

INSPECTION REPORT

NELMES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Havering

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102321

Headteacher: Mrs V Shooter

Lead inspector: Peter Sudworth

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 December 2004

Inspection number: 267373

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	375
School address:	Wingletye Lane Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM11 3BX
Telephone number:	01708 447676
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Perkins
Date of previous inspection:	5 July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Nelmes Primary is a larger than average primary school situated on the outskirts of Hornchurch. It serves a wide area. About one-fifth of the pupils come from districts beyond the school's traditional catchment area. It has 375 boys and girls on roll, educated in 14 classes. The area is socio-economically advantaged. The percentage of pupils whose parents claim free meal entitlement is below the national average at 7.6 per cent. Most pupils are White British, though a significant number of pupils are from other ethnic groups. Whilst some of these pupils have a first language other than English (8.5 per cent), almost all are fluent in English. One pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (13 per cent) is below average. Most of these pupils have learning problems, but a few have emotional difficulties. Five of these pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Children enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. Most have had attended pre-school provision. Attainment on entry is about average, though there is a wide spread of ability. Movement into and out of the school other than the normal time of admission is above average. Most of the Year 6 cohort in 2004 had come to the school after the start of Year 3. The school has Investors in People status and obtained an achievement award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
19852	Mike Fowler	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History
33124	Bridget Trim	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Art and design Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Nelmes Primary is a very good school, providing a very good standard of education for its pupils. It is led and managed very well. There is a very good team spirit amongst the staff, which is highly committed to do its best for all the pupils in its care. Pupils relate very well to one another and to their teachers. Lessons are purposeful and productive. Good teaching combined with pupils' very good attitudes to work enable pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 6 and they often reach above expected standards. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, history and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and she has a very effective working partnership with the deputy headteacher and senior staff.
- Teaching is good and frequently very good in Year 6 and the teachers take very good care of the pupils.
- Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to work, which assist their good achievements.
- The Foundation Stage is not sufficiently regarded as a separate key stage.
- The ICT suite and the school library are positioned inconveniently and do not make it easy to use them.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in addressing the issues raised at that time. Standards have risen in science by Year 6, in physical education in Years 1 and 2 and in ICT and history throughout the school. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are very much improved. There has been a slight improvement in pupils' spiritual development. Assessment systems and marking are more rigorous. Leadership has improved. The curriculum structure is better and subject leaders are more effective. The accommodation has improved, but the computer suite is cramped for space and the library still awaits development.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	B	B	B
mathematics	A	B	A	A*
science	A	B	A	A*

Key: A very high; (top 5% of schools nationally) 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.

Children achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage in most areas of their learning.

Pupils achieve well in the rest of the school. Foundation Stage children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed expectations, though they have too few opportunities to make choices. Year 2 boys and girls over time have performed better than boys and girls nationally in tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The trend of improvement has been above the national trend. In science, teacher-assessed results have been below the national average because of over-cautious marking. Year 6 pupils have also performed better than boys and girls nationally. From a position of strength, the overall trend of improvement over the last five years by the end of Year 6 has been in line with the national picture. Challenging targets were reached in mathematics in 2004, but they were just missed in English at the higher level.

Currently, attainment is above average in all aspects of English in both Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well. They develop good skills in reading and enjoy books. Handwriting is well developed and speaking and listening skills are above expectations. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is currently in line with expectations in Year 2, and pupils achieve satisfactorily, but overuse of mathematics workbooks in the infants affects the quality of experience. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is above expectations and they achieve well. Pupils receive a good grounding in science in Years 1 and 2 and they have a good understanding of the expected content for that age. They are prepared well for work in the juniors. They reach an above average standard in Year 6 because of the good attention given to scientific investigation in all classes. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in ICT and attain more highly than in most schools. Pupils achieve soundly in religious education and reach the locally expected standard. No judgements could be made in art and design, design and technology, geography, music or physical education. Pupils' attainment is above expectations in history and they achieve well.

Pupils from ethnic minorities and those whose first language is not English make similar rates of progress to other pupils. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support that they receive and the account the teachers take of them when lessons are planned. Overall, able pupils achieve well in their academic studies and pupils with special talents have good opportunities to extend their interests in sport and music.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are nurtured well. Pupils' moral and social development is very good; their cultural development is good and their spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The well-planned curriculum and good range of extra-curricular activities ensure that the pupils are prepared effectively for their next stage of education. **Teaching and assessment are good.** Pupils make good strides with their learning. The staff take very good care of the pupils. There are good links with the parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is a great strength and contributes highly to the school's success. The deputy headteacher and key staff provide very good support and lead by example. Very good management structures are in place. Governance is good, fulfils statutory requirements and provides both support and challenge in equal measure.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the progress that their children make and the standards they attain. They feel comfortable approaching the school and find the teachers supportive. They state that the school takes very good care of their children. Parents have a very high regard for the school's leadership. Pupils enjoy school and enjoy their activities. They feel that they learn a lot in lessons. They like their teachers and they enjoy playing with their friends at playtimes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that practice in the Foundation Stage accords more with the national guidance for that age group.
- Provide better facilities for lessons in information and communication technology.
- Improve the accommodation for the school library.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The children's attainment on entry is average. The pupils achieve well in much of their learning and have often reached above average standards in key areas of learning by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' competence in information and communication technology is better than that usually seen for their age. All pupils achieve well, including those who have English as an additional language or who have learning difficulties.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection report.
- Pupils achieve well in all aspects of English and in mathematics, science and information and communication technology by Year 6.
- Pupils receive a good grounding in the infants that provides a solid foundation for their later success.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Results in national tests over time have been good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

1. Although there is a wide range of ability on entry to the reception classes, overall, their skills meet expectations for their age. The children achieve satisfactorily at this age in most areas of their learning and reach the goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed expectations in this area of learning.
2. Over time, boys and girls have performed better than boys and girls nationally in Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The trend of improvement has been above the national trend. Teacher assessments in science in the past two years have been below the national average, but inspection evidence indicates that these assessments have been too cautious.
3. Boys and girls have performed better than boys and girls in national tests at the end of Year 6. From a position of strength because of continuing good results, the overall trend of improvement in Year 6 has been in line with the national picture over the last five years. The school reached its challenging targets for the national tests in 2004 in most respects, but just missed the percentage in writing for the higher level. However, one-quarter of the pupils who were not predicted to reach the higher level in English only just missed it. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in science at Year 6 and in ICT and history throughout the school. Pupils' attainment has also improved in physical education in Years 1 and 2.
4. Currently, attainment is above average in all aspects of English in both Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well. They develop good skills in reading and many pupils develop a love of books. By Year 6, pupils have good library skills that enable them to research effectively. They know how to use books to extract information from them. The above average standard in reading reached in Year 6, in which pupils display good accuracy and fluency when reading aloud, is supported well by regular reading at home. The good teaching of handwriting results in well-formed letters and a neat script. Many pupils present their work really well so that it is easy to read. Writing skills are above average throughout the school, encouraged by writing for a wide range of purposes and good links with other subjects. Pupils' speaking and listening

skills are above expectations because the good class atmosphere gives them confidence to contribute in lessons. Equally, they have good opportunities to discuss in a focused way. In science lessons, for example, they plan investigations in groups. They discuss ideas regularly in pairs and groups in other subjects. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is currently in line with expectations in Year 2 and above in Year 6. In Year 2, workbooks sometimes restrict the opportunity for pupils to work practically and some of the tasks in these are not sufficiently mathematical. The regular use of them restricts pupils' progress. Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and they are currently reaching above expected standards for the stage of the school year. Pupils are taught very good strategies to tackle their work, for example, when dealing with problems, and this supports their good achievement.

