

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG CRENDON SCHOOL

Long Crendon, Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110338

Headteacher: Mrs T Thomson

Lead inspector: Mr A Clark

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 February 2005

Inspection number: 267232

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 235 |
| School address: | Chilton Road Long Crendon Aylesbury Buckinghamshire |
| Postcode: | HP18 9BZ |
| Telephone number: | 01844 208225 |
| Fax number: | 01844 208225 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Rebecca Smith |
| Date of previous | 19/04/1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Long Crendon Primary School is an average sized school serving the village of Long Crendon in Buckinghamshire. There are a similar number of boys and girls on roll. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals and the social and environmental characteristics of the area are generally very favourable. There are two pupils with English as an additional language although the vast majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. A very small percentage is from families from ethnic minorities. There are 11 pupils on the register of special needs, which represents 5.9% of the pupils attending the school, which is lower than the national average. Less than one per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs which is also low. The children's attainment on entry to the school is above that typical for their age particularly in communication, language and literacy.

The headteacher was appointed in April 2004 following two terms with a caretaking, temporary headteacher. The school also underwent changes to classroom organisation in September 2004 from single age classes to mixed aged classes of Years 1/2 and Years 3/4. The school was awarded the Gold Active Mark for its sport's provision in 2004; the School Travel Award for Road care and a school achievement awarded for improvements to standards in 2002/3.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---|
| 21596 | Mr Andrew Clark | Lead inspector | Mathematics Information and communication Technology Religious education Physical education English as an additional language |
| 11437 | Mr Tony Anderson | Lay inspector | |
| 22778 | Mrs Anne Shannon | Team inspector | English Art and design Design and technology History Special educational needs |
| 14732 | Mrs Enid Korn | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage Science Geography Music |

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Anglia House
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 2LA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 11 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 16 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS | 18 |
| AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE | |
| SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 30 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with very good features. Leadership and management are good ensuring a good quality of education, particularly teaching and learning. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The quality of education in the Foundation Stage (children five and under in the reception class) is satisfactory overall. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good standards in English, mathematics, science and music. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well in these subjects. Standards of speaking and listening are excellent.
- Children are willing and effective learners and the quality of teaching is good.
- The school provides a very positive ethos for learning and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The new headteacher has a very clear vision for school improvement and is supported well by staff and governors.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage does not provide enough consistent challenge to children in all areas of learning.
- There is very strong support from parents.

The school has improved well since the last inspection. Standards in several subjects have risen well. The procedures and use of assessment are now good. There has been very good improvement to provision and standards in information and communication technology (ICT). Although there has been satisfactory improvement to provision at the Foundation Stage there is still further development needed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| English | B | A | A* | A |
| mathematics | C | A | A | D |
| science | A | A | A | 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.*

The pupils' achievement is good overall. They attain standards which are well above the national average by Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a good trend of improvement to the results of National Tests since the last inspection. Standards of reading and writing were very high for Year 2 and for English at Year 6 and in the top five per cent of the country. Standards of mathematics and science were both well above the national average. Standards for the current Year 6 and Year 2 are well above expected levels for English and mathematics. A very high proportion of pupils reach standards which are above those typically expected for their age in all three subjects. The school identified weaknesses in pupils' problem solving ability in mathematics in 2004 and is taking strong and effective steps to address this. In science, the development of pupils' practical and experimental

skills does not yet match their very good knowledge in the subject. The pupils have attained excellent standards in speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. By the end of the Foundation Stage the vast majority of children attain the Early Learning goals expected for their age in all areas of learning and a good proportion exceed these levels in aspects of early reading, writing and numeracy skills. However, opportunities are missed to promote achievement further in aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Their achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards in religious education and ICT are above normally expected levels by Year 6. Pupils' achievement in music is very good because of very good planning and teaching.

The pupils' have very good attitudes to their work. They are positive and friendly and very willing to share ideas and support each other. They behave very well throughout the school. **The pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good.** The pupils are reflective and thoughtful. They value the many responsibilities they are given. They have a good understanding of their own and other cultures. Attendance and punctuality are very good making a good contribution to the school's ethos.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The teachers' question pupils well and encourage the development of speaking and listening skills very well. Very good use is made of homework to raise standards. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils feel confident to learn as a result. Pupils of all abilities show very good levels of concentration and work hard. They make good use of ICT as an effective tool for learning. Sometimes lessons finish too abruptly without opportunity for reflection on what has been achieved. There are good assessment procedures which are used well to ensure that the work challenges pupils of all ages and abilities. There is a good curriculum which is under close review because of significant changes to classroom organisation and changes of approach under new leadership. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for gifted or talented pupils is good. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved but does not always offer enough challenge to pupils through independent and self-selected activities. There are good extra curricular activities and enrichment to the curriculum through music and sport. Procedures for health and safety and child protection are good. The parents are well informed and provide very good support to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governance of the school is good. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements well. The new headteacher is a thorough and strategic planner who has established very clear pathways for school improvement, building on earlier good practice. The governors are supportive and yet challenging to the headteacher and key staff. They monitor school improvement closely and ensure policies are effectively implemented.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very positive about the school overall and strongly support the new leadership. Some parents expressed concern about the change to mixed aged classes and that their children's educational needs may not be met. The findings of the inspection are that the academic needs of pupils of all ages and abilities are met well.

The pupils enjoy school very much. They particularly appreciate the many opportunities they have for real responsibility, including involvement in the interviewing for the headteacher, through the school council and other means.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of education in the Foundation Stage to that of the rest of the school so that pupils are consistently challenged in all areas of learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The pupils' achievement is good overall. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good by Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain excellent standards in speaking and listening.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 2 and Year 6 have improved well since the last inspection. Literacy and numeracy skills are very good.
- There has been satisfactory improvement to achievement in the Foundation Stage although children do not make enough progress through self-chosen activities.
- Achievement in music is very good.
- ICT skills are good and used well. The pupils' general knowledge skills are very good and this helps their learning in all subjects.

