literacy teaching.

Commentary

44. When children enter the Reception classes, a significant number have levels of language which are below those expected for children of their age. In both classes, there is an emphasis on encouraging children to listen carefully and to respond to questions in complete sentences. All staff are skilled at supporting the children's oral development. As a result, children are making good progress and a significant number will reach the national goals in this aspect of their early learning. The literacy strategy has been adapted to meet the needs of the children, although there are occasions when the less able children would benefit from shorter sessions of focused literacy. In a very good lesson, higher attaining children were making particularly good progress. They were challenged to extend and improve their language skills. These children are already beginning to write independently and to present their work well. Marking encourages the children to think about the next steps in their learning. In both classes, a wide variety of language related activities are available to support their progress. Most children can write their names independently and in both classes, higher attaining children are beginning to apply their phonic skills. All children have many opportunities to develop their writing skills both formally and informally. Children enjoy books and stories, higher attaining children are reading simple texts with confidence. Children with particular needs make satisfactory progress but few will reach the national goals for early learning in reading and writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of practical activities are used well to reinforce the children's learning.

Commentary

45. Most children are likely to attain the national goals for learning in this area. Although children with particular needs make steady progress, a small percentage is unlikely to achieve the expected levels. Higher attaining children will exceed them. Teaching is satisfactory, and two good lessons were seen during the inspection. In one, the pace of the lesson was very brisk and an element of fun was introduced. The interactive whiteboard was used very well to support the learning and children were confident enough to write number stories on the board themselves. In this class, children know the meaning of the 'plus', 'minus' and 'equals' signs. In both classes, group activities are appropriate and children are learning to count reliably. Most children recognise simple shapes such as circle, square and triangle. A good range of resources is available in both rooms and these are used well to reinforce learning in the subject.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities are planned to promote learning in this area.
- Teaching is good and successfully extends the children's understanding of the world in which they live.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well. Most are working at levels expected for their age and higher attaining children will exceed the national goals for learning in this area. A good variety of interesting and appropriate activities is planned to stimulate the children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. Currently, children are learning about the weather and in a good lesson, the outdoor area was used very well to demonstrate the effect of wind on a toy windmill, a flag and a kite. A higher attaining child was able to form the connection between the wind outside and the wind that comes from the fan heater. The teacher adjusted the lesson to test his theory. In the other class, children used the interactive whiteboard confidently to move various mapping symbols around the screen successfully. In both of these lessons, the good teaching was characterised by the quality of questioning which promoted thought and the fact that children's ideas were valued. An examination of planning indicates that the outdoor area is used more widely in the summer term to support the development of knowledge and understanding particularly in relation to learning about insect life and simple mapping. Computers are available to the children, they use the mouse with confidence and most children know how to click and drag pictures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children behave very well in formal lessons.
- There is insufficient use of the outdoor area to develop children's physical skills.

Commentary

47. Only one lesson was observed, which was a formal music and movement lesson in the hall. The teaching was good. The children listened very carefully to instructions from the teacher and the tape. They used space well, and are learning how to evaluate their own performance. They sorted themselves into pairs quickly and discussed sensibly who would lead the partnership. Scrutiny of the planning and timetables indicates that each class has a minimum of two hall sessions a week. Although both classes have easy access to an appropriate outdoor area; planning and observation reveals that these areas are underused. The school does have a serious problem with vandalism and a new school building is planned which will incorporate a safe, sheltered outdoor area for the Reception children. However, there are missed opportunities to use the current areas effectively and children would benefit from, for example, many more opportunities to use large wheeled toys to develop their gross motor skills. The areas are currently underdeveloped and the curriculum for learning that should take place outside does not form an integral part of the planning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

48. It was not possible to observe any sessions where creative development was the focus during the inspection. Children were observed using paint, glue and scissors appropriately and an examination of work on display and a portfolio of children's work, suggests that they are having good access to creative materials and that this aspect of their learning has a high status. There is a role-play area in each classroom which children use frequently. Although no music sessions were observed, it features in planning and children join in with hymns in assemblies with confidence. Assessment records indicate that most children have made good progress and are achieving well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **satisfactory**. The achievement of the pupils is good in the Years 1 to 2 due to the teaching that is good and frequently very good. In Years 3 to 6, the achievement of the pupils is satisfactory reflecting the satisfactory teaching pupils receive. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of writing skills in Year 2 is very good and many pupils achieve very well.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well in many lessons.
- The pupils are developing an enjoyment of literature which is used well by teachers to stimulate learning.
- Classroom computers are insufficiently used within the lessons.