5. Pupils achieve well in science by Year 6 because of the good attention given to investigation. Pupils are constantly challenged to think by explaining their predictions and conclusions and reflecting on the results. They gain a good understanding of testing fairly and understand the need to re-test to ensure that the results are reliable. Pupils receive a good grounding in science in Years 1 and 2, reach the expected standard and achieve well. They develop an early interest in science and a good attitude to the subject that contributes to the acceleration of their progress in the juniors. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in ICT. Pupils build well on the skills and confidence that many acquire from using their own home computers. By the end of both Years 2 and 6, attainment is better than that in most schools. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education and reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. No judgements could be made in art and design, design and technology, geography, music or physical education. Pupils' attainment is above expectations in history and they achieve well.
6. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those whose first language is not English make similar rates of progress to other pupils. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support that they receive and the account taken of them when lessons are planned. Their progress is monitored well by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Able pupils achieve well in their academic studies in key areas of work because they are challenged effectively in their activities. Pupils with special talents have good opportunities to extend their interests in sport and music.
7. The success in pupils' achievements and the good record of results are due to good teaching, effective tracking of the pupils' progress and also very good leadership and staff commitment that are focused on ensuring that all pupils do their best and reach their potential.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.5 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.4 (16.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.2 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 52 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	27.7 (29.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.8 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	31.3 (29.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's personal development is very well supported in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils with specific needs are supported very well so that they take a full part in the school's daily life.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to work and are keen to learn.
- Relationships amongst the pupils and their behaviour are very good throughout the school.
- The school very effectively promotes pupils' understanding of right and wrong and the advantages of getting on well together.

Commentary

8. Children in the reception classes get off to a good start in their school life and develop good social skills and relationships. They become involved in the daily routines and they understand the need to work together and to be co-operative. Pupils with special educational needs across the school are very well integrated and very well supported so that they make friends and benefit from the very strong relationships in the school.
9. The pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes are much improved since the last inspection. Pupils are aware of, and comply with, the high expectations set for their behaviour, which supports strongly their very good work ethic and their good achievement. They concentrate very well in lessons. Pupils are proud of their school and they like to attend. They enjoy playing with their friends and find school fun. The harmonious and friendly atmosphere in the school results in pupils having respect for themselves and for one another. Some pupils have special roles in resolving minor disputes and they take an active role in ensuring that the harmonious community spirit is maintained. They fulfil their duties effectively and try to help pupils who feel lonely. They resolve minor disputes speedily. Other pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as attendance monitors. Older pupils also help young pupils in their playgrounds. Pupils show a very good sense of self-discipline. The award of house points for good effort is much cherished and pupils look forward eagerly to the weekly results. House captains seek out pupils' views on school matters and this contributes to them feeling involved in the school organisation. Individual pupils can make confidential personal notes to be placed into a box opened daily by the headteacher. These systems allow pupils to know that their opinions make a difference and are taken into account.
10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, overall, is good; the weaker aspect being their spiritual development, which is satisfactory, but nevertheless improved since the last inspection. Assemblies are of a satisfactory quality and allow pupils to reflect upon their feelings and how these may affect others. Opportunities are lost to use assemblies to promote pupils' cultural development through music. Pupils' very good social and moral development is a strength. Pupils develop self-confidence and respond very well to, and enjoy, the very good learning activities. Their contributions to the formation of class rules ensure a common understanding of the way they should behave in class. The school plans carefully for pupils' very good social development; for example, through duties they exercise in the school, through residential visits and participating fairly in various sports. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' different cultural traditions are recognised, shared and respected and this contributes to their good understanding of others and to the fact that they live in a diverse and multicultural society.

Attendance

Most parents ensure that their children attend regularly, although holiday absences during term-time have significantly affected the attendance rate. The school has been successful in significantly improving its below average attendance this term through the good efforts of the headteacher and the educational welfare services. A few parents do not comply with the need to notify the school when their children are absent, particularly on the first day. The school has recently strengthened its approach to lateness. Parents have to explain the reason for any lateness to school. This has resulted in an improved attitude to punctuality. Consequently, most pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. There have been no exclusions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.9	School data :	0.1
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.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the previous academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The well-planned curriculum and good range of extra-curricular activities ensure that the pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Teaching and assessment are good. Pupils make good strides with their learning. The staff take very good care of the pupils. There are good links with the parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is frequently very good in Year 6.
- Very good relationships and class management help pupils to work hard and achieve well.
- The very good quality of questioning makes the pupils think deeply and reason their answers.
- English, mathematics and science are taught particularly effectively.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do not have enough opportunities to make choices about their learning.
- Teachers make good use of resources in lessons to help pupils' understanding.
- Good use is made of assessment to track the pupils' progress.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	10 (18%)	29 (52%)	16 (29%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