Commentary

1. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved well since the last inspection. The trend of improvement in the results of National Tests by Year 6 is above the national trend for the last four years. There has been particularly significant improvement to standards in reading and writing at Year 2 and English at Year 6 which were in the top five percent in the country in 2004. These results were well above those of similar schools. The improvement in English is the direct result of sustained development in the subject over this period. Standards in mathematics and science have also improved well since the last inspection but are not as marked as in English. In 2004 the results of mathematics tests were well above similar schools in Year 2 but below them in Year 6. This related to a small percentage of less able pupils who did not make the expected levels for their age. The school has thoroughly analysed the results and improved the quality of problem solving as a result. Standards in science have also improved well and are in line with those of similar schools. Good leadership and management is successfully addressing weaknesses and continuing to drive up standards. The targets the school sets for attainment are challenging and are largely met. In all three subjects a much higher than average percentage of pupils reach levels that are above those normally expected for their age. Although there are some variations in national test results to standards attained by boys and girls there does not appear to be any significant difference by the time pupils leave the school. The achievement for pupils of all abilities is good from Years 1 to 6. There is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The value added to the schools' test results from Year 2 to Year 6 was in line to the national average but above that of similar schools for English and mathematics. The school is consistently and significantly above the average for the LEA for pupils attaining the expected levels for their age and those reaching higher levels in English, mathematics and science.

2. All pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans (IEPs). Some make very good progress towards achieving these targets. Pupils also make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Outside agencies such as the education psychology service are used when needed and the school makes good use of them.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 18.3 (18.0) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 17.5 (17.3) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 18.1 (18.6) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 31.2 (28.8) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| mathematics | 29.5 (29.1) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 31.2 (30.9) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The standards for the current pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics largely reflect previous test results and are well above expected levels. They are above expected levels for science. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are excellent by Year 6 and very good throughout the school. The pupils are very articulate and express themselves very clearly in a wide variety of situations. The skills of the majority of pupils are above those normally expected. The high standard is a result of the sustained efforts of teachers to provide many very good opportunities for pupils to speak and listen in all subjects and so build on the good skills many start school with. Standards of reading, writing and numeracy are also very good at all ages. Pupils read with accuracy and fluency and develop effective reference skills. They write for a very good range of purposes demonstrating a wide vocabulary and very good structure to their writing. Pupils' ability to calculate and work with numbers is very good because of a carefully structured programme of development and good teaching. The provision for literacy and numeracy provides good levels of challenge to gifted or talented pupils who achieve well. The pupils' very good general knowledge contributes to the progress they make in all subjects. Their knowledge and understanding is a significant strength in science for example and also in history.
4. The children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment which is generally above that typical for their age. Their achievement is at least satisfactory and good in some aspects of literacy and numeracy. However, the teacher's focus is sometimes too narrow and opportunities are missed to help the children achieve across all areas of learning. In particular, there are not enough opportunities for children to make progress through activities they choose for themselves.
5. Standards in ICT have improved well since the last inspection because of very good leadership and management and improved resources. The pupils are very confident in their basic skills and make good use of ICT in many subjects as a result. Standards in music are very good because of a well planned curriculum and very good specialist teaching. Pupils are particularly able in composition and performance.

6. The new headteacher is providing a very good focus for further improvement to standards through the development of pupils' learning skills and the curriculum. Assessment and targeting procedures are becoming more rigorous and effective. The school is building well on previous improvement and is well placed to continue to progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their personal development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality at the school is very good and the vast majority of parents support the school in this area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of pupils exhibit very positive attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and around the school.
- Pupils' personal development is very good, as is their relationship with adults and visitors to the school.

Commentary

7. The pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. Their attitudes to one another and to the teaching and support staff are consistently very good. When moving around the school and, when walking in and out of classrooms or the hall, most children displayed excellent attitudes and care for their fellow pupils. There were just a few examples observed during the inspection when small groups of pupils were a little boisterous, but this was usually in lessons where pupils were invited to brainstorm a particular theme or to discuss ideas with their working partner. An observed whole school assembly demonstrated the wonderful ability of the children to sit very respectfully and attentively as they were asked to reflect very quietly on a moral question posed by the headteacher.
8. A discussion with a group of year 6 pupils revealed that children are very happy at this school and that they feel safe and secure. Pupils are provided with a very wide range of opportunities to further their personal development. The provision of a school council is increasing the opportunities for pupils' personal development and every child in the school now has a 'voice' in the way the school is developing. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced through the school prefect and 'house' systems.
9. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to the school and work hard during lessons. These positive attitudes contribute significantly to their good progress.
10. The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good overall. A significant level of spirituality was evident in the observed assemblies and there are further elements of spirituality in subjects such as religious education, science, art, history and particularly in music, the provision for which is very strong; in this school. The moral and social development of pupils is very good and is enhanced, for example, through the many opportunities provided for working and playing in small groups. Most children have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The local and wider environment is used very well to foster pupils' social skills. The provision for cultural and multi-cultural development is also very strong and displays are used effectively to promote and demonstrate the richness and diversity of the world in which we live.
11. Overall attendance is very good and well above the national average. There is little evidence of pupil lateness and the vast majority of parents are supportive of the school in terms of helping to ensure that their children attend regularly and promptly. The school is proactive in monitoring and promoting the attendance of all pupils and

the occasional use of external agencies to support the school on attendance issues is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.6 | School data | 0.0 |
| 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.

12. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very much linked to the very powerful ethos of this school and, taken together with the very positive promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, they are a major strength of the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6. They are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures are good and used well throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers' high expectations contribute to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils listen, attend and retain information very well.
- There is good use of assessment to make sure work is challenging to pupils of all abilities. However, opportunities are missed in the Foundation Stage to develop learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- Homework is used well to raise standards.
- Teachers sometimes run out of time and do not conclude the lessons effectively.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2(5%) | 9 (24%) | 16 (42%) | 11(29 %) | 0 | 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.

13. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Assessment is good and used well to set work which challenges pupils of all abilities. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. However, the teaching in the Foundation Stage is not as good as that in the rest of the school. Examples of excellent teaching were observed in English and music.
14. The teachers create a very positive ethos for learning through their high expectations. In the best lessons, pupils strive to achieve very high standards because teachers make it very clear what is expected of them and the atmosphere is academic and challenging. At the start of all lessons the teachers discuss with the

pupils what they are expected to learn and how they will know if they have achieved the learning targets. This is often a very brisk and useful part of the lesson because the pupils are then eager to tackle their work. Teachers expect a calm and purposeful classroom and this is achieved well. The rapport between teachers and pupils is often very good and there is humour and a lightness of touch in the very best lessons which really appeals to the pupils. The learning support assistants play an important role in managing the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, and guiding them in activities. All have very good relationships with the children and they offer unobtrusive but effective support and as a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

15. The school has made good improvement to procedures for assessment and these are used well. The school uses a wide range of tests and tasks to measure pupils' attainment in English and mathematics towards the end of each year. They then use this to set targets for the forthcoming year based on National Curriculum levels. In the Foundation Stage, there is detailed assessment and record keeping of how well children progress through the early stages of reading and writing and these are used well to make sure pupils' skills are progressively developed. Some parents' expressed concern about the new mixed aged classes. However, because of the thorough use of assessment in English and mathematics, and good assessment for other subjects, work is generally challenging to pupils regardless of age and ability. There is good use of marking to support the assessment. Teachers are increasingly sharing targets for improvement with the pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are given carefully matched support by the headteacher, who acts as the special educational needs coordinator and the class teachers and learning support assistants. The assessment of the needs of these pupils and of their progress is good. Reviews are undertaken regularly and support is specific and based on an accurate analysis of progress. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from the support of a specialist special teacher although this support is only for a few hours each term.
16. The pupils bring a very good level of general knowledge to their work and make good use of this in their learning; they pay attention and take an interest in all their work. A priority in the school improvement planning is the further development of learning skills, particularly for the most able. Pupils are taught techniques to improve their own learning in the best lessons. They are taught to organise their work efficiently in mathematics, for example, and to develop logical procedures for solving problems. However, in science the lessons concentrate too much on knowledge and do not allow learning to flourish enough through practical skills in experimentation and investigation. The pupils make good use of ICT as a tool for learning and respond well to the good examples set by the teachers and pupils use of Interactive whiteboards in many subjects. In the Foundation Stage, the teacher misses opportunities to develop the pupils' learning. There is often too narrow a focus on the main area of learning that is planned for the group and situations that arise incidentally are overlooked. This is partly because opportunities for promoting all areas of learning are not identified regularly in the planning and also because some of the regular activities that the children choose for themselves do not have enough challenge built into them. However, there is good concentration on pupils' early reading, writing and mathematical skills which form a sound basis for later development.
17. Very good use is made of homework in most subjects. This is generally regularly and consistently given and teachers respect the effort that the pupils make.

Although a few parents feel that this is not the case, the overall use of homework makes a very good contribution to learning. This is particularly so in English and mathematics. There is also a good range of material available for parents to support pupils' learning at home, such as the guidance for strategies to be used in mathematical calculations. There are many opportunities for very able pupils to develop ideas through extended projects involving work at home and school. Pupils often make good use of ICT in this.

18. A weakness that occurred several times during the inspection was that lessons were cut short because time had run out and there was no summing up or plenary session. Occasionally, these took place at a later stage of the day, but it was not always evident from the planning whether a plenary was expected. This sometimes led to missed opportunities to reflect on achievement during the lesson and to discuss further development.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum provides good learning opportunities for all pupils. The curriculum is enriched by good provision for clubs and visits.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a wide variety of activities outside the school day.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- Curriculum development is good.
- Music is a strength of the curriculum.
- Planning does not always show how much teaching time is given to individual subjects within topics.

Commentary

19. The curriculum opportunities provided for pupils throughout the school are good. The curriculum covers the National Curriculum in full plus religious education and provides a good programme of personal, social and health education that takes account of drugs awareness and sex education through the Values Project. All subjects now have a scheme of work. The planning of cross-curricular links and for a two year cycle of work because of the mixed age classes has been an agreed focus for improving the curriculum. Careful thought has gone into planning the curriculum and links are becoming strong between subjects. This is enabling pupils to see links with subjects. However, the new curriculum is not yet rigorous enough in specifying the amount of time being spent on each subject within the 'umbrella' topic. There is planned use of ICT to support work in all areas of the curriculum.
20. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. Literacy is supported and extended through links with other subjects. For example, when learning about life at sea and exploration during the Tudor period, pupils use the knowledge they have gained to practise writing skills in English lessons. They create diaries of their imaginary experiences as sailors on board a sailing ship. There is extra provision in literacy for pupils who experience difficulties with their reading and writing skills.
21. The school makes good provision for children with special educational needs throughout the school. Procedures are well organised. The requirements of the

New Code of Practice are fully met. The coordinator works effectively with all members of staff. The headteacher is responsible for organising the support these pupils have and she ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. Individual targets are reviewed regularly to monitor each pupil's progress towards the learning targets and to set new ones. The school also ensures that provision matches the IEPs of pupils with formal statements of special educational needs. For pupils who are not on the special needs register but for whom staff have concerns, the school provides further literacy support.

22. Teachers work hard to make learning stimulating for pupils. There are strong links with the local secondary school that support the learning of pupils in sports and drama. Pupils' experience is broadened through participation in local events such as music and dance festivals.
23. There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through visits and visitors and many clubs run outside of the school day. Visits to places of interest include theatre and museum visits and visits to historical houses. Travelling theatres visit the school for pupils to both participate in and to appreciate a performance. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential trip to the Isle of Wight as part of their personal and social education. Music features prominently in the curriculum and is taught by a specialist teacher. Currently every pupil in Years 3 and 4 is learning to play the recorder. The range of clubs includes gardening, art, sports, computer and choir. The school has its own outdoor pool and all pupils have swimming lessons during the summer term.
24. Induction arrangements ensure that pupils settle quickly into the Reception class and Year 1 classes. Similarly, pupils are well prepared for transfer to the senior school through a programme of exchange visits of staff.
25. Educational inclusion is generally good. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils have access to the full curriculum. Where there is withdrawal from lessons for instrumental music tuition, it is timetabled so that pupils do not miss the same lessons for more than short periods.
26. The quality and quantity of staffing and accommodation match the needs of the curriculum. The recent acquisition of new books for the school library, an art room and music room, an ICT suite and interactive whiteboards in each classroom, have enhanced the delivery of the curriculum. The school also has extensive grounds which are used well to support aspects of the curriculum
27. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The procedures for child protection and welfare are good. The procedures for supporting and guiding pupils through monitoring are good and those for seeking and acting on pupils' views are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and support staff know their pupils very well and provide a high degree of welfare and pastoral support.