Commentary

49. In 2004, standards in Year 2 were average in reading and above average in writing. In comparison to similar schools the standards were above average in reading and well above in writing. At Year 6, standards were well below the national average. In comparison to similar schools, standards were below the average. The standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected for their age. This is a reflection of the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs within these year groups. A higher proportion of boys than usual have identified special educational needs and more limited language skills.
50. Overall, speaking and listening skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. Standards of listening are average. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils are confident and articulate speakers. Throughout the school, teachers successfully develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers of the youngest pupils focus considerable attention upon the development of spoken language and this helps pupils to achieve well in this aspect of their work. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for the pupils to discuss in pairs and they are encouraged to use more complex sentences with more specific vocabulary. Within most classes there are some pupils, more often boys, who lack the confidence and skills to speak to the class or to contribute effectively within discussions. However, teachers and support staff work hard to include these pupils in all parts of discussions.
51. The teaching of reading is satisfactory throughout the school. Higher-attaining pupils across the school reach appropriately high standards. In the younger classes, phonics

is taught through interesting games which hold the pupils' attention and reading for meaning is encouraged. Higher ability pupils achieve well with this system but some middle and lower ability pupils in Year 2 were unsure of their letter sounds and lacked the ability to tackle unknown words. There is considerable additional support for lower attaining pupils and those with special needs. In all classes, pupils are introduced to a wide range of literature by a variety of authors. Some texts are specifically chosen by teachers to appeal to boys and to boost their interest in reading. In all the lessons observed, the pupils were attentive and interested in the stories that were read to them. In one lower ability Year 6 class, where the teaching was very good, the pupils were so excited by the story that they almost groaned when the teacher stopped reading! Frequently, teachers use literature well as a stimulus for pupils' writing. In the group sessions teachers guided the reading well, but the tasks set for other pupils often lacked sufficient challenge. By Year 6, the pupils have had very little experience of selecting books from a library for private reading or for research. The school library is located too far from many of the classrooms and has limited space.

52. Writing skills are taught very well in Year 2 enabling the pupils to achieve very well. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching of writing is satisfactory. Teachers are knowledgeable and introduce the pupils to the craft of writing very skilfully. They use the interactive whiteboards effectively to stimulate interest. Pupils learn to set the scene for their writing by using adjectives to make the writing more interesting. Those with special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistants and consequently they compose well-constructed sentences. The handwriting of many pupils in Year 2 is exceptionally neat and well formed and most of the pupils use a joined script. These skills are not always sufficiently developed in Years 3 to 6 where presentation skills dip and some teachers pay insufficient attention to improvement. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils have additional extended writing lessons. They make satisfactory progress and by Year 6 the higher ability pupils are writing lengthy, exciting stories which are carefully punctuated, accurately spelt and which contain well selected vocabulary.
53. There is good leadership and management of the subject. This is provided by two co-ordinators who oversee and lead educational developments well. The monitoring of teaching is well established. There has been considerable staff training because continuing to raise standards in English is a school priority. The monitoring of learning has led the school to sharpen the quality of marking which is now very good. Teachers write insightful comments that are supportive and help the pupils improve their work. Target setting is well developed throughout the school and assessment systems are good. The use of homework to support learning is satisfactory and is set regularly. Research skills, a weakness from the last inspection, have not been sufficiently improved. Classroom computers are insufficiently used to support the pupils' learning and to refine their research skills.

Literacy across the curriculum

54. The pupils' literacy skills are used satisfactorily to develop their learning in other subjects. For example, they write about Victorian personalities. Younger pupils write extended stories in religious education, for example and produce accounts of events from the past in their work in history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Pupils achieve well and this is successfully promoted through the quality of teaching which is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils are given opportunities to solve word problems and explain their ideas.
- The setting arrangements effectively ensure that pupils are given work that best reflects their ability.
- Pupils get too few opportunities to use computers to extend their learning.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils do not always present their work with sufficient care.
- Good leadership and management of the subject is characterised by the careful way in which teaching is evaluated to bring about further improvements.

