

INSPECTION REPORT

RENHOLD VC LOWER SCHOOL

Renhold, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109603

Headteacher: Mrs E J Ferguson

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 267558

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First school
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4-9
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 100

School address: Church End
Renhold
Bedford
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Telephone number: 01234 771724
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Revd Clifford Bradley

Date of previous inspection: 15th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Renhold VC Lower School is a voluntary controlled school for pupils aged four to nine, situated in a rural setting. With 100 pupils on roll, it is smaller than other primary schools, although numbers are steadily climbing. Pupils come from a wide area and overall socio-economic characteristics are average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, largely because families do not claim their entitlement. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The Foundation Stage consists of the reception class, which is the biggest class in the school. The pupils are predominantly White-British, but with a small number from other ethnic or mixed race backgrounds. None is at an early stage of learning English. Around 12 per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register and this includes four pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. More pupils than average move into the school during the school year. The school provides both a breakfast and after-school club, together with afternoon care for the youngest children who are not in full-time education.

The school was awarded Investors in People and the Activemark in 2003 and a Schools' Achievement Award. It gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004. It is working towards a national award in information and communication technology (ICT) and the Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Susan Walker	Lead inspector	Special educational needs, English as an additional language, English, information and communication technology, personal, social and health education and citizenship, history, geography, art and design and design technology
32697	David Smith	Lay inspector	
27568	Midge Davidson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, mathematics, science, religious education, music and physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Renhold Voluntary Controlled Lower School is a **very successful** and inclusive school. The headteacher provides excellent leadership which has resulted in very good teaching and learning. At age nine, standards are very good in English and above average in mathematics and science. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science. Achievement is well above average standards in ICT, art and design, dance and games by age nine.
- Innovative leadership by the headteacher has resulted in very well trained staff.
- There is very good teaching and learning in Years 1-4, which cater for pupils of all abilities. However, while satisfactory, teaching in the reception class could be better planned in some aspects.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which has resulted in the school's very good ethos.
- There is an outstandingly innovative curriculum that encourages pupils to learn.
- All adults provide very good care and guidance for pupils.
- Relationships with the community are very good and they have benefited the school.

The school was last inspected in March 1999. It has made very good progress in addressing its areas for development and has got better in almost every other aspect due to the headteacher's excellent guidance on improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **very good** overall. Children enter the reception class with broadly average standards. By the time they move to Year 1 most are average, but children are better than this in their personal and social skills due to good teaching. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science. They reach above average standards in almost all subjects due to very good teaching. By the end of Year 4, pupils achieve very well in English, ICT, art and design, dance and games and attain well above average standards. Here pupils' very good standards in presentation are most evident. They achieve very well in mathematics and science and standards are above average. In all other subjects achievement is good and standards are above average.

Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	B	A	A
writing	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A	D	B	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

In the 2004 national tests, standards were well above average in reading and writing when compared with all schools nationally and with those with similar numbers of free school meals. Standards were above average in mathematics when compared with all schools and

average when compared with similar schools. Teacher assessment in science is well above average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are very good. The school makes consistently **very good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this has led to the very good ethos of the school. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. Teachers are a real strength of the school's provision. Teaching and learning are **very good** overall in Years 1-4. Teaching is particularly good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, dance and games. Teaching and learning is at least satisfactory in the reception class, but there are weaknesses in planning, pace and resources which mean that learning is not as good as it could be. Assessment is very good. The curriculum is very good in Years 1-4 where it is very creatively planned and it is satisfactory in the reception class. There are very good opportunities for pupils to experience educational visits, visitors to school and extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils new to the school are quickly assessed and provided for. Good staff, resources and accommodation aid pupils' learning well. Pupils are very well cared for and supported. The very effective links with the community have improved pupils' learning in ICT.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. She has developed a team of very good teachers in Years 1-4. Management and leadership by key staff are very good. Management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. All subject leaders are committed to providing high quality education for pupils of all abilities. Governance is good and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and what it provides, particularly the individual attention pupils receive and the 'wrap round' care. Pupils like coming to school and show very clear enjoyment of their lessons. They are eager to put their views forward and play a full part in school life.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve children's learning in the Foundation Stage is:

- to improve the use of classroom accommodation, the pace of children's learning and the quality of creative resources in order to improve achievement in some aspects in the reception class.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **very good** overall because pupils receive a rich and innovative curriculum. Achievement is particularly good for the older pupils in art and design, dance and games and ICT. Standards are **better than average** in nearly every subject at ages seven and nine because teaching is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are better than average because pupils have very good opportunities to practise their skills in other lessons.
- Achievement is very good because assessment is very accurate and lessons match all pupils' needs.
- The school enables its pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.
- Adults recognise and make good provision for pupils who are gifted and talented.

Commentary

1. Children enter the reception class with standards that are average for their age. Most will reach the early learning goals¹ in most areas of learning by the time they reach Year 1 due to satisfactory teaching. Their achievement is average. However, due to the priority that the school gives to personal and social development, achievement in this area is good and most pupils are likely to exceed the expected level.
2. Inspection findings show that standards are above average at Year 2 and Year 4 in most subjects. Standards are well above average in English, ICT and art and design at Year 4. In religious education standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at Year 2 and above average at Year 4. In physical education standards are particularly high in dance and games at Year 4. This overall standard is better than many schools nationally and reflects the very good teaching pupils receive.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.7 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.2 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In the 2004 national tests for seven year olds, standards were well above average in reading and writing when compared with all schools and those with similar socio-economic circumstances. Standards were above average in mathematics when compared with all

¹ The goals that children are expected to reach by the time they start in Year 1.

schools and average when compared with similar schools. Results of teacher assessment in science indicate consistently high scores.

4. With such small numbers, one pupil can make a difference to the overall results. Although the attainment of boys and girls varies from year to year, for instance in the 2004 Year 2 tests girls attained more of the higher levels, inspection findings showed no difference in the overall performance of girls and boys.
5. In 2004, twelve pupils took the optional tests for pupils aged nine. In reading pupils achieved very well and half were at the level expected for pupils in Year 6. In writing and mathematics standards were above average. Pupils usually do better than others in the county. Pupils who transfer to the school after Year 2 make particularly good progress before they leave at the end of Year 4.
6. The impact of pupils coming into the school at other than the usual time is not as great as in many schools. This is because they are quickly assessed so teachers know what they need next. The very good curriculum, the very good teaching and other pupils' enthusiasm for lessons ensure that the pace of the newcomers' learning accelerates.
7. Achievement for girls and boys of all abilities is very good overall because of the rich curriculum and very knowledgeable teaching combined with the fact that teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses very well. Achievement is very good overall in English, mathematics and science, and very good at age nine in art and design, games and dance and ICT.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans and achieve well. This is because assessment is very accurate so all teachers and learning support assistants are clear about these pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Because the school is very good at training its entire teaching and learning support staff in special educational needs techniques, adults know exactly which approach will be successful with pupils in lessons and in small teaching groups.
9. The school checks the performance of pupils from all ethnic groupings, but this reveals no clear trends. Inspection findings show that pupils from all ethnic groupings perform according to their ability and do no differently compared with their classmates.
10. There is a gifted and talented register. Pupils achieve very well. Teachers have had up-to-date training and have sufficient resources to deliver a good programme. One of the strengths of the school is the fact that the staff can identify when a child is talented, despite behaviour that might suggest otherwise. Through attendance at the 'Children's University' pupils have good opportunities to meet other gifted and talented pupils. The number of activities which they can take part in out of lessons also supports the learning of this group of pupils.
11. Direct comparison with standards in every subject since the last inspection is difficult because of the small numbers of some cohorts. However, it is clear that achievement has improved very well, particularly in Year 1 and for the higher attaining pupils. The school has maintained its traditional strengths in standards in subjects such as art and design and physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are **very good**. Their behaviour in and around school is **very good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very happy to be at school and take an active part in their learning.
- The very high quality of personal relationships underpins the quality of lessons and ethos of the school.
- Pupils acknowledge and conform very well to the school rules.
- The quality of spiritual awareness is very high.
- The school council is very effective.
- The highly enriched curriculum gives pupils many opportunities to develop their cultural awareness.
- Attendance is above the national average and time keeping during the day is good.