Commentary

28. Child protection systems and procedures are effective and the reporting person is known to all staff in the school. The school teaching and support staff who know their children well, provide a very high degree of welfare and pastoral support for individual pupils. Accordingly, every pupil has access to several adults in whom they have complete trust and confidence. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored both formally and informally by the school and the advice and support resulting from this monitoring are of a high standard.
29. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and regular fire drills are undertaken and recorded. The school is proactive in maintaining a safe school site through regular inspections and action plans. In addition, the school undertakes risk assessments for trips out of school. The induction arrangements for pupils entering the school are good.
30. Lessons such as personal, social, health and citizenship education are used well as an aid to the promotion of pupils' awareness of their surroundings. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced through the provision of both classroom and individual targets to which pupils are expected to work and effective feedback systems are also in place to inform teachers of the level of understanding of their pupils in individual lessons. The formal assessment systems and the use of assessment to support and guide pupils as they progress through the school are good. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. The school council helps to underpin the very positive ethos of the school by providing all pupils with the opportunity to have a say about how the school is run and managed. The school council was involved in the selection process for the present headteacher.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents' views of the school are very good, as are the school's links with parents. The school's links with the local community and other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of parents and children like the school. Parents feel that their children are making good progress.
- Communication with parents is very good and helps pupils to make progress.
- The school makes very good use of the local community, including other schools, to improve the quality of learning.

Commentary

31. The parents' meeting with the inspectors was well attended and the parental questionnaire was returned by a relatively high percentage of parents. A significant majority of parents who returned the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. A minority of parents have expressed some concern over the mixed age classes but the inspection team found that these were being managed well and included appropriate levels of work and challenge for pupils of all ages.
32. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual governing body report to parents and via regular newsletters is of a high standard. Advanced topic and curriculum information is also provided to parents. Annual academic reports to parents are of a good standard although there is a little inconsistency in the documented targets for pupils' further development, some of which are too general. The headteacher and her enthusiastic staff are always available to assist parents with any problems or concerns. There is a clear

determination on the part of senior management to continue to improve school/home relationships for the ultimate benefit of children, parents and for the school itself.

33. Several parents are regular visitors to the school and they provide very welcome classroom support and occasional assistance with external visits and extra curricular activities. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement, which is designed to promote improved communication between the school, parents and children. There is a very effective and hard working Parent and Teacher Association which is very supportive of the school. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good.
34. The school has very good links with the community and regular field trips are made to study the local and wider environment. The school also has very good and developing links with other local primary and secondary schools and, in particular, with the secondary school to which most children will eventually transfer. There are a variety of projects taking place between the two schools and Year 7 staff visit to prepare Year 6 pupils for their transfer. The links also make a good contribution to the training of teachers and other staff.
35. The developing links with parents, together with the very good links with the community and other schools, provide a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development and is a major strength of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is providing very clear guidance for future improvement in standards. She works well with the deputy headteacher and key staff to effectively manage developments.
- The governing body is efficient and well organised. They have good procedures for monitoring school developments.
- There are good procedures for staff development overall. There are limitations to the effectiveness of management of the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

36. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection because good leadership and management have focused on raising standards, particularly in literacy. Over the last two years there have been significant changes through the appointment of a temporary headteacher for two terms and then the current headteacher since April 2004. These changes have broadened the scope of school improvement planning and generated more involvement of staff, parents and pupils in the process. The consistent good governance has ensured that the recent faster pace of change has strengthened the ethos for learning and built on the many strengths in pupils' attitudes and very good relations with staff and parents.
37. The headteacher has very clear strategies for school improvement and these have had a strong impact in developing the role of subject coordinators. There are good procedures in place for staff to monitor standards of pupils' work, promote good teaching and learning and improve resources. The staff are now much more accountable for the budgets of their subjects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked together well to establish the strategic development of subject coordinators roles and that of a new senior management team. Leadership and management now have much more of a shared team approach with clear guidance from the top. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set very good examples through their own teaching.
38. The governing body are active and involved in school improvement. They have well established procedures for regularly scrutinising the work of subject coordinators through meetings built on key questions. They are continuing to develop this. They provide critical and challenging support to the school and debate improvement issues fully. Policies are maintained well and the governing body were very involved in changing admission numbers. They contribute well to the school's overall ethos for learning. The school is well placed to allow staff time for planning and preparation within the school day. The governing body have played a very significant role in establishing these procedures and managing the financial commitments. The costs of improvement are carefully calculated and managed. Financial management is good and administrative staff are efficient and thorough. They also play an important role in establishing the positive nature of the school and they are usually the first to meet and greet parents and other visitors. The leadership and management make a good contribution to the inclusivity of the school. They have clear policies on race relations, special educational needs and disability. They are actively involved in ensuring these are carried out effectively.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 641,309 | Balance from previous year | 51,910 |
| Total expenditure | 630,225 | Balance carried forward to the next | 29,967 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,681 | | |

39. The role of subject coordinators is improving and their contribution to school improvement planning is much stronger than it was. The role of the Foundation Stage coordinator is limited as she is not the reception class teacher and there are not enough opportunities for her to support the teacher in bringing the quality of education up to that of the rest of the school. The headteacher is aware of this and is looking at ways to develop the role. The processes for setting sharper targets for staff's professional development are well planned and linked closely to whole school improvement. The headteacher has very good strategies for further development in this area. Overall, the quality of leadership and management leaves the school well placed for further improvement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There are currently thirty children in the reception year. Older children enter in September but remain part time until January. Younger children start in January and are part time for their first three weeks. At the time of the inspection, older children had been in school full time for half a term and the younger children for three weeks. In this short period of time the older children have made good progress in their reading, writing and number work and almost all the children were securely settled in the class.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The planned curriculum is now satisfactory, covering all areas of learning. Children have opportunity to initiate and to choose activities and a variety of activities are provided in morning and afternoon sessions. The reception year now has its own outdoor area. At the time of the inspection, this was being developed to include a covered area and an all weather surface, providing potentially good facilities for an outdoor learning environment.

The curriculum lacks enrichment and this restricts the children's ability to explore, to extend and to develop their learning in depth. Although a broad range of activities are provided that cover all the areas of learning, the full learning potential of each is not planned for and links are not made to identify how learning can be enhanced as it is continued from one activity to another.