Commentary

55. The 2004 Year 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. Pupils' performance was above average when compared with similar schools. The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 6 indicated that standards were below average. They were average when the results are compared with how well pupils performed when they were in Year 2. Standards have varied in recent years due to the nature of the cohorts of pupils which can vary from year to year. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are on course to reach below average standards in Year 2 and average standards in Year 6. The difference between inspection findings and the 2004 test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 is attributable to the differences between year groups. Given the low attainment on entry to the school and the fact that the school has a higher number of pupils with special educational needs, overall achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs, English with additional language and those who are members of the Travelling community, is good.
56. A key feature of pupils' learning across the school is the way they effectively solve problems. In Years 1 and 2, pupils solve number problems satisfactorily both mentally and when using pencil and paper methods. As they get older, the pupils are effectively taught to use mental strategies such as estimating potential answers to problems, and where necessary, using a calculator to determine the accuracy of their answer. Pupils achieve well when grasping and deepening their understanding of the part that mathematics plays in their daily lives.
57. Teaching and learning across the school is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and effectively plan the pupils' learning to ensure that work set matches the pupils' particular skill levels. The opening mental sessions to lessons are often interesting and capture attention and interest. In many lessons, teachers effectively draw on the potential of interactive whiteboards to demonstrate particular teaching points, enabling pupils to get a clear idea of how best to tackle the problems posed. However, in many classes insufficient use is made of computers during the course of day-to-day lessons to extend learning or build on the pupils' enthusiasm for using certain software. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught in sets and the progress of individual pupils is regularly assessed to ensure that they join the set that best reflects their ability. The work taught in each of these year groups is often challenging but achievable and those with special educational needs are usually supported well by the learning support assistants who have been briefed well by teachers. The teachers' generally high expectations of pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not always extend to how they present their work. This can be inconsistent which makes it difficult to follow the line of pupils' thinking. The quality of presentation does not always match the effort and determination to solve problems shown in lessons.
58. The overall pace of improvement since the previous inspection has been good. This reflects the good leadership and management of the subject. This is shared between two co-ordinators who represent classes in the lower and upper part of the school. They have a good understanding of the provision made, which has been gained through a regular programme of monitoring of teaching and learning. Sensitive, yet effective, evaluation of assessment information is regularly undertaken and this work highlights areas for further improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There are sufficient opportunities for the pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils develop their skills and understanding of measurement, for example, through design and technology and science. However, there are missed opportunities to further their knowledge and understanding of different mathematical ideas by using computers in day-to-day lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**. Achievement is satisfactory. Too few pupils reach the higher levels in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there is some good and some very good teaching.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their investigative skills.
- There is too little use of information and communication technology in day-to-day lessons.
- In some classes, there is an over dependency on worksheets.

Commentary

60. In the national tests in 2004, results in science based on teachers' assessments of pupils in Year 2 were below the national average. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was average. Results for pupils in Year 6 were also below the national average and there is a similar picture for the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. Although standards in Year 6 are below the national average, they are comparable to those in similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average, because a smaller than average proportion of pupils are reaching the higher levels. There are also a number of lower attaining pupils who will require extra support to reach the expected level by the end of the school year.
61. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and very good features. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the teaching effectively enabled pupils to investigate the differences between forces. The activities organised for independent enquiry provided pupils with very good opportunities to distinguish between the effect of 'pushes' and 'pulls'. In this lesson the interactive whiteboard was used to support learning. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching observed was good with one very good lesson in Year 6 when the higher attaining pupils were learning about the effect of exercise on the heart. The lesson moved at a very brisk pace and the investigation stimulated the pupils' interest in the subject. They were able to discuss clearly what they thought the effects were and understood the need to make the test fair. In all the lessons seen, pupils were encouraged to investigate and to test their own hypotheses. They were all very clear about the importance of a fair test if the findings were to be regarded as valid.
62. An examination of workbooks reveals that in several classes, there is a very heavy dependency on worksheets which limit the opportunities the pupils have for recording their own findings using the correct scientific language. More opportunities to record their work independently would also support the development of their language and literacy skills. Mathematics is used to support learning in the subject but there are many missed opportunities to support learning by the use of computers in the classroom. In some classes, marking is very effective. It indicates the next steps in learning, but this approach is not applied consistently throughout the school; greater attention to marking in all classes would raise levels of attainment in the subject. The curriculum is well planned so that the national programme of study is taught in full. Resources for the subject are good.