Commentary

12. The high quality of the curriculum ensures that lessons are relevant to pupils and they enjoy what they are doing. Some subjects are particularly popular, for example science and physical education where teachers are particularly knowledgeable and creative. In all lessons teachers ensure that pupils are actively engaged in what they are doing. There are plenty of well planned opportunities for pupils to work together collaboratively. They are able to discuss issues effectively and act as members of a team when discussing strategies in order to solve problems. This has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
13. The caring and inclusive ethos of the school is reflected in the quality of relationships established right at the beginning. In this supportive atmosphere all pupils flourish and those with special educational needs are valued and settle into school life very well. All members of the school community feel valued and pupils' self-esteem is high. Teachers provide very good role models for their pupils by the high quality of their own professional relationships, their quiet speech and very high expectations of good behaviour. Routines and good levels of personal development established in the reception class provide a good basis for very good attitudes and behaviour later in the school. The high levels of respect, co-operation and responsibility are the results of very good opportunities for moral and social development. Pupils are eager to please their teachers through hard work, good humour, politeness and co-operation. They respond well to their class and school rules and the enjoyment of '*Golden Time*'. There have been no exclusions.
14. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own learning in lessons and older pupils carry out their 'jobs' in a caring and conscientious manner. The school council is a very effective group with representatives from each class and officers chosen from older pupils. They take their responsibilities seriously and meet regularly, responding to agendas and minutes of previous meetings. Their decisions on fund-raising and dealing with concerns have a significant effect on school life.
15. Spiritual development accurately reflects the religious foundation of the school. Curriculum themes give all pupils scope for reflection. The religious education curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to discuss issues relating to their own feelings. The quality and content of assemblies contribute effectively to this. Cultural development is also very good. Significant influences come through music, religious education, physical education and geography. The very good opportunities that pupils have to listen to visitors from the local village and the part the school plays in village life also contribute to this development. Dance, similarly, enables pupils to

appreciate the traditions of their own heritage. The richness of the thematic curriculum enables pupils to become aware of other faiths and cultures. All the issues raised in the last report concerning these aspects have been addressed very well.

16. The school keeps a close eye on attendance and a working group regularly updates the headteacher and governors on issues relating to pupils' absence and punctuality. The school strongly discourages term time holidays and parents respond well. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now broadly in line with the national average. Parents ensure that their children arrive in good time at the start of the day.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.9	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching and learning are **very good**, as is assessment. The curriculum is **very good** and is complemented by **very good** opportunities for curriculum enrichment. Care, guidance and support are all **very good**. The school's links with the community are **very good** and partnerships with parents and other schools are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good** overall, but are **satisfactory** in the reception class. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers in Years 1-4 are a real strength of the school's provision and are excellent at encouraging pupils to learn.
- Teachers in Years 1-4 have very good subject knowledge and specialist teaching is effective.
- There are very high expectations of what pupils can achieve in Years 3 and 4.
- Lessons in Years 1-4 are carefully planned so that the needs of all pupils are met.
- There are good opportunities for pupils in Years 1-4 to carry out and evaluate practical activities.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by the use of '*brain gym*'.²
- The school uses very good systems in Years 1-4 to check what pupils know and understand.
- Although overall satisfactory, in the reception class planning of some aspects could be sharper.

Commentary

17. At the time of the last inspection, nine out of ten lessons seen were satisfactory, with about half being good. The school has made very marked improvement because teaching is now very good or better in half the lessons seen. Teaching is particularly good in Years 3 and 4 and this results in very good achievement in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and art and design. The headteacher accurately evaluates the quality of teaching as being very good and pupils correctly feel that they are learning a lot. Their learning is very well supported by their teachers' encouragement, support and praise.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	11	12	3	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.