The teaching is satisfactory overall. The lesson planning and target setting indicate high expectations that are reflected in the good progress made in reading, writing skills and number work. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, although there are unsatisfactory elements within the planning and teaching methods. These primarily relate to extending the children's learning in their self-selected activities. Adults tend to supervise, ensuring that the children are all busy, rather than sitting with the children, becoming involved with their play and extending the learning. Frequently there are no plenary sessions, where the children can reflect upon their work and where the class teacher can discuss with the children, thereby helping them to consider how their work could be improved or extended. The assessment systems, particularly in the development of writing skills and in mathematics are good.

Children enter with overall above typical standards for their age and well above typical standards in their spoken language. The children achieve satisfactorily overall. They make good progress in their writing, reading and number skills. Few children do not attain all of the early learning goals. Around half the children are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum when they leave the reception year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel safe and secure and they develop an increasing confidence to select activities, to speak to adults and to be independent.

- There are good opportunities for children to learn about relationships and friendships as they play and work together.
- There are insufficient opportunities to help the children practise ways of solving problems.

Commentary

40. Children enter with standards above those usually seen. They achieve satisfactorily and all attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The teaching for this aspect of the curriculum is satisfactory and at times good. Most children maintain their concentration on an activity for a good length of time. A noticeable feature is the children's good social skills, where they collaborate and work with others whilst respecting the needs of others. In activities such as music and physical education in the hall, teachers develop the children's confidence to work as part of a class, to speak in front of the others and they establish the social skills of turn taking. A good feature within the lessons is the many opportunities for children to work together and to select their own activities and this aspect of the curriculum is good, enabling children to develop their confidence and self-esteem. As the children work at these activities, practitioners tend to act as facilitators rather than intervening and challenging the children. For example, a group of girls selected to cut and stick the numbers up to ten onto a number line, but they were not helped to plan or to develop strategies for successfully completing their task.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress and achieve well in developing reading and writing skills.
- Assessment systems for reading and writing are good.

Commentary

41. The children achieve satisfactorily overall and almost all will attain or exceed the early learning goals. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The children's spoken language is very good. Almost all children are already confident to speak in front of the class and many of the older children express themselves clearly, using a wide vocabulary. Children are good at participating in conversations. They discuss with each other as they work and they negotiate as they play, recognising the conventions of language. At times their conversation is influenced by familiar literature as they re-create roles and experiences. For example, a group of three girls discussed together before starting their role play and decided that they would all be 'poor girls' who could 'talk to the animals and be friends with the woodland animals'. Opportunities to stimulate language are sometimes taken, as the learning support assistant did when she read a book about dinosaurs with two boys, but this is not consistent practice and opportunities for developing language following a story session, a discussion or a video are not sufficiently well planned and utilised. Overall, adults do not plan how they will extend the children's spoken language in order to help them organise and clarify their thinking, nor do they provide role play in a range of imaginative settings that stimulate the children to use extended and specific vocabulary.
42. The teaching of early reading and writing is generally effective. Stories are read with expression. Children are quickly introduced to reading and those that have been in the class since September have achieved well and made good progress. All are established within a reading scheme. Children understand what they read and they make sensible predictions. The class teacher ensures that she hears each child read

individually on two occasions a week. However, because each child reads individually, these sessions are rushed and there is little time to discuss the book in any depth. Good use is made of homework to develop the children's reading skills. The children who started in September have made good progress with their writing. They recognise the sounds of letters in words when the class teacher says them slowly and clearly and they write the letter to match the sound. They independently write several key words correctly and the most able write simple greetings in cards accurately and independently. Adults do not encourage the children to extend their sentence structure in writing sessions and this, together with a limited range of writing, restricts their achievement. Assessment systems are good and the class teacher identifies the next stage in the children's learning and keeps a careful record of their progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis upon number work, but an under-emphasis upon the problem solving aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

43. The pupils achieve well and all but a small minority are already working at around the early learning goals. The teaching of mathematical development is good and it reflects the class teacher's high aspirations. Work in children's books shows that they have achieved well and made good progress since September. High ability children are recording simple addition sums. The class teacher leads effective sessions where she formally teaches the children how to write the numerals correctly. Much of the mathematics teaching is in short periods of time that are well focused and at these times the children are separated by ability. Their learning is carefully directed by an adult as the children play 'games', using mathematical apparatus. Specific activities also develop mathematical knowledge such as introducing the children to the language of comparative length when they observed and compared different length straws. A weakness in this planning was that these skills were not linked to some of the free choice activities, in order to consolidate and extend the children's learning in 'play' activities. Within the children's free choice activities, there are many occasions in which they need to develop their special awareness and ability to, for example, estimate, but these are not identified and developed by the staff.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Insufficient teaching was seen to make a judgement on provision in this area of the curriculum and no previous work was available to make a judgement upon achievement from when the children entered the class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a well above average general knowledge.
- In the activities observed during the inspection, the children were not sufficiently extended and their achievement was unsatisfactory.

- The curriculum has been improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory.

Commentary

44. Little direct teaching of this area of the curriculum was seen, but the medium term planning has a suitable range of activities. In the teaching that was observed, there were missed opportunities for developing the children's learning and therefore the children did not achieve as well as they should. For example, following a story session, when a child explained that a balloon made a noise because the air was escaping, this was not discussed or followed through. Children enjoy exploring sand, water and dough, but there is no clearly planned progression for these activities. Children use technology confidently, such as a computer and the interactive whiteboard and adults ensure that they are used appropriately. Construction toys are used well by the children, but no teaching of how to use tools or extend this work was observed. Opportunities for cooking are provided. Children have a range of equipment that is available around the classroom and the few that selected to observe the world through coloured cellophane were suitably helped in their exploration.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a satisfactory control of their body and good control of tools such as a pencil.

Commentary

45. Overall standards are satisfactory and the children achieve satisfactorily due to the teaching that they receive. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The opportunity for physical activity is currently hampered by the construction work taking place on the outdoor playing surface. In the classroom, the children move in a controlled manner. They are given careful instruction in how to control a pencil and their writing is well formed. They have similarly good dexterity with the computer mouse and construction toys and puzzles. In the school hall, the children demonstrated satisfactory awareness of space, balance, co-ordination and skills to control a ball. The teacher carefully made them aware of the impact of exercise on their heart rate and this was a good feature of the lesson. In the lesson seen, there were weaknesses in the planning, related to the lack of opportunity for children to explore space and to make their own choices.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's imaginative linguistic development is very good.