63. The subject manager is relatively inexperienced, she has however, quickly identified the priority areas for development. There is a good assessment system which represents an improvement since the last inspection. Targets are set in Year 2 and this is having a positive effect on progress. A programme of monitoring teaching and learning in the subject has been established. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory and much improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Progress in improving provision since the previous inspection has been good and standards are now satisfactory.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, although teaching is good in the computer suite.
- Classroom computers are under-used to support learning in other subjects.
- The subject is well led, although the co-ordinator has not had regular opportunities to monitor teaching and learning, which limits her overall effectiveness.

Commentary

64. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, when several aspects of this subject were unsatisfactory and standards were below average. Resources and provision now meet the pupils' needs and standards are satisfactory. This is because there has been considerable investment in resources and in staff training, so that pupils now use the computer suite and there are computers available in each classroom. Staff have benefited from training, most recently for using interactive whiteboards. Such initiatives, together with the coordinator's good support, have led to improved standards, which are now satisfactory at Year 6. No lessons were seen in Year 2 but one was seen in Year 1 in which standards were satisfactory.
65. Pupils in Year 6 are generally confident when using computers and have a wide range of experience in using different applications, with the exception of using external sensors to monitor changes in the environment. They are able to combine work from different programs and amend their work to improve the quality of communication. Pupils of all ability groups can operate a computer independently with a satisfactory degree of confidence and capability. However, while sufficiently challenged in the tasks set, pupils of higher capability have not yet extended their learning to a higher level. Nevertheless, because pupils of lower capability are well supported, they have gained the expected level for their age.
66. The teaching is usually confident. Interactive whiteboards are used to good effect helping the pupils to gain the skills and capability required to use new programs. The pupils make good efforts in the subject and achieve satisfactorily. Their work indicates that a good degree of pride and effort has been put into presenting it well. Few pupils have access to similar information and communication technology programs at home and consequently they are very interested at school. Teachers often use the internet in preparing lessons and the interactive whiteboards support their teaching well, although the pupils seldom use them. There are effective checks on the gains in pupils' skills and learning, which are recorded. This provides a good means by which standards can be charted and teachers know what the pupils need to learn next. However, few lessons are planned with different activities for pupils of higher capability and this limits what they are able to achieve.
67. Successful improvements have been made because the subject is well led. Much guidance has been provided for teachers, especially in the scheme of work, which has helped raise confidence and increase the effectiveness of classroom assistants.

However, little use was made of the computers in classrooms during the inspection. Furthermore, there was little or no planning that indicated how information and communication technology was to be used to support the pupils' learning in other subjects. The school has rightly identified this as an area for improvement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Some lessons in the information and communication technology suite provide pupils with learning that relates to other subjects. For example, a Year 6 lesson involved pupils in devising a formula for perimeters and areas using a spreadsheet. However, lessons in classrooms seldom refer to how information and communication technology may support their learning. Classroom computers are not used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects. This aspect is an area that the school has identified for development.

HUMANITIES

69. Neither **history** nor **geography** was a focus for the inspection and no judgements can be made on the quality of provision made. Pupils' books from all year groups and portfolios of work in history were scrutinised. The expected curriculum is covered in both subjects, and pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their literacy skills. Pupils with particular needs have full access to history and geography and they are given satisfactory support. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have made satisfactory progress in their understanding of both subjects and are developing suitable skills.
70. In **history**, pupils are beginning to recognise features of different homes and ways of life from the past. Year 6 pupils could recall in great detail their Victorian Day when they dressed up in Victorian clothes and their trip to Wisbech museum when they were introduced to how people lived in Victorian times. They could also recount with great detail their 'Tudor Day' when they learned a Tudor dance and when a visitor came to the school and demonstrated the use of the stocks. They show a good understanding of the effect of World War 2 on society in general and particularly children of their own age who were being evacuated. Geography skills are generally developed well as pupils move from year to year. Pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of different localities and learn to interpret maps with different scales. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how the weather affects development in differing areas across the world. They also have a good awareness of environmental issues.
71. In both subjects, the local environment is used well to support learning. There are two residential visits, trips to museums and places of interest and visitors come into school. A good example was a visit by a drama group who presented a play relating to the history of World War 2. Co-ordination of both subjects is satisfactory, assessment procedures are in place and there is monitoring and evaluating of planning, although scope for the co-ordinators to directly monitor teaching and learning is limited.

Religious education

Provision is **unsatisfactory**. Standards by Year 6 are below those expected, reflecting underachievement in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in Year 2 is good and as a result the pupils achieve well and attain the expected standards.