11. Throughout the school, teachers manage the pupils very well, have very high expectations of behaviour and preserve a calm, working atmosphere in lessons. As a result, pupils are confident to contribute to lessons and learn effectively. They listen well and take a very good level of interest in the lessons. Teachers convey the purpose of the lessons clearly so that pupils are very clear about the learning intentions. They are taught to understand 'success criteria', which indicate their rate of progress. Teachers share these very effectively with the pupils at the start of lessons and they review them together at the close to good effect.
12. Pupils are challenged effectively in key areas of learning. English and mathematics lessons are taught well and structured effectively, with a good match of work to pupils' different capabilities. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematics and English skills across the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well when they discuss ideas and share views. Teaching in science is strong throughout the school because of the very good emphasis on investigational work and teachers' good subject knowledge, which help pupils to be keen in this aspect of their work and to achieve well. Teachers manage the difficult and cramped conditions for ICT as well as they can, and pupils show good maturity in sharing the facilities so that they make good progress in lessons. Good use is also made of ICT in other lessons.
13. Good opportunities are provided to extend able pupils well in most lessons so that they reach their potential. Occasionally, a common task is set which does not challenge able pupils enough. Children with special educational needs are motivated to learn well and they generally receive good support from the teaching assistants so that they can manage the work. Occasionally, the teaching assistants sit too passively during the introduction to lessons or do too much of the pupils' thinking for them during the activity session. Nevertheless, on the whole, the support that they give develops pupils' self-esteem effectively. Pupils with special educational needs have very constructive relationships with other children, many of them taking responsibility for aspects of their own learning. They sustain their concentration well for lengthy periods. Clear targets are set for them through their individual education plans, which are devised carefully and reviewed at regular intervals. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, those who have English as an additional language, and boys and girls are treated equally and they engage well in learning in both ability and mixed-gender groups.
14. Very good questioning is a strong feature of many lessons and the very good relationships give pupils the confidence to answer, knowing that their responses will be valued and treated respectfully, whether right or wrong. Teachers ask pertinent questions that help pupils to recall previous learning and to apply their knowledge to new learning. The quality of questioning is particularly good in Year 6, where pupils' initial responses are followed up constantly with supplementary, probing questions, for example, '*Why does this happen?*' '*How would you do that?*', which forces the pupils to explain their responses and helps the teacher to understand the depth of their understanding.
15. Teachers make good use of vocabulary that is specific to different subjects, such as 'variables' and 'molecules' in science, 'subordinate clause' in English and 'mode' and 'median' in mathematics. Pupils absorb this vocabulary and then begin to use it in their own vocabulary, which helps them to think more succinctly and to express themselves precisely.
16. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Planning in the Foundation Stage is comprehensive, but there is an imbalance towards over-direction in the learning and insufficient opportunities for children to decide what they would like to do. Sometimes the activities are repetitive and not enough attention is given to moving learning on through play. Teaching is mainly good in the infants. It is good in the juniors, with a significant amount of very good teaching in Year 6 where the highly respectful relationships and very challenging and interesting work enable the pupils to achieve very well in key areas of work. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because of good monitoring of lessons by senior staff to improve its quality and an injection of some innovative ideas by enthusiastic new staff.

17. Good use is made of resources in lessons. Teachers make good use of individual whiteboards for pupils to write down their responses in lessons so that pupils are kept thinking. They also make good use of modern technology to present lessons on electronic whiteboards and use these to project prepared material. These electronic boards assist the brisk pace of many lessons and facilitate the relevant use of video clips that provide a visual support for the ideas being taught. Their good use supports pupils' understanding very well.
18. Good use is made of test results to identify gaps in the pupils' knowledge and to compare the respective performance of different ethnic groups or of boys and girls. This knowledge is then used effectively by the teachers to support weaker areas of the pupils' learning. The deputy headteacher does good analytical work in independently scrutinising test results for different classes and reviewing progress of individual pupils during the course of the year. This helps teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision that each is making for their pupils. Good records are in place for key areas of learning so that pupils' skills can be monitored, except in ICT where there is as yet no whole-school approach to tracking pupils' key skills. Co-operation with other local schools is designed to help the teachers to assess standards in science more accurately in Year 2. Portfolios of work are currently being put together in key areas of work, which should also support moderation of standards.

The curriculum

The school ensures that all pupils have a good quality and range of learning opportunities that cater for a range of learning styles. It provides them with good opportunities to widen their experiences through extra-curricular activities and a variety of visitors to the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of stimulating and challenging activities is well matched to pupils' needs and increases their confidence and self-esteem.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the curriculum is inclusive of all pupils.
- The accommodation and resources are good and used well to support pupils' learning.
- Effective links are made between different subjects and ICT supports many areas of the curriculum well.

Commentary

19. The challenging, well-structured and interesting curriculum is a key factor in pupils attaining high standards and achieving well, particularly in the emphasis given to key areas of learning. Careful thought and planning link different parts of the curriculum together in interesting ways that help to encourage the pupils' keen interest in their work. Boys and girls have equal opportunities. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including provision for religious education. Its overall quality is much improved since the last inspection.
20. Teachers' planning takes account of the different levels of attainment within their classes, but very occasionally there is not a sufficient opportunity, particularly for the more able in lessons such as geography and history, to develop more independent learning. The curriculum is adapted well to pupils with special needs and they receive good support. However, whilst these pupils receive extra provision often in small groups withdrawn from class, they sometimes miss the same lessons each week. The needs of ethnic minority pupils and those with English as an additional language are considered carefully, so that these pupils are included very well in lessons.
21. The curriculum organisation encourages teachers to adopt innovative learning styles, such as focused discussions between pairs of pupils and pupils questioning one another, as when they take on the role of a story character or historical personality. These initiatives work well in practice. Pupils become well motivated to learn, developing both academically and

personally. As a result, their confidence increases as they move up through the school. There is good provision for personal, social and health education. Themes are taught successfully through individual lessons, as well as being integrated successfully into other subjects.

22. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, including various sports, musical activities, French and a computer club. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum and extends pupils' learning in a variety of ways. Year 6 pupils interviewed a Muslim parent about her Islamic faith. A professional coach works to enhance pupils' football skills.
23. There is a sufficiency of teachers and teaching assistants ensuring that the needs of the curriculum are met effectively. They have good opportunities to keep updated through clearly defined professional development needs. The co-ordinator for special needs is well qualified. Additional support is amply provided for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. Staff morale is very good. Staff work together very co-operatively. Subject leaders are effective and focused upon improving standards. Arrangements for evaluating and monitoring the curriculum are good. However, curriculum time in the juniors is below the minimum recommended by 35 minutes weekly and restricts a little the breadth of opportunities, particularly in the foundation subjects.
24. The accommodation is good, with light and airy classrooms providing ample space for practical and general class work, allowing the curriculum to be taught well in the main. Much progress has been made since the last inspection in the provision of additional computers in classrooms that facilitate good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. However, the area used as an information and communication technology suite, though enabling a full class to be taught simultaneously through the shared use of computers, is cramped. It is difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' work during lessons. The library is small, although centrally situated, but it is not accessible when the hall is being used. It is not easy for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to access it from their separate building, at some distance from the main school. The accommodation for special needs teaching is good. The external facilities are good. There is ample space for outside play and physical education activities. The Foundation Stage has ample external space, including a covered area that permits year-long use. In general, learning resources are good and support classroom activities effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The school places a very good emphasis on care and welfare. It provides good support, advice and guidance for pupils and involves them well in seeking their views about its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a high regard for pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Pupils are fully aware who can help them if they have problems or concerns.
- Advice, support and guidance are good, overall, and very good for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has good systems for taking account of pupils' views.

Commentary

25. Good improvements have taken place since the last inspection in the care and welfare arrangements the school makes for its pupils. Child protection procedures are very well understood. The headteacher, who is the responsible officer in this regard, discharges her duties very well. Staff are kept fully briefed about child protection matters and have had up-to-date training. Justifiably, parents feel that their children are well cared for.