² A series of carefully graduated actions which stimulate all areas of pupils' brains.

18. Lesson planning in Years 1-4 is very good and this leads to very good teaching in English, mathematics, science, art and design, physical education and personal, social and health education. Teaching is good overall in ICT, religious education and design and technology. Teachers in Years 1-4 have very good subject knowledge and understanding, thanks to the very good training opportunities that are offered to them. This means that they are confident to plan and deliver an innovative and creative curriculum. Teachers routinely plan very good opportunities for all pupils to observe, predict what will happen and evaluate their own and others' work in order to improve their learning in a full range of subjects. All adults use the correct technical subject language and this ensures that pupils are confident to talk about what they know and can do.
19. Specialist teaching enables pupils to learn at a faster pace. This is very evident in physical education where two skilled teachers work with pupils in games and dance lessons. The use of a learning support assistant, who is also a trained sports coach, enables boys and girls to refine their football skills at an unusually early age.
20. Teaching is satisfactorily planned in the reception class. It has some good features. For instance, the teaching assistants provide strong support for the teacher in the management of children in this class. The weaker features are that structured play activities and space in the classroom are not always used to the best advantage to make for a really stimulating environment in which these children can learn. Lessons sometimes lack the brisk pace seen in other parts of the school where learning is fast and exciting.
21. The innovative curriculum means that pupils learn basic skills in each subject. But then teachers in Years 1-4 plan imaginative lessons so that pupils get very good opportunities to employ their skills in interesting ways in many different lessons. Pupils' pride in the final draft of their work improves their learning. The high expectations that Year 4 pupils will strive towards the targets normally expected of Year 6 pupils mean that learning is very focused. *'Brain gym'* is used very effectively to calm pupils down after one lesson and prepare them for another subject. Very great care is taken to ensure that pupils carry out the correct focused movements that will improve their learning.
22. Pupils are assessed annually in the autumn term and this information is used to set challenging targets for the rest of the year. The information is used very effectively as part of teachers' lesson planning and also to identify those pupils who need further help. The school has made very significant improvements in marking pupils' work and telling them how to improve. This was an area for development at the time of the last inspection. Currently, the comments on their work show pupils how they have met the purpose of the lesson, for instance by writing a specific number of sentences, but also recommend, for example, that they use more adjectives next time. Subject leaders analyse the tests used on a question by question basis and this leads to good improvements in provision and teaching methods, for example in common methods of calculation. Assessment of writing is very good. Writing is assessed twice a year and results are shared among teachers and other schools and compared to see whether gifted and talented pupils are being truly stretched.

23. Assessment is in place for all subjects. The school has found this easy to implement because it is so clear about the purpose of each lesson and what it expects average, below average and higher attaining pupils to achieve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good** and is **satisfactory** in the reception class. Opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The choice of themes ensures that pupils enjoy a rich and relevant curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.
- The staff team works together to make outstanding improvement to the curriculum through innovation.
- Pupils benefit from a very large range of out-of-school clubs and additional experiences which enrich their learning.
- Improved accommodation has enhanced pupils' learning.