Commentary

46. The children achieve satisfactorily and they should attain all the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The teaching for this area of the curriculum is satisfactory. Adults provide a suitable range of opportunities but they do not intervene sufficiently, to extend the children's exploration and observation skills, or to help them to plan ahead. Children are provided with a range of activities, such as model farms, pirate ships and construction sets and they use these well, becoming engrossed in their own imaginative world. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their own ideas as they explore paints and collage, and this is good. In music lessons, children listen attentively and many have good listening skills, identifying many instruments in a piece of music. They have a lesser ability to describe the music imaginatively and their ability to interpret music through movement is just satisfactory. In contrast, their imaginative ability with words, drama and role play is very good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is very good in reading and writing.
- Speaking and listening skills are excellent.
- Effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- Achievement is good.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

47. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards in literacy skills and by the end of Year 6 achievement has been good and pupils are attaining well above the national average in reading and writing and they have very high standards in speaking and listening skills.
48. Throughout the school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills of speaking and listening in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are attentive and listen well in class. Many lessons include a time for pupils to discuss work with a partner or a time for a whole class discussion. This builds confidence and as a result pupils are articulate speakers by the end of Year 6. This is evident in their ability to ask and answer questions and in the quality of discussion. They talk expressively about their work and things, which interest them, with each other and with adults. This very high level of skill in speaking and listening is a contributory factor in the very good standards achieved in reading and writing.
49. Standards in reading are well above national averages by the end of Year 6. The reading programme, daily opportunities to read to themselves and the guided reading session, where a small group of pupils work with an adult studying the same text, has been well implemented in Years 3 to 6. The adults responsible for these sessions are keeping secure records that track the individual's progress. The resources in classrooms are used well and the interactive whiteboards contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The library is in a central position in the school and is a most attractive place for both individuals and groups to work. It was seen to be used well during the inspection. The recent flood which destroyed all the books in the library has resulted in a complete replenishing of new books which were chosen by the whole staff to support the curriculum.
50. Attainment in writing by the end of Year 6 is well above the national average. Standards have fluctuated since the national tests in 2000 but are now well above average. At age eleven standards have risen from being similar to national levels to being well above. Some of the work seen during the inspection was of a very high standard. Targets are set termly based on individual needs and notified to parents. By the end of Year 6 pupils have acquired very good skills in writing and they have many opportunities for using these skills in extended writing.
51. Information and communication technology is used to develop pupils' literacy skills. Pupils listen to stories on CD Roms and use word processing programs to present

their work. Pupils have Internet access to use in research. Each class has an adequate supply of both fiction and non-fiction books for the pupils' use.

52. Teaching during the inspection was good overall with some very good and excellent teaching observed. The teaching of English has recently been the focus of intensive development in the school. Marking is now consistent across the school. It shows the pupil how well they have achieved the task and what needs to be done to improve. Pupils with special educational needs are given clear well-focused targets that help them to improve. They are well supported in lessons by well-briefed teaching assistants. This raises their achievement. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the study of well-chosen texts and through visits and visitors that enhance the English curriculum.
53. At the time of the previous inspection, the role of coordinators was not developed sufficiently. There has been good improvement in this respect. The coordinator has an overview of the whole school and she has used the available data to identify weaknesses in teaching and learning. Improving boy's writing has been a recent focus. Measures, such as using non-fiction texts, have been taken to improve attainment. These have been very successful and boys now perform as well as the girls.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. The use of literacy skills in other subjects is good but it is still an area for development. The staff are being creative in approaches to cross-curricular planning but this is still in its early stages. The importance the school attaches to the use of language across the curriculum is a contributing factor in the very good standard the pupils achieve.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' understanding of numbers and ability to complete written calculations is very good.
- The pupils' ability to solve mathematical problems is improving but is not as effective as their other mathematical skills.
- Teachers make very good use of the interactive whiteboard to make lessons more interesting and challenging.

Commentary

55. Standards are well above the national average and a high proportion of pupils are working at levels above those normally expected for their age throughout the school. There has been a good improvement to the results in national tests in both Year 2 and Year 6 since 2000. However, the results were not as high as those in some similar schools for Year 6, largely because a small percentage of less able pupils do not reach the level expected for their age. The school identified a weakness in the pupils' problem solving skills and has taken strong steps to address this. The quality of teaching and learning is good.

56. By Year 2, the vast majority of pupils show very good numeracy skills. They add and subtract numbers mentally between 1 and 100 with speed and accuracy. They have a very good understanding of strategies for counting on in groups of 2, 5 and 10 and other numbers. The most able are very quick to identify missing numbers in a sequence. They explain the strategies they use well. This is a direct result of probing questions matched well to the pupils' ability and challenging and entertaining games and activities to help them retain number facts and think quickly. These skills are further developed through the school. Teachers use a good balance of quick fire questions and more formal mental mathematics problems where the pupils have to identify the operations used and fulfil extended mental calculations. By Year 6, the pupils multiply and divide to two decimal places and calculate comparative percentages, fractions and decimals. The more able have a very good understanding of negative numbers and complete simple algebraic equations in four quadrants. The curriculum planning provides very clear guidance for teaching the most effective strategies for written calculations and this contributes to pupils' success. The subject coordinator has produced some helpful leaflets to explain these strategies to parents.
57. The very good numeracy skills give the pupils a good basis for mathematical investigations. Teachers are increasingly building a part of every lesson around investigations which are well planned to challenge all ages and abilities. For example pupils in a Year 1 and 2 class investigate shapes; the more able pupils by investigating the permutations of patterns formed by six squares whilst less able pupils explore the shapes in a robot drawing. The mathematics content of this lesson was high and pupils learned the properties of a wide range of regular and irregular shapes as a result. However, in some lessons there is too much reliance on textbooks which are not matched closely enough to the pupils' needs. Teachers' question pupils well and they explain their thinking well. However, there are not many times when pupils write down the strategies they have used to solve problems and investigations. As a result, pupils miss opportunities to clarify and structure their ideas further. The pupils are developing very good attitudes to problem solving. They concentrate hard and apply logical thought. The presentation of pupils' mathematics work is of a very high standard and pupils' generally show good organisational skills.
58. The subject is led and managed well. Teachers are making good use of ICT for teaching mathematics, particularly the interactive whiteboards. Oral and mental mathematics sessions are significantly enhanced by the use of good quality software generating number patterns, quizzes and problems in all aspects of the subject. Very good use is made of the whiteboards for demonstrations of new concepts or for rehearsing particularly tricky number operations. The pupils make good use of the White Boards to solve mathematical problems, use spreadsheets and data handling programs and investigate shapes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. This is satisfactory and an area planned for further development. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in several subjects. Good use is made of mathematical skills in ICT through spreadsheets, graphs and problem solving. Pupils use measurements and data handling in science and design and technology projects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' knowledge and understanding in many areas of the curriculum is developed very thoroughly and, in many year groups, is very good.
- The practical aspects of scientific enquiry skills are not developed to a similarly high standard and this reduces the pupils' attainment and achievement.
- The attitudes and enthusiasm of the pupils are very good by Year 6.