26. The school has a very high regard for health and safety and very good procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. Attendance is monitored effectively.
27. The school has a very good level of contact with a range of support agencies and makes very good use of the advice and guidance given to support and promote the progress of all of its pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are supported very well, enabling them to achieve well.
28. Pupils of all ages know to whom they can turn if they need help, advice or support. The very strong relationships throughout the school, and the support of all staff, mean that pupils feel happy and secure. The procedures to help the youngest children settle into school life are satisfactory, though the children have quite a limited familiarity with class procedures before they enter. Older pupils have a good introduction to secondary schools. They make an early visit with parents and participate in a full day's activities at the secondary school of their choice before transfer.
29. The school encourages and supports pupils to express their views on the school and takes these into account. Elected school house captains and vice-captains have special roles in the playground to help pupils play happily together. All pupils are particularly helpful to others; for example, if a pupil waits at a 'Friendship Stop' in the playground. Other pupils are quick to invite them to join their group. Staff are particularly supportive. Pupils indicate that they enjoy very good relationships with all adults in the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good procedures in place to keep parents informed and for an exchange of views.
- The Parent-Teacher Association provides very good support for the school.
- Good links with other schools include the use of swimming facilities.
- The good support that the school gives to providing accommodation for a local playgroup and a breakfast club contributes to the good community links.

Commentary

30. The school has improved on its satisfactory partnership with parents stated in the last report and links are now good because the school values and welcomes parents. It provides them with good information about the life and work of the school. Their views of the school are sought and they are more positive about the school than at the time of the last inspection. Most parents are very happy with all that the school provides.
31. The good partnership with parents benefits pupils' learning. The school sends home regular newsletters and curriculum detail. Additionally, parents and teachers communicate in writing through the pupils' reading record and homework books. The school facilitates arrangements for parents to meet teachers on a daily basis, if needed, at the start of a school day. Parents feel very comfortable about approaching the school, knowing that their views are welcomed and valued and also acted upon. The school provides regular formal opportunities for parents to meet teachers to discuss their children's progress.
32. The very strong Parent-Teacher Association has given very good financial support to the school and has provided playground equipment and other items to support learning. It provides a good programme of social and fund-raising events.

33. The school's good links with the community, such as a playgroup meeting on site, distribution of harvest gifts to the elderly and regular visits from the community police officer enhance pupils' understanding of community needs and key roles. The partnership with other schools is well established, including the use of swimming facilities at a nearby secondary school. The school plays a full part in contributing to the training of student teachers and the development of newly qualified teachers. The headteacher takes an active role in the cluster of schools that share good practice and represents the group at local education authority level.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good, overall. The very good leadership of the headteacher is a major strength and contributes highly to the school's success. Key staff manage their responsibilities very well. Very good management structures are in place. Governance is good, providing both support and challenge in equal measure. The school provides good value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership has facilitated very good overall progress since the last inspection.
- The deputy headteacher sets a very good example in teaching and commitment.
- The dedicated and experienced senior management team provides very good support for the school's leadership.
- The very good relationships in the school result in the staff working very well as a team.
- The Foundation Stage is not considered sufficiently as a separate key stage.
- Monitoring is used well to evaluate what the school does and to guide improvements.
- Finances are used prudently in the management of the school improvement plan.

Commentary

34. Several aspects of leadership and management combine towards the school's success. The headteacher provides strong leadership through her clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations. She and the deputy headteacher form a very good partnership and are very well supported by a committed and enthusiastic senior management team and supportive governing body. The deputy head leads by example and is a strong force in the pupils' good level of attainment. These are significant improvements since the last inspection, when the then headteacher was on long-term sick leave and the future was uncertain. The staff work very well as a team and are committed to helping one another and to ensuring that all pupils fulfil their capabilities. The governing body is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plays an active part in setting the performance management targets of the headteacher.
35. The role of the subject leaders has developed well since the last inspection. Each one has completed an audit of their particular subject, from which priorities have been identified. They have completed good quality action plans, with targets that link into the school improvement plan and also targets for performance management. Major subject leaders have undertaken a significant review of each of their subjects, which includes analysis of test data, lesson observations and feedback to teachers. The monitoring of teaching and learning especially of the core subjects is very effective and has undoubtedly helped to raise standards throughout the school. The standard of lessons observed during the inspection reflected the impact of this thoroughness. Whilst non-core subject leaders do not have designated management time, they play a key role in evaluating and improving the provision in their subjects and are now in a good position to improve standards further.
36. The governing body is effective in undertaking its responsibilities, fulfils its statutory responsibilities and works hard to support the school. For example, much of the improvement to the office and staff facilities, together with the upgrading of the ICT hardware, is due to its efforts to provide the best environment for teachers and pupils.

37. The school improvement plan is a good document that identifies the school priorities well. However, in some instances, it does not always link the priority with raising achievement. All initiatives are based on the agreed priorities. Challenging and achievable goals have been set and time-scales are credible. The school has very good monitoring and evaluation systems in place. These in turn are linked closely with the planning for school improvement. The school has thorough self-evaluation procedures that inform all school improvements and through this, the governors have gained a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The one omission in the self-evaluation documentation is any mention of a strategic view of the Foundation Stage as a separate key stage and an overview of how to improve the quality of provision.
38. Control of the school finances and day-to-day financial management are very good. Good use is made of best value principles when purchases are made. Detailed analysis of spending is carried out regularly. The school has acted upon the suggestions made in the last audit report. The next tri-annual audit is due to take place in January 2005. Financial planning is related through the school improvement plan to the school's priorities. The higher than average carry forward money has been ear-marked for building a new school library and information and communication technology suite that will be accessible to all pupils including the youngest to overcome the present accommodation difficulties.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,037,540	Balance from previous year	80,637
Total expenditure	977,082	Balance carried forward to the next	141,095
Expenditure per pupil	2,605		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is one intake per year to the reception classes in September, which means that the summer-born children had their fourth birthday shortly before starting school. Attainment on entry is average. The atmosphere in the Foundation Stage is warm and inviting. The children achieve satisfactorily in most areas of their learning and achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. The majority of children are expected to achieve the goals set out for the end of the reception year and exceed them for their personal, social and emotional development. The children with English as an additional language blend in well and make good progress in assimilating the English language.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in most aspects of work and good in the provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development. However, there is insufficient time planned for children to explore and experiment. All staff are very hard working and committed to the growth and development of the children. Nevertheless, the balance is in favour of teacher-directed learning. There are insufficient activities for children to develop independence and to take responsibility for their learning, to experiment and experience situations for themselves. However, now that there is a new assessment record-keeping system in place for monitoring the children's progress against the Foundation Stage goals for learning, gaps in the children's experiences can be identified easily.

The management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage is not addressed fully, especially for the very youngest children. There are good links with the on-site pre-school, which makes for a smooth transition from one setting to the next. Teachers make home visits if there is a particular need. Parents appreciate the very positive experience that their children have in starting school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good. Staff act as very good role models.
- Good routines are in place so that children know what is expected of them.
- Children behave well and are supportive of one another.