Commentary

24. Inspection findings agree with the school's evaluation of the curriculum for Years 1-4. In the Foundation Stage a satisfactory balance is maintained between different kinds of activities. Teachers are very successful in bringing subjects together. Themes such as *'The Abstract'* or *'The Human Figure'* that link subjects very effectively give relevance and richness to pupils' learning and encourage creativity. A reflective approach to the content of the curriculum contributes significantly to the spiritual development made by pupils. Pupils see the relevance of what they are learning and enjoy interesting lessons that frequently involve them in investigations and performance activities. Very effective links between music and physical education lend vibrancy to dance lessons and, for instance, singing *Greensleeves* becomes more significant when you realise it may have been written by Henry VIII. The very high quality of the curriculum provides a rich learning environment. There has been substantial improvement since the last inspection when the development and progression of pupils' skills was sometimes weak.
25. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is based on good quality individual education plans. Year 1 pupils who are identified as having special educational needs are given a good structured programme of support. There is a detailed scheme to support pupils with special educational needs in mathematics. Those who need it have skilled weekly help in a language group taught by a learning support assistant. A specialist teaching assistant delivers a programme to those pupils who need help with manipulative and co-ordination skills. It is a tribute to the school's inclusivity that such a small school deals so well with the complex needs of pupils with pronounced special educational needs.
26. Through the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the very effective annual staff conference, agreement is made on school development initiatives. This forms the basis for an excellent level of innovation in the curriculum. The results are evident in the day-to-day functioning of the school and the resulting high standards attained by pupils through very good teaching. For example, an initiative to improve teaching of calculations is apparent in the recorded work of pupils.
27. Pupils, teachers and support staff are able to participate in a large variety of clubs that run at lunchtime and after school. This adds to the enjoyment and quality of performance, especially in physical education. Specialist coaches and expert teachers transmit great enthusiasm and high levels of skills. The local environment like the grounds, local church and village are used very well to support the curriculum and visits further afield enhance learning. Many visitors

come into school to share experiences and make learning especially relevant. The visiting Roman soldier and music groups, for example, support teaching very well. Resources for teaching are good quality and plentiful. They are particularly well used in science where they contribute significantly to the high quality of investigations carried out and in art and design where the standards of pupils' work is particularly good.

28. The quality of the accommodation was a significant issue at the time of the last inspection. It is now good and enables pupils to be taught in single age classes. The extra space allows for creativity and enables pupils' work to be very well displayed in ways that support their learning well. Resources in Years 1-4 are good and make learning interesting. In the reception class, while numbers of support staff and the quality of the accommodation are good, resources are satisfactory. There is a lack of good quality resources for creative play.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance and involves its pupils **very well** in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils very well; child protection and health and safety procedures are very thorough.
- Pupils are very clear about how well they are progressing and how they can improve their work in the future.
- The school council is a very effective body and is highly regarded by adults and pupils.

Commentary

29. The school welcomes all children and provides a high standard of support and care that is tailor-made to meet the needs of each individual. Child protection and health and safety procedures are comprehensive and members of staff are fully aware of their individual responsibilities. The school ensures that staff are trained to meet the needs of each and every pupil. Teachers know their pupils very well and they are able to spot any emerging problems at an early stage. Care for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this expertise comes directly from the headteacher. Pupils feel that the school cares for them well and they like and respect the adults in the school. They say that they would feel able to ask for help or advice if ever they needed it. This puts pupils in a good position to be able to settle down and to concentrate on their work.
30. The school works hard to ensure that pupils understand clearly how well they are doing and how they can improve. Home and class work is quickly and clearly marked and teachers provide comprehensive guidance on the quality of the work submitted. Pupils discuss their ideas openly and confidently and evaluate each other's contributions. Homework diaries are used well as an aid to learning.
31. Each class has its own council from which representatives are drawn to serve on the whole school council. Elections are democratic and pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. Regular meetings are well run and, though supported by an adult, are organised and minuted by the pupils. Pupils with concerns or ideas can discuss these with school council representatives or place them in a suggestion box for review in the meetings. Pupils make a clear contribution to school life and have brought about

several improvements, such as improved toilet facilities for the disabled and suggestions for after-school clubs. There has been substantial improvement in this aspect since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The community and local businesses support the school very well.
- The school provides good information to parents and responds very well to their comments and suggestions.
- Transfer arrangements with the receiving middle school are good.