Commentary

60. Standards are above expected levels for the current pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils' achievement is good. This reflects the good teaching. There has been very good improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
61. The pupil's knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes is well above the average in the Years 3, 5 and 6. In the Years 5 and 6 much of the work, such as that on micro-organisms in Year 6 and the differences between gasses, liquids and solids in Year 5, is covered in some considerable depth. The pupils' scientific enquiry skills are good, but this aspect of the curriculum is recognised by the school as the weakest area of the curriculum and the one for focused development.
62. The achievement of the pupils in their development of subject knowledge and in their understanding of scientific ideas was good in all the lessons observed and very good in the oldest class in the school. This achievement is a reflection of the good subject knowledge of the teachers and also of the pupils' very good attitudes to their work and their confidence as learners. In the Year 6 lesson, which did not include a practical element, the teacher stimulated and challenged all the pupils well and provided work that was well matched to the ability groups within the class. All the pupils identified that the work was new to them and they all worked hard in order to succeed in their tasks.
63. The other two lessons focused upon practical work. In the one infant lesson presented, the teaching was well focused towards the development of the pupils' scientific enquiry skills, particularly predicting at the start of the lesson and comparing results at the end. They achieved well and provided some good conclusions from their observations. The higher ability pupils can explain their observations and are starting to identify cause and effect in terms of particles moving and the space between them.
64. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, such as a lack of time for science, and gaps in the curriculum have been addressed well. However, the school has just remodelled its planning and it is not clear that there are sufficient regular science lessons. The new planning does not yet include the systematic development of scientific enquiry skills, which is the area of the curriculum identified through monitoring and analysis of national test results as a relative weakness in the provision. The co-ordinator has recently introduced good graded recording sheets for scientific enquiry to influence the development of these skills and these sheets are consistently used throughout the school. The school has introduced new assessment systems that when fully functional should be good. There is good use made of ICT equipment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of pupils' work is above average by Year 6 and there has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils are effectively taught very good basic skills so they can make effective use of computers and other technology with minimum guidance and support.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT.

Commentary

65. Pupils of all abilities achieve well through the school. Standards are typical for their age by Year 2 and above these by Year 6. Throughout the school there are examples of very good work. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection as a result of very good leadership and management. The staff's professional knowledge is much better than it was because of well focused training opportunities matched to good quality resources.
66. The quality of teaching is good and the majority of lessons observed in the ICT suite were very good. The teachers have a good knowledge of the previous attainment of the pupils and make certain that the lesson challenges all pupils. They group pupils well so that they challenge and support each other, provide additional and simplified guidance for the less able and those with special educational needs and high levels of independence and investigative opportunities for the most able. By Year 2, the majority of pupils have the skill to select and organise their own files and save their work to appropriate folders with no assistance. The Year 5 and 6 pupils very confidently organise their own multi-media presentations involving audio and video facilities, set up the projector and demonstrate their skills to others. The curriculum is broad and balanced and by Year 6 the pupils' skills are good across a wide range of aspects of the subject. They have a very good understanding of creating formulae on spreadsheets and using the data to solve mathematical problems. They skilfully use a program to control events such as traffic lights and create pathways and routes.
67. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, see ICT as a useful tool for learning. This reflects the good use teachers make of interactive whiteboards and other technology. Many pupils use computers as a matter of course in their homework, rehearsing skills they have learned at school or in researching the Internet. The pupils are very positive about using ICT as a result. They are persistent and thoughtful learners and are very happy to share their ideas and support each other. The resources are good and the subject coordinator has very good plans for further improvement. She manages and promotes the subject very well through demonstrations and training and taking the opportunity to work alongside colleagues.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. This is good. Over the last two years the school has introduced interactive whiteboards into many classrooms and supported their use through good software for several subjects. Information and communication technology is used particularly well in music where pupils are composing and arranging their own songs on computer. Information and communication technology skills are well developed in mathematics and science. Research and desk top publishing skills are used well in geography and history.

HUMANITIES

69. Standards in **geography** are around the average in most year groups and the achievement of the pupils is satisfactory overall. The teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory and as a result the pupils made satisfactory progress. In the younger year groups there is an emphasis of studying locations. In the Years 1 and 2, the pupils follow 'Barbary the Bear' on his travels to many cities of the world. In their more detailed study of an island community, they discuss the various occupations, buildings and transport on the island and they recognise the importance of the pier or jetty to an island community. The study of communities is extended satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4 to an African village in Tanzania. In Year 6 the pupils produce good quality work, with well labelled diagrams to depict the course of a river, rock formation and the formation of underground streams. The recorded work in the pupils' books includes relatively little practical fieldwork skills or using maps of various scales. The subject leader has recognised these weaknesses in provision and intends to plan the development of these skills across the school. Since the previous inspection there has been a good increase in the use of ICT that has led to an improvement in standards. The use of homework, in the form of projects using ICT, in Year 6, is good. There are good curriculum links to science and to art and the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development.
70. **History** was sampled during the inspection. No lessons were observed due to the constraints of the timetable. Looking at pupils' work in books and taking into account displays of history work around the school, standards are judged to be better now than they were at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach levels higher than normally seen. This is partly due to history taking a more prominent part in the curriculum. Another factor is the implementing of a scheme of work and links with other subjects where possible. Planning shows that there is satisfactory coverage of the subject. In Years 5 and 6, pupils study a period of history in some depth and aspects of the subject are linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils, who were learning about King Henry VIII's six wives, drew and painted portraits of them in their art lessons.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' personal development through religious education is very good.
- The pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity but limited understanding of other faiths by Year 6.
- Teachers make very good use of drama and debate to raise standards. The Internet is used well as a learning tool.