Commentary

39. The very good relationships and high priority given to personal, social and emotional development ensure that children achieve well. Most children are expected to achieve beyond the early learning goals before they move into Year 1. Children know what is expected of them and respond very well to the good organisation in the classrooms. Daily routines are made clear and expectations in regard to behaviour are consistent. Therefore, children are polite and behave well. They have learnt to take turns, and share with others, to listen and interact with adults and with other children pleasantly and kindly. For example, when a group of children was playing with a construction set making model people, they played alongside one another sharing the pieces and making constructive suggestions to each other. "Look at his", exclaimed one child, celebrating the success of his friend. Most children are confident and independent, though they have limited opportunities to make decisions for themselves. They change their clothes for physical activities and manage their personal hygiene well. They follow instructions quickly, organise themselves responsibly for their activities and clear away sensibly.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Knowledge and understanding of books are promoted well by all staff.
- High priority is given to developing the necessary skills for reading.
- Children make good progress in handwriting.
- There are insufficient planned independent activities to extend children's vocabulary through role-play and talk.

Commentary

40. The children's early reading skills are developed well through regular story sessions, both during the planned literacy sessions and at story time. Good questioning by the teachers helps children to recall the stories in the correct sequence, understand the role of characters in stories, and develop their vocabulary as they are introduced to unfamiliar words. However, the children do not have enough variety in the planned independent activities to extend their vocabulary through role-play and talk. Handwriting skills are developed well. From an early start, children are taught to shape their letters correctly. Many children can write their own names. Teachers model writing for the children during the literacy sessions, showing them how to create sentences and form their letters correctly. Higher ability children use their knowledge of letter sounds well to write regular words. They have a good try at more complex words as they link sounds with letters. Planned experiences for developing confidence and skills in early writing are not part of the daily routine. The children's knowledge of letter sounds and blends is developed well as they work with teachers naming objects that begin with the same initial sounds. Reading is encouraged, for example, when they read together from Brian Wildsmith's *'The Cat Sat on the Mat'* and also through a structured reading programme. Reading is well supported by parents.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical language is taught and developed well.
- Staff use songs, rhymes, stories and games to good effect.
- Opportunities for the development of thinking and problem-solving skills are limited.

Commentary

41. Mathematical development is promoted through puzzles, number and shape recognition activities and games, such as snakes and ladders. Most children are expected to reach the early learning goals and a few should exceed them by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Teachers lead whole-class sessions introducing children to new concepts and teaching the appropriate vocabulary. In one lesson, children sat in pairs on the carpet and learned that when two sets of numbers are combined an addition sum is formed. Some were successful, but there were no planned and well-resourced activities for children to apply this concept through their play. Opportunities for the development of thinking and problem-solving skills were, therefore, limited. Many children can count to ten and more, some have learnt to record their numbers. They enjoy their learning. Mathematical language is developed well. When playing subtraction and addition games, the children learn to use phrases such as 'how many', 'less than' and more than'. Staff use songs, rhymes, stories and games effectively to reinforce mathematical understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen to talk about their knowledge and experiences.
- Many have good computer skills for their age.
- The outdoor curriculum is underdeveloped.

Commentary

42. Most children have access to a computer at home. Therefore, they have been able to gain early ICT skills effectively. They play early learning games, return to the 'home' page with confidence and some can even support their friends who are less competent. The use of the outdoors for knowledge and understanding of the environment has not been developed fully. The grassed area is underused. For example, there is no garden area for sensory awareness, the cultivation of plants or the observation of mini-beasts and butterflies. Good use is made of the immediacy of some learning opportunities. The children were thrilled to observe, from the classroom window, a grey squirrel climbing a tree. The teacher used this observation immediately to talk with the children about food storage and hibernation. Children are keen to understand how things work, as when they build from a range of large and small construction toys. On one occasion when they were sorting shiny and dull objects into sets, they followed the teacher's example of shining the torch on the multifaceted shiny ball in order to see the effect caused by splitting up the beam of light. The children's knowledge and understanding of how bread is made is the subject of one of the many good quality displays in the Foundation Stage area. Also they brought their baby photographs in from home and understand how they have changed over time. Children talk freely about their families, where they live and about their holiday experiences.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new good quality canopied play-safe area provides an opportunity for outdoor play all year.
- Children understand how their bodies can move in response to a variety of stimuli through movement and dance.
- Resources for climbing and imaginative play out of doors are limited.

Commentary

43. Children gain skills as they use a range of small apparatus and equipment. At playtime they are supervised in the play-safe area by teaching assistants supported by older pupils. During this time they move with control and co-ordination as they throw and catch bean bags and play with the hoops and other small apparatus. In the afternoon sessions, groups from both reception classes are given an opportunity to play outside on a variety of the large wheeled vehicles. However, despite ample space for a stimulating adventure-style play area, the range of apparatus for promoting physical development is limited. Fine motor skills are developed more effectively through a wide range of activities where children practise the formation of their letters, cut, glue, trace, and complete puzzles. On the whole, children hold their pencils correctly, and use brushes and glue sticks well for painting and sticking respectively. The use of the school hall for indoor physical activities enables the children to demonstrate well that they understand how they can move their bodies in different ways in response to a variety of stimuli through movement and dance.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weakness

- Children are given good opportunities to undertake observational drawings.
- Children have access to a wide range of resources to develop skills and techniques.
- Opportunities for drama and imaginative role-play are limited.

Commentary

44. Children are taught to observe the detail of objects when drawing from still life, with the result that the finished products are executed well both in their drawing books and in the work on display. This is demonstrated effectively in the pictures of their families and of their recent experiences, both in their drawing books and also when illustrating their independent writing. Staff provide many opportunities for children to paint, crayon, and use pastels and malleable materials, such as play-dough as part of a planned activity. For example, children chose from a range of Christmas paper and trimming to decorate their stocking shapes using cutting and sticking techniques. Imaginative, well-planned and specifically resourced role-play in appropriately simulated environments, other than the home corner, is underdeveloped. Children enjoy making music in the weekly session. They respond well to rhymes, songs and poems by moving to the beat in a number of interesting ways.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well structured and help the pupils to achieve well.
- Careful use is made of assessments that inform planning effectively.
- Good use is made of opportunities to develop language skills in all areas of the curriculum.
- The support given to children with special educational needs is good.
- The use made of ICT in language development is good.
- Pupils respond well to all language activities and their speaking and listening skills are above expectations.
- Library provision is limited and difficult for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to access because of the split site.