Commentary

32. This school stands at the heart of its community and it has nurtured very good links with local organisations and their representatives. Its rural location allows pupils to use the surroundings effectively for fieldwork and they visit local places of interest to supplement work undertaken during lessons. The school is available for community use and after-school computer training is proving particularly popular. Members of the community, parents and ex-pupils provide good support within the day-to-day life of the school. For example, residents visit to tell pupils about their wartime experiences and this helps pupils to reflect upon and understand the school's history within its community. There are strong links with the church. There is a small but active parents' association which runs regular social events to raise funds for the school. Local businesses also provide good support for learning. Pupils make pizzas at the restaurant of a national chain as part of a project on food and businesses have funded the installation of network cabling and carpeting throughout the school.
33. The school provides parents with good information about its day-to-day life through regular newsletters and letters about school events and developments. Posters about events and clubs and photographs of staff are displayed prominently and the school has an 'open door' policy and is willing to be flexible in informing and involving parents. Reports to parents are clear and well structured and provide a picture which parents say truly reflects their child. Parents are encouraged to air their views on matters of importance and have recently been asked to comment on their perception of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Wherever possible the school takes full account of parents' views when planning for the future and, as a result, parents feel fully involved in the life of the school.
34. Parents of reception class pupils are highly satisfied with the induction process when their children start school. They are given good information about what their children will be learning.
35. The school works well with the receiving middle school to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their move at the end of Year 4. It joins other primary schools in the cluster to visit the receiving middle school and shares sporting and artistic events. These help pupils to make new friends and settle when they start Year 5.

36. The school regularly provides places for teacher trainees and nursery nurse trainees from local colleges. It also hosts work experience places for secondary pupils who live nearby and works well with other schools within the cluster, sharing funding for a computer technician. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection and sorted out the missing statutory elements from its documentation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**. The leadership of key staff is **very good**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outstanding vision of the headteacher underpins all aspects of the school.
- The quality of concern for the needs of all individuals is excellent.
- The sense of purpose and co-operation shared by the whole school team are excellent.
- Subject leaders manage their subjects very well.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school.
- Very good approaches to financial management help the school to achieve its priorities.

Commentary

37. The headteacher offers outstanding leadership. She has been able to create a totally committed team of staff through very careful recruitment processes. Thus the school team has become a dynamic group of practitioners in Years 1-4 committed to the development, improvement and status of the school and staff in the reception class are making progress towards this. Pupils and adults are all valued throughout the school. This sensitive and caring ethos created in the school welcomes all pupils who are supported very well, whatever their needs may be. Talents are used to the full and teachers' responsibilities are shared successfully through the judicious training and delegation of duties to support staff, all of whom share a vision for the school. This marks a very good improvement since the last inspection.
38. The drive for improvement comes through a shared approach to teaching, which is established each year during a staff professional development conference. As a result agreed initiatives are put into place and everyone understands the direction for improvement and how their own responsibilities will fit with the school development plan. Those teaching staff who have responsibilities for subjects carry out their roles very well. They have a clear understanding of how to improve the standards and teaching in their subjects. They look carefully at the results of tests and assessments by scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' planning very effectively and by monitoring the quality of teaching. Teachers respect and like each other and are happy to share experiences and comment constructively on performance, which has contributed greatly to the improvements in teaching and the raising of standards since the last inspection. It reflects clearly the collegiate approach established and led so effectively by the headteacher.
39. Leadership and management of the reception class are carried out by the class teacher and are satisfactory. There is an appropriate action plan, which recognises some of the areas for improvement identified in the report. This area is making steady improvement under the guidance of a relatively new teacher.
40. Governors support and respect the headteacher. They understand clearly the strengths of the school and are kept informed through regular visits and presentations from teaching staff.

They make informed decisions about financial expenditure and assess the value of decisions made, for example the provision of school meals. The governing body contributes well to the school development plan and has a good view of strategic planning, building for the expansion of the school. Members are aware of the continuous development being made with the curriculum and maintain their own training. It is an orderly body and its committees are influential and take their responsibilities very seriously.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>		<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Total income	333,202	Balance from previous year	13,631
Total expenditure	329,675	Balance carried forward to the next	3,527
Expenditure per pupil	3,399		

41. The school operates very efficiently. The headteacher is particularly good at acquiring extra funds and donations from the community so that her plans come to fruition. The priority given to training and recruiting expertise among the staff means that the carry forward is very small.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Foundation Stage

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are happy at school and settle well. They behave very well.
- Teaching of reading skills is good.
- They make good progress with personal and social development.
- Creative play is sometimes restricted by a lack of suitable resources.
- Occasionally, whole-class sessions are too long.
- The accommodation could be used more creatively.