Commentary

71. The quality of teaching seen was very good. No lessons were observed for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but the evidence of work and planning suggests teaching is at least good. Overall standards are above those expected by the Agreed Syllabus by Years 2 and 6. The pupils' spiritual development through the subject is very good. By Year 2, the pupils express their wonder at the world very well through expressive writing about 'Poppy Day'. By Year 6, pupils express their views and beliefs articulately and develop a very good sense of tolerance and fairness. They use their very good English skills well to write their own stories with a strong Christian moral. They develop a good understanding of concepts of self-discipline and ambition through their studies of religious leaders. They learn to express their feelings in interesting and dramatic ways. 'Dance is the thing that makes me happy because I am in a world of my own.' The pupils explore religion in the community and debate challenging issues such as whether children should go to funerals. The presentation of work is of a high standard throughout the school and pupils clearly take a pride in their work.
72. The pupils study a number of faiths during their time in school. However, there are not enough opportunities built in to revisit earlier learning and ensure the highest standards, particularly in aspects of learning about other faiths. The pupils have a good knowledge of the facts of Christian worship and relate these to some of the key features of other faiths.
73. The subject coordinator was absent during the inspection. The outcomes of pupils' work, the standards of teaching and action planning seen, suggest leadership and management promotes the subject well. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when standards were similar. There is some very good use of technology to make lessons interesting. For example, access to Internet sites on world poverty provokes considerable thought amongst Year 6 pupils. The teachers questioning is very thought provoking and pupils are successfully encouraged to put themselves in the place of others through hot seating and other drama techniques.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on provision in **design and technology** and **physical education**. Two lessons were observed in **design and technology** during the inspection, one with Year 3 and 4 pupils and one with a small group of Year 5 pupils. Both lessons were well taught and pupils' learning was good. In both lessons pupils were learning new skills and Year 5 pupils were learning why it is important to handle food safely and hygienically. In the other lesson pupils were investigating different techniques to create a 'pop up' scene for a Mothers' Day card. Both lessons were well resourced. A full range of experiences in design and making is offered to the pupils, including cookery. There was very little previous work on display and no photographic evidence which could be taken into account, so no judgement has been made on standards or provision.
75. One lesson was observed in Years 1 and 2 and one in Year 3 and 4 and part of a lesson was observed for Year 6 in **physical education**. Discussions were held with the subject coordinator and a group of Year 6 pupils. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and a reasonable amount of time is devoted to the subject. In the lessons seen many elements of good teaching were observed. Pupils were

actively involved throughout the lessons. They are encouraged to reflect on their own practice and that of others and make suggestions for improvement. This was very good in Year 6 where pupils were demonstrating games they have made up. There is progressive development in skills for gymnastics, games and swimming. The school makes good use of its own small swimming pool so that pupils develop good skills and knowledge, particularly in water safety. Inter school team games and tournaments make a good contribution to physical development. The school attained the challenging Gold Activemark through the quality of its provision in 2002.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The use of a separate art room makes a good contribution to learning.
- Pupils work with concentration and imagination.

Commentary

76. Standards are typical for the pupils' age by Year 2 and Year 6. There are indications of good standards in the breadth of pupils' experiences. The younger pupils were seen making sketches of Katie Morag's island from looking at illustrations in the story books. They showed good pencil control and most of them used observational skills to produce work of a satisfactory standard. A small group were painting pictures of the grandmothers in the story and this work showed close attention to detail and an ability to choose a suitably sized paintbrush and to mix colours. The older pupils, who were being taught by a specialist art teacher in the art room, demonstrated the progress pupils make while at school. In this good lesson on landscape and cityscape paintings, ICT had been used to research pictures of famous buildings to be used as a starting point for their individual work in the lesson. During the whole class focus pupils showed very good general knowledge of famous artists and their individual styles. One pupil recognised a picture of a Lowry painting by the people in the painting 'because that is how he paints people'. Another pupil saw a similarity between an abstract cityscape by Leger and Picasso's style. The teacher was quick to develop these observations for the benefit of the whole class. The standard of sketching by some of these pupils was good. The pupils have very good attitudes to learning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The coordinator has not been in post long and she is already developing a plan to improve attainment.

Music

The provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All the teaching is by the co-ordinator. At times the teaching is excellent.
- The attitudes of the pupils as they work are excellent.
- A high proportion of the pupils in the Years 3 to 6 learn how to play musical instruments.
- The skills of the class teachers are not being developed.

Commentary

77. Standards in Year 6 are well above average. In this year group, all the pupils know that there are a range of scales in which music is written and they are able to compose a piece of music for two parts in a given scale. They have the capacity to improve their performance through practice and by amending their work, and to sensibly appraise the work of others. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to learn a musical instrument and in Year 6 around a quarter of the pupils read music and play an instrument. Some learn to play more than one instrument. These high standards are due to the vision and the very good teaching provided by the co-ordinator who has very high expectations and very good subject knowledge.
78. The lessons observed were quickly paced and very well planned. Throughout the school the pupils are very receptive. Their attitudes and their ability to work together in a co-operative manner are excellent. An example of excellent teaching was seen in one Years 3 and 4 class, where the standards were excellent for the pupils' ages.
79. At the start of this excellent lesson, the pupils appraised a piece of African dance music and identified the mood and the instruments they heard. They then sight read and played a piece of written music on recorders. A quick reminder from the teacher of how to play the notes enabled the pupils to sight read this two part piece of music accurately and to accompany a group of vocalists. Through support of the teacher, these pupils made very noticeable improvements in their singing skills. Within the second half of the lesson the pupils composed and played an African style piece of dance music played upon drums, together with a dance, which they performed as a class by the end of the lesson. This very good achievement was through a series of very well structured activities excellently taught and developed by the teacher.
80. The co-ordinator provides many opportunities for the pupils to perform and to play together such as in the school's brass band. Singing is taught in assemblies every week and the standards are good. Assessment systems are in need of development, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Resources are good and the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

81. The pupils' personal and social education is central to the philosophy of the school and a key feature of its success. There are well-planned opportunities to educate pupils about sex education and drugs awareness. They discuss issues such as racism or sexism in an open manner. The very good links with the pre-school and secondary school all develop the pupils' knowledge of the world of work and citizenship. The pupils feel that they benefit significantly from lessons in this aspect. The very high standards of speaking and listening allow the pupils to articulate their concerns well and this is increasingly translated into practical charity work and other activities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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