Commentary

45. Pupils achieve well as they move up through the school to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards are similar to those at the last inspection. A good emphasis on writing in Years 1 and 2 leads to good achievement in this area and above average standards. Pupils' writing skills are above average by the end of Year 6 and some examples of very good work were seen in Years 3 to 6. However, not enough pupils reached the higher level in writing in the most recent national tests. Thoughtful steps are being taken to remedy this, including Saturday morning sessions. Pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs achieve well because of the good provision made for them.
46. Pupils' attainment in reading is above expectations throughout the school due to the systematic teaching of reading. Pupils learn the sound of letters and letter blends at an early stage and this forms a good basis for learning to read. Additionally, a good emphasis on

spelling with effective strategies, such as learning words spelled with a common rule, help to promote pupils' reading and writing skills. Standards reached in Year 2 in reading are above those in most schools. Pupils read well with a good level of fluency and accuracy. By the end of Year 2, pupils read with expression and many predict the actual ending or suggest alternative ones. Pupils deploy good skills using illustrations and letter sounds to work out how new words are pronounced. The good foundation laid in the infants helps pupils accelerate their reading progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enjoy reading and are enthusiastic about books. They take them home regularly. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is well above average. Pupils are competent, confident and fluent readers and able to extract information from books well because they have finely developed library skills. They show clear understanding of the main ideas and themes within a text.

47. Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations. Throughout the school, teachers recognise the importance of pupils' speaking and listening and many and varied opportunities are provided, not only during English lessons but also in other areas of the curriculum. Year 5 pupils did well when they made presentations to their peers about the lives of famous people in history. Pupils' responses in lessons to questions are very good; they are very clear and articulate when they contribute.
48. Teachers make very good use of well considered support structures, such as 'writing frames' that help to provide a structure for the less able. Pupils respond well and take pride in their work. Standards of handwriting are above those usually seen. Pupils take care with the presentation of their work. Handwriting is usually clear, well formed and easily readable. The use of rulers adds to the overall good quality of presentation. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to write in different forms and styles. For example, Year 3 pupils wrote free verse poems about a flame, while Year 2 pupils wrote for instructional purposes. Texts are selected carefully for purpose and add interest to the learning process.
49. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is mostly good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers explain new ideas well and frequently use ICT very constructively to present lessons, to help pupils' understanding and to motivate them to learn. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers or their assistants in lessons through working in small groups in which they get lots of support that facilitates their good achievement. Teachers use well selected texts for reading development that add to the pupils' interest in lessons. Conclusions to lessons are used well and good reference is made in these to the success criteria that have been prepared so that pupils can assess how well they have learned what was intended. Targets are generally challenging for pupils and they know what they need to learn. Monitoring of individual pupil progress and analysis of the progress of various groups are very good and these processes inform planning well.
50. English is well led and managed across the school by the subject leader. Pupils who have English as an additional language are supported well. The subject leader has monitored teaching and standards to good effect and this is enabling good improvement to be made. However, the school library is very small and relatively inaccessible and hence its effectiveness in promoting books and library skills is not as good as it might be. The teachers try hard to compensate for this through teaching library skills more formally so that the pupils are not disadvantaged. The split site makes it difficult for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to use these facilities, which are located in the juniors.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Considerable time and effort have been given to ensuring that there are many opportunities to develop literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. This is seen as Year 6 pupils learn about the characteristics of Victorian schools and research their work and write accounts. Year 3 pupils re-enact an evacuation in the Second World War. Good use is made of ICT to develop language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in Year 6.
- The heavy reliance on pupil workbooks in the infants reduces the potential for more engaging teaching approaches.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and they present their work neatly.

Commentary

52. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in mathematics in Year 2 in reaching the expected level of attainment for their age. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. There are not as many above average pupils as the previous year's cohort when results were above average. Pupils are achieving well in the juniors and standards, overall, are currently above those expected. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements, though there is a heavy emphasis on workbooks in the infants. These sometimes engage pupils in non-mathematical tasks, such as colouring in and drawing, which affect the liveliness of the work and the opportunities for pupils to work from a more practical base to secure their understanding. Occasionally, good use is made of apparatus. For example, pupils in a Year 1 lesson used 10 cubes to find two and three numbers, which together made 10. Good attention is given to data handling and to the cross-curricular application of mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well because of the good provision made for them and the carefully matched work.
53. Teaching and learning are good, overall. Teachers have high expectations of the amount of work that pupils should complete in a lesson and they comply well. Some of the teaching seen was very good, particularly in Year 6. Pupils develop good strategies in tackling mathematical word problems in this year group. Lessons are prepared well with very good use of modern technology to project teaching material on to an electronic screen in some classrooms. This facilitates the presentation of lessons and ensures a brisk pace. The visual images engage the pupils' interest effectively. Pupils enjoy mathematics and work with a ready enthusiasm. They concentrate well, persevere with their tasks and behave very well. This is because teachers create a good atmosphere for learning, make a prompt start and ensure that pupils understand the purpose of the lessons. They make good use of opportunities to promote pupils' mental skills and the very good use of individual whiteboards ensures that all pupils are kept on their toes and made to think.
54. Junior pupils give very good attention to neatness and to the setting out of their work with effective use of rulers, which adds to their accuracy in calculation. Computers are often used in lessons, but the program material sometimes does not relate closely enough to the focus of the lesson. Teachers make very good use of mathematical vocabulary, which supports the pupils' understanding of the work and their ability to converse about it. Whilst pupils often work accurately, they do not often use estimation to check the reasonableness of their answers. The conclusions to lessons are undertaken effectively, refer back to the success criteria and often take pupils' learning on further or to a deeper level on the same theme. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, which involved pupils sorting objects according to different criteria, the teacher successfully used a flow diagram, known as decision tree, to help classify some given objects. Pupils' came to a good understanding of the technique.
55. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The subject leader keeps updated by regular attendance at courses. The provision of resources is better than at the last inspection and well managed. The curriculum structure has been handled well and there is a good provision of ICT programs. However, there is not enough focus on the oversight of mathematics in the infants in the leadership role.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The school makes good use of mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils use it very well in science to tabulate results and to interpret findings. There is good use of information and communication technology in mathematics to support their studies. In geography, pupils use their mathematics well to locate places using grid references and to understand scale. Informal opportunities are used well, such as comparison of population figures when studying different countries.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn effectively through a practical approach to learning.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons and engage well in learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge that assists the pupils' good achievements by Year 6.
- Pupils' attainment is frequently well above expectations by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