Commentary

42. When children start school their attainment is average, overall. Children start in the Foundation Stage class in the term after their fourth birthday. Currently, there are 27 children in the reception class who attend part-time. About half have had no experience of the school's nursery or pre-school provision.
43. Children achieve satisfactorily and most will reach the early learning goals in most areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. In their personal, social and emotional development they achieve well and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals.
44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. Planning is satisfactory and is clear about the adults' role in the lesson. However, it is not as clear about what children will be learning. The teaching assistants provide strong support for the teacher in the management of children in the class. Together they ensure that satisfactory learning occurs. They are fully involved with the planning of lessons and contribute ideas for activities. However, sometimes class teaching times are not brisk enough and occasionally opportunities are missed for children to consolidate what they have been taught through structured play activities. Children use the outside area regularly each day. The quality of the accommodation has improved since the last inspection. However, space in the classroom and the small room is not always used to the best advantage in order that there is a really stimulating environment in which these children can learn.
45. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, overall. It is early days for the class teacher to be managing this area. A significant amount of work has been carried out recently in reviewing the curriculum, methods of planning and assessment in the reception class. This is beginning to have an impact upon the quality of provision. A policy which embodies the practice of the Foundation Stage is in the process of being written. The action plan correctly identifies the need to improve the already satisfactory curriculum by modifying the 'play curriculum' and improving resources. Observations of children's progress are made regularly and good records are kept of progress made during those activities led by adults. These are maintained carefully and form the basis of the annual profile of progress. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

46. Children achieve well in **personal, social and emotional development** because of the high quality of relationships established and the good teaching provided. Children are happy and settled in the class which stems from the good quality of planned meetings and opportunities to visit the classroom before they actually start. The good progress made in this area of the curriculum reflects the values and aims of the school. Children respond well to the older pupils with whom they have contact at playtimes. Well-established routines and high expectations in the classroom also support their good behaviour. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn how to behave in the hall at assembly times and lunchtime because adults model how they should behave. Provision in this area is good.
47. Achievement is satisfactory in **communication, language and literacy**. Children are beginning to prepare for later literacy hour lessons. Good questioning ensures that they all take a full part in discussion. Most children are learning the sounds of letters and recognise simple common words quickly. For those who are making the best progress with reading, these skills are used well to sound out new words. This aspect of learning is taught well and forms a sound basis for the high standards attained in reading later in the school. Close attention is given to recorded work and children become confident writers by the end of the reception class. Occasionally, sessions where children are taught on the carpet are too long for such young children. This is especially true when they are then followed by adult-led 'sitting round the table' sessions.
48. Children have plenty of opportunities to count and recognise numbers. Most can count ten objects reliably and some can count beyond. They can make attractive pictures with shapes and name some of them. Children enjoy working on activities that are related to their class discussion and enjoy their big counting book together. They achieve satisfactorily in **mathematical development**.
49. Children achieve satisfactorily in **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They benefit from the support of classroom assistants when they discuss the autumn treasures they have brought from home or found on their walk. They use their senses well to describe texture, shape and smell. They share in celebrations like Diwali and special events in school. Children all have access to the class computer and with adult support they use the mouse satisfactorily to select items. They have regular experiences to make things and talk about their plans and the reasons why they are making puppets or rabbit hutches. These activities are planned and recorded well in class books. Children enjoy looking at pictures of themselves involved in activities.
50. It was not possible to observe any direct teaching of **creative development**, but evidence of earlier work suggests that achievement is satisfactory and is usually linked to activities that children select for themselves. There are limited opportunities for painting, but previous work suggests that pupils achieve satisfactorily when painting self-portraits. The quality of role play is sometimes restricted by the lack of exciting or imaginative use of resources to stimulate children's imagination or to give a clear focus to the area.
51. Children achieve satisfactorily in **physical development**. They have satisfactory opportunities to balance, run and use large apparatus outside. This outside space is used satisfactorily for all areas of learning and children are happy to choose to play here. Specific physical education lessons enable them to match movements to music. They experiment with twists and turns and make sound progress in learning how to

use space and interpret feelings due to effective demonstration by both the class teacher and support staff.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic skills are very well taught.
- Marking and feedback is really informative so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Teachers build in very good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