- The teaching in the Years 3 to 6 has insufficient impact on pupils' learning and therefore is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

72. Discussions with pupils, observations of lessons and of previous work indicate that standards in Year 6 do not meet those expected in the Cambridgeshire Locally Agreed Syllabus. Although the pupils receive a regular lesson every week they lack sufficient knowledge of Christianity. These pupils have a confused understanding of Judaism and their knowledge of Islam is negligible. Their knowledge of Buddhism, from their Year 5 lessons is just satisfactory. The one good piece of work seen in these pupils' books was a visit to the local church and an interview with the curator. The work scrutiny indicates that in Year 5, the teaching is good and that in their study of Hinduism, standards are of an appropriate level for the pupil's age. The attitudes of the girls to this subject are better than that of the boys.
73. In the one Year 2 lesson seen, the pupils practised the skills of reading and speaking and listening skills as they read the parable of the Prodigal Son from the children's Bible. The teaching was good and the high number of adults in the class, including two parents, ensured that drama could be successfully included. By the end of the lesson the teacher's skilful questioning skills and the use of a modern version of the text, helped the pupils to understand the messages within the story. Previous work in the pupils' books is beautifully written and is extensive.
74. The majority of the teaching seen in the Years 3 to 6 lacks sufficient depth to challenge and extend the learning of the pupils. In an unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection, the pupils were comparing the differences in aspects of life now and at the time of Jesus. They were not given research opportunities and were dependent upon adults. Photographs of the areas in Israel where Jesus lived were not explained. Consequently, the pupils were not focused upon their tasks and little learning took place. In addition, pupils are given too few opportunities to explore how religion has a part to play in their day-to-day lives or the differences and similarities between different world religions.
75. There has been unsatisfactory leadership of the subject since the previous inspection. Resources, identified as unsatisfactory in the previous inspection, remain insufficient. The subject is not a school priority. Little staff training has taken place and there is little effective display of pupils' work around the school and overall the subject has too little status. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' moral development but an unsatisfactory contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Visits and visitors are restricted to members of the Christian faith. Within the lessons, the teachers include the development of speaking and listening skills, which is a school priority. The pupils' writing skills are insufficiently developed in Years 3 to 6. Assessment systems are satisfactory. Computers are insufficiently used.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. Pupils' work in design and technology is of a satisfactory standard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given sufficient opportunities to develop an early understanding of the principles that underpin design and technology by making musical instruments from a range of everyday objects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have explored food technology and have also made moveable vehicles. Discussions with the pupils indicate they have a secure understanding of the

need to evaluate their work with a view to considering how it may be improved. However, they have had few opportunities to study pneumatics, to make more complex items with wood or to use computer technology or examples of electronic equipment to extend their learning of the subject.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in the development of their drawing skills.
- Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to learn and explore the styles and techniques of different artists and craftspeople.
- Events such as an 'Arts Week' give pupils good scope to extend their learning.
- Although pupils have sketchbooks, these are underused to enrich learning.
- Pupils are provided with too few opportunities to use new technologies to extend their understanding of the subject.

Commentary

77. Pupils reach standards that are average at the end of both key stages and satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection. Achievement by all groups of pupils is satisfactory.
78. A key strength in the pupils' achievement in art and design lies in the progress that they make in the development of their drawing skills. Teachers provide the pupils with regular opportunities to develop their proficiency in drawing. Pupils produce still life drawings and make sketches of everyday objects and they understand well that artists use pencils with different leads in order to obtain particular effects. By the time pupils leave the school, they understand what is meant by drawing terms such as cross-hatching, stippling shade, tone and line and work hard to apply these skills in their work in order to give it added impact. In all year groups, pupils are provided with regular scope to explore the particular styles and effects employed by particular artists and pupils are keen to experiment in applying the techniques learned to their own artwork. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding that art can be generated using a range of different materials such as paint, fabric, clay and that sculpture, for example, can be constructed from combining many everyday objects.
79. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the main, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and demonstrate well to pupils how to apply particular techniques to their own work. Good links are made with other subjects such as history which helps to extend pupils' learning of how artists from the past created their art and how this work tends to influence future craftspeople. Where teaching is less effective, teachers are not confident in their knowledge and do not always demonstrate or explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn. Satisfactory use is made of sketchbooks to allow pupils to experiment with their work. However, pupils only use these from time to time. This limited use restricts the potential for pupils to develop their understanding of the importance of sketchbooks as a means of preparatory work and as a means for the gathering of photographs, images or other everyday clippings that capture the pupils' interest. In addition, while improvements have been achieved in the pupils' use of computer software to produce artwork, there is potential to exploit

this further. Pupils have a limited perception, for example, of how images can be captured digitally and manipulated still further.

80. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator gives a clear lead and the curriculum is sufficiently enhanced by an annual 'Art Week' that enables the pupils to explore aspects of the subject in more depth.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music has a high status throughout the school.
- Teachers show strong enthusiasm in teaching the subject and the pupils catch this enthusiasm.

Commentary

81. Standards are in line with those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. In one the teaching was very good, in the second, the teaching was good and the third was satisfactory with many good features. In a joint Year 2 lesson, it was evident that pupils are making satisfactory progress over time. They are able to name un-tuned instruments with confidence; they handle them sensibly and are learning to keep the instrument in time with the beat although a few are unable to manage this all the time. They can identify instruments by name by listening to music. In this lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used to support learning in the subject.
82. In a very good lesson observed in Year 3, the teaching was particularly lively and enthusiastic; this transmitted itself to the pupils and resulted in very good learning. Pupils were clearly building on previously learned skills. They were confident composers and performers and were able to evaluate their own work and that of their peers in a mature manner. Achievement in this lesson was particularly high. By the time pupils reach Year 6, pupils show a growing awareness of the way in which music can be used to support a performance and they respond well to lively, enthusiastic teaching which captures their interest.
83. There is a school choir which recently took part in a BBC recording of 'Songs of Praise' from Ely Cathedral. Peripatetic lessons in brass, recorders and woodwind are offered to pupils. Visitors come to school to demonstrate music, during the inspection a professional Japanese recorder player visited during assembly and demonstrated a range of music on a wide range of recorders including descant and treble recorders. Pupils regularly perform to parents and they participate in the choice of music to be played in assemblies. Singing in assembly is of a good standard. The subject is managed effectively, systems of assessment are in place and some monitoring of teaching and learning takes place. Music has a high profile throughout the school.
84. Improvement since the last inspection is good. There is now a scheme of work based on national guidance and assessment procedures are well established.

Physical education

Provision is **satisfactory** and all aspects of the programme of study are taught.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses in helping pupils to improve the quality of their performance.
- Standards in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory.
- Accommodation and resources are good; there is a swimming pool, changing rooms and gymnasium.

Commentary

85. Standards could not be judged in Years 1 and 2. Standards at Year 6 have remained satisfactory, as they were in the previous inspection. The pupils understand about how exercise affects the body. Consequently, pupils of Year 6 made good efforts in fitness training, where they were encouraged to engage in short bursts of energetic activity. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6, are trained in routines of getting changed and putting out apparatus safely. Year 4 pupils could appraise the performance of others. By Year 6 most pupils have learned to swim 25 metres.
86. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are planned clearly and the long-term plan provides good guidance about what aspect of the programme of study should be taught next. However, the plan does not promote progress in acquiring skills and improving the quality of movement. This aspect of provision is inconsistent between teachers and can lead to unsatisfactory learning. In a fitness training session for Year 6, the pupils did not improve the quality of their movements and consequently some were disappointed with the number of actions they could do in 20 seconds. In some lessons, teaching gives too little emphasis to the detail and quality of efficient and effective movement. Occasionally, classes are noisy and this can lead to a lack of concentration. However, teachers have sufficient class management skills to regain good order when needed.
87. The school makes good use of its accommodation advantages. The gymnasium helps to promote good attitudes to activities and the swimming pool and changing rooms are good facilities. The school enriches the subject with a typical number of extra-curricular clubs and school activities. Most pupils show a good interest and make good efforts. They achieve satisfactorily. However, in the classes seen, too many pupils did not have the right clothing and too many did not participate in the lessons,

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. Only one lesson was seen and overall judgements on the quality of provision cannot be made. However, the subject is well planned, both for the long-term and in lessons. The subject has a satisfactory scheme of work that includes issues such as sex and relationship education. Teachers often use discussion in a circle to help the pupils to listen to others and to empathise. Personal development is promoted well in this way and staff recognise that this subject is a priority. Assemblies provide additional learning. For example, in one assembly, the pupils were helped to empathise with the needs of people in the Asian disaster region. Members of the school council announced a fund-raising effort. The school council helps to promote similar issues

and pupils develop a social conscience. While Year 6 pupils have voted for council members none know about democracy, although they feel that their views are listened to in a variety of ways.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
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	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).