57. Science is a real curriculum strength and attainment and curriculum organisation are much improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy the subject greatly because of the practical approach right through from Year 1 to Year 6. This approach, one which engages the pupils well in their learning, provides good opportunities for focused discussion, as pupils plan and carry out experiments by themselves. The teachers challenge the pupils effectively with the demands that they make of them. The pupils respond very well with purposeful endeavour and a ready enthusiasm. The early introduction of a practical approach and good use of scientific vocabulary in Years 1 and 2, which the pupils assimilate well, enables them to achieve well in the infants. They receive a good grounding in reaching the expected standard and are prepared well for the more exacting work in the juniors. They achieve well by Year 6 and, currently, standards are above expectations. They have often been well above expectations by the end of Year 6.
58. Both teaching and learning are good throughout the school and sometimes very good. A Year 6 lesson observed was excellent. Teachers prepare lessons well with very clear success criteria. They ensure that there is a good provision of resources so that pupils can work singly or with others, as appropriate, giving good opportunities for personal experience and investigation. The quality of resources is very good. For example, very precise timing devices enable the pupils to measure very accurately and obtain reliable results. Every Year 2 pupil had individual equipment when trying to make a bulb light up. Pupils know that they need to retest to ensure that the results are valid. Good attention is given to prediction and pupils are taught to reason these based on what they already know. Their predictions are, as a result, usually very well thought out. Pupils handle equipment with respect. They co-operate very well with others when they plan and undertake experiments, and when making key decisions. There is a brisk pace to lessons and a purposeful endeavour in both teaching and learning. A very good feature of science teaching is the very good questioning by the teachers and the quick follow up to questions that encourage the pupils to think in depth. The challenging conclusion to a Year 3 lesson about floating and sinking drew on the pupils' observations well as they considered whether two objects of the same weight, a pin and a cork, would sink or float.
59. The well-behaved pupils and good class management ensure that lessons flow smoothly without interruption. Lessons are very well-structured, with a good variety of content. Their length encourages in-depth working and the inclusion on occasions of brief video clips promotes interest, informs and extends the pupils' knowledge and understanding, but does not

take away personal experience. The two-minute clips showing a rocket thrusting off from the launch pad and a parachute falling to earth were particularly appealing to the pupils in an excellent lesson in Year 6 as they studied air resistance, force and aero-dynamics. Further planned work, to listen to a rocket scientist and design their own rocket to be launched into space, indicates thoughtful opportunities for pupils to expand their knowledge and to put their learning into practice. Very good use was made of electronic whiteboard technology to check on pupils' gains in learning during the Year 2 work on circuitry and to extend their learning through the concept of a switch. Good attention is paid to health and safety. For example, In a Year 1 lesson about day and night, pupils were reminded of the dangers of looking directly at the sun.

60. Teachers research the content of their lessons well and demonstrate very good subject knowledge. They make very good use of scientific vocabulary and pupils increasingly give this back when they make contributions to lessons with correct use of words, such as 'electrons' and 'molecules'.
61. Leadership and management of science are good. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and organises the subject well. She has monitored lessons and pupils' work throughout the school and analyses test results carefully, picking up on any issues of concern that help to decide where more focus is required in the future.

Example of outstanding practice

This high quality Year 6 science lesson on the theme of force linked to aero-dynamics engaged the pupils actively throughout with the use of their findings on air resistance to design a rocket.

The classroom was very well prepared with all the equipment available and this helped to maintain a very brisk and purposeful atmosphere throughout. Very clearly excited by the lesson focus, the pupils let out a controlled cheer when they found out what they were to do. Half the class were challenged to adapt a small cereal box placed on the desk so that it was resistant to the force of an electric fan, whilst the other half timed the fall of parachutes with different canopy sizes. They later swapped over so each pupil had experience of both. Pupils organised themselves very effectively in groups to undertake their investigations and discussed their ideas thoroughly in a focused way with very good attention to the success criteria outlined at the start of the lesson. Their modelling, discussions and conclusions were supported very effectively by the teacher's excellent subject knowledge, the judicious and extremely good use of an interactive whiteboard for video clips and a very high quality of questioning, which forced pupils to think through their responses very deeply. Pupils skilfully checked the reasonableness of their results. They brought into play, to very good effect, their previous knowledge about gravity and friction. The lesson concluded outside with a spectacular rocket launch using principles they had learned about during the lesson.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those usually seen and expectations are high.
- Skills are taught well.
- ICT is used effectively for teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- The two subject leaders manage the subject well and have a clear vision for its future development.
- The computer suite is poorly sited upstairs in a busy thoroughfare.
- The youngest children do not have enough opportunities to use the computer suite.

Commentary

62. Standards by both Years 2 and 6 are above those seen in most schools. Pupils achieve well because of the good subject knowledge of the majority of the teachers and the positive disposition of the pupils. Pupils are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject.

Most pupils have access to a computer at home and this gives them a good background to work from. They are very familiar with the use of ICT in their everyday lives and they understand how computers can control devices and monitor change.

63. Teaching and learning are good, with some elements of very good teaching practice. Teachers make clear links to previous learning, enthuse pupils and have good classroom and behaviour management skills. Consequently, lessons progress at a good pace. The newly adopted scheme of work is very effective. The step-by-step approach to teaching key skills works well. It has enabled pupils to make good progress so that they are confident in using computers and have an ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of key skills and their application. Pupils learn well. They are keen to take an active part by making suggestions and observations as they work towards the solution of the challenges that are offered to them. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed that they could log on, enter and retrieve their work and enter their own information correctly and independently. All pupils in the class were able to produce accurate graphs and to print out their finished work. In a Year 4 lesson, where teaching was very good, the teacher gave very clear guidance to the pupils about their task. She then assessed their progress constantly as she questioned them during their activities to promote their thinking skills, thus contributing to the effective learning. All pupils were absorbed in designing slides for their PowerPoint presentations about healthy bodies and healthy bones.
64. The management of the subject is good and leadership satisfactory. A recent audit has been carried out and priorities identified for the next stage of development. Teachers' planning is very effective since the adoption of a new scheme of work. Although the subject leaders do not have management time for monitoring and evaluating through observations of lessons, they have a good understanding of standards that are being attained through regular scrutiny of the pupils' ICT work books. The infants have a simple system for tracking the progress of individual pupils. At present, tracking pupil progress is underdeveloped in the juniors, although there are elements of good practice in Year 3. The cramped accommodation in the suite makes it difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress in lessons and its location in the junior building makes it difficult for Years 1 and 2 pupils to use the facilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The school makes very good use of ICT across the curriculum. Recently the computers have been upgraded and all classrooms have been cabled and are now on line. Four new interactive whiteboards are put to good use. In a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, one was used well when the pupils were learning to describe, extend and explain number sequences. The mathematics was challenging, but the enthusiasm was palpable. Pupils access information regularly via the Internet in subjects such as history and geography.

HUMANITIES

History, geography and religious education

66. Due to timetabling, it was only possible to observe one lesson in **geography**. It is not possible, therefore, to make firm judgements about the quality of provision, standards, teaching or learning in this subject. In one lesson, Year 4 pupils were handling data relating to population figures for various countries and they were beginning to realise that the population of a country is not directly related to its size. However, they were less able to identify the factors which may give rise to this fact and were not afforded sufficient opportunities to develop their own research skills by locating their own information from appropriate sources. Hence, there was not enough geographical challenge and not all of the time was used well. In other year groups, the evidence from pupils' books suggests that tasks are somewhat repetitive and lacking in challenge. However, examples of good work in geography could be seen in classroom displays mainly relating to school visits undertaken by pupils in Years 5 and 6.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history are higher than in most schools.
- Pupils are motivated effectively in lessons and participate well, but opportunities to learn through experience are not used frequently enough.
- Lessons have a good focus and teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils use their literacy skills well to investigate past events and present written recounts and reports very well.

Commentary

67. Standards are above expectations in both Years 2 and 6. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and standards are above those reported previously. The achievement of pupils is good. Year 6 pupils have made good strides in learning about Victorian times and Year 4 pupils about life during the Viking invasions. Year 2 pupils have come to a good understanding of life in the trenches during the First World War. Pupils' work is very well presented. Pupils enjoy the subject. They are very enthusiastic in their lessons and participate very well in role-play activities. They behave well and concentrate hard throughout.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are planned well. They are purposeful with some very good questioning by teachers, particularly in Year 6. Pupils usually have very good opportunities to participate actively in their learning, as when Year 3 pupils re-enacted an evacuation activity in their Second World War studies. Occasionally, however, such opportunities are missed and pupils learn too formally from written material and factual data. Artefacts support pupils' understanding significantly when they are provided. Although such resources are limited in their range, they are supplemented well by the good use of ICT.
69. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well during lessons. Teachers match the work well to their needs. Subject management ensures that good resources are available and there is good structure to the sequence of studies to develop pupils' learning in the subject. Subject leadership is good.
70. The study of history is systematic, purposeful and focused and used effectively to develop literacy skills further. However, there are times during which there is an over-emphasis on the literacy links to the detriment of the history, with insufficient opportunities for more direct experience, such as role-play.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of religious education is good.
- Good use is made of the expertise of members of the community.
- Children respond well to the varied teaching approaches and share their learning confidently with others.

Commentary

71. Pupils' attainment throughout the school meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and they achieve satisfactorily. Standards are similar to the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good.
72. In lessons seen, teachers' planning about the Christmas Story and the lives of well-known individuals such as Elizabeth Fry, Martin Luther King and others was good. Varied teaching approaches assist pupils in understanding how a person's religious beliefs can have an impact upon their life. The religious studies undertaken enable pupils not only to learn about religions and develop their knowledge of them, but also to understand people's responses in making sense of life. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well by teachers, particularly during independent work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their questioning is good, as are the supportive structures that are given to children who prepare talks to present to the rest of the class.
73. Leadership and management of the subject are good and support the work of teachers and pupils well throughout the school. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus, which is integrated into the overall school curriculum and linked closely with personal health and social education. The subject is enhanced by recognising faiths other than Christianity and by the introduction of well-informed members of the community to share and explain their faith. A Muslim parent talked informatively with Year 6 pupils about her faith, which enhanced the pupils' knowledge. They responded very well and asked thoughtful and well-considered questions to extend their learning. Assemblies sometimes extend pupils' religious education knowledge, as in the focus on the Jewish festival of Hannukah and the significance of the Advent wreath for Christians.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

74. Two lessons were observed in **physical education**, but the lack of opportunity to observe the range of work did not permit a judgement on attainment and achievement, overall. Good provision is made for swimming. A good scheme of work has been put in place since the last inspection and, as a result, the provision in the infants has improved. Of the two lessons observed, one was of a good quality and one of a very good quality. Teachers showed good skill in improving the pupils' techniques and, as result, they made at least good progress in both lessons. In the Year 1 lesson, pupils improved their jumping and stretching movements as they incorporated them into a sequence of movements. In a very good Year 6 dance lesson, pupils worked with very mature attitudes in making group movements to the theme of 'rugby' and then combined these together effectively commencing with a war dance. There was a good interplay of class discussion, teacher guidance and pupil activity, which facilitated the pupils' very good progress. The good accommodation for physical education on site combined with the close links with the neighbouring secondary school sports college add to the pupils' opportunities in physical education. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities in sport.
75. Not enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about overall provision in **music**. In the one Year 6 lesson that was seen during the inspection, the specialist teacher's preparation and planning were good and the pupils responded well, singing and later performing pieces that they had composed and reading from their own scores. Opportunities were missed for listening to music on entering and leaving assembly. The lunch-time recorder clubs and instrumental lessons with visiting specialist staff provide good opportunities for pupils to pursue their musical interests. Pupils perform regularly at assemblies and on special occasions throughout the year.

76. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about the overall provision in **art**. In the one Year 3 lesson that was seen during the inspection, the teacher's preparation and planning were good. Relevant techniques were taught effectively, enhancing the pupils' skills in block printing using ink and rollers to create repeat zebra patterns. Successful teaching, stressing the need for close observation and detail and reminding the pupils how to use tone and shadow, enabled pupils to create well-executed drawings of segments of oranges and pomegranates, showing a fine eye for detail.
77. Displays in classrooms and around the school show that pupils are provided with a good range of artistic experiences. These include three-dimensional activities involving, for example, models made using wire, papier mâché and other materials, paintings inspired by famous artists such Cézanne and Kadinski, collages using materials from the environment and compositions based on pupils' interpretations of the natural patterns of the environment.
78. The school follows a recognised national scheme of work in **design and technology** and this affords the pupils a range of design and making opportunities. Only two part-lessons could be observed but, together with other evidence, it is clear that National Curriculum requirements are fulfilled. Year 1 pupils design and make moving parts for a book, Year 3 pupils their own sandwiches, whilst Year 5 pupils evaluate the texture, appearance and taste of different types of bread. Year 4 pupils have made their own felt purses, stitching the parts together themselves, whilst Year 6 pupils have designed and made their own slippers. Good opportunities are taken in some of this work to practise literacy skills, such as instructional writing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Living healthily is given good attention in the programme of work.
- The subject is linked effectively to other subjects.

Commentary

79. Teachers use a published scheme flexibly to provide the personal, social and health education curriculum. Whilst some teachers adopt formal personal, social and health education lessons, including 'circle time', when pupils gather round to discuss aspects of conduct and relationships, others integrate the learning into other subjects. Through these arrangements, there is good content for living healthily and pupils are prepared well for their later physical development through an effective sex and relationships education programme. Drugs education is considered sensitively and pupils are alerted to the positive features of drugs, as well as to their dangers. Pupils are taught to think beyond themselves, and the termly charity event makes them aware of the needs of others. Some good use is made of theatre groups on issues relevant to growing up, such as bullying. Pupils take on roles in school that develop their sense of responsibility and contribute very well to the pupils' good level of social maturity. One Year 3 lesson was observed in full. This was of good quality. In this lesson, pupils learned to work with a partner and draw a design from the instructions their partner gave. Pupils related well to one another and listened carefully. The exercise, designed to get pupils to listen to important detail, such as when crossing a road with an adult, was useful and fit for purpose.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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