52. In the 2004 national tests for seven year olds, standards were well above average when compared with all schools and schools in similar circumstances. In the optional tests for nine year olds half the class attained the level expected of Year 6 pupils in reading. Standards in writing were above average. Opportunities for speaking and listening are very well developed and so by age nine many pupils discuss, argue and present information with confidence.
53. Inspection findings show that current Year 2 pupils attain better than average standards and achieve very well in reading and writing because basic skills are very well taught. Standards in Year 4 are well above average and achievement is very good.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well planned and interesting. Because of this fact pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and this is evident from discussion about their work. Very good relationships mean that no time is wasted dealing with behaviour issues and so learning proceeds at a fast pace. Teachers include pupils of all abilities in discussion and value their contributions. Beginnings and endings of lessons are used particularly well to enhance pupils' learning. They are used extremely well to introduce and reinforce the purpose of the lesson and often involve pupils in evaluating others' work. Resources are imaginative. Teachers use both good quality texts and pictures to stimulate pupils' writing. Marking and feedback are a clear improvement since the last inspection and leave pupils in no doubt what they need to practise next.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. They are given many opportunities to take part in discussion and share their ideas with the class. Classroom support assistants keep pupils focused effectively on their tasks and provide good demonstrations of how to write and form letters.
56. The subject action plan clearly focuses on improving learning and achievement. Assessment in writing is very good and carefully checks that the school challenges its

gifted and talented pupils. The subject co-ordinator analyses questions in the optional and national tests and uses the findings to improve teaching. The library is accessible, well resourced and knowledgeably used by pupils. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. This aspect is very good because of the way that the curriculum is designed. For instance, in a design and technology lesson pupils wrote invitations to the other infant class to come and sample their pizzas. This is writing for a real purpose. Pupils, particularly the higher attaining, have good opportunities to write at length in many subjects. Techniques such as labelling, writing captions and organising arguments by using bullet points are fully used across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above average standards because they are taught very well.
- Interesting investigations help pupils to make very good gains in their learning.
- Very good use is made of assessment and this helps teachers to plan lessons which match the needs of all pupils.
- Mathematics is used well in other subjects.

Commentary

58. Observations during the inspection and analysis of records of work from previous years indicate that standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 4. Higher attaining pupils are particularly well challenged in Years 3 and 4 and current Year 4 pupils are achieving particularly well due to very good teaching. In the 2004 national tests Year 2 standards were above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools.
59. The teaching of mathematics is very good throughout the school and all pupils achieve very well. A particularly good understanding of the subject and an approach to investigation and problem solving which engages pupils' interest result in exciting lessons during which pupils learn very well. Lessons are carefully planned and activities designed well for those with different abilities. Where the content of lessons is imaginatively linked to the current theme the desire to learn is even greater. For example, designing pizzas in order to create number sentences! Classroom assistants offer significant support to those with whom they work, asking searching questions and suggesting ways to improve. Those with special educational needs make very good progress because adults provide encouragement to work through problems and show pupils how to form numerals correctly. Lessons are brisk. Pupils have sufficient time to complete tasks, but no time is wasted. In the very best lessons, the starting activity is challenging and responses are fast. Children's progress is assessed regularly. Very effective analysis of these test results enables pupils' progress to be predicted and tracked accurately.
60. Leadership and management are very good. The commitment of all staff to improvement and development means that new initiatives agreed are apparent in the work observed in lessons. The subject leader has sufficient time to monitor the teaching of mathematics very well, which leads directly to continuous review and improvement of the curriculum. There has been very good improvement in standards and teaching since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Mathematical skills are used well in other subjects. Graphical work of all kinds is used to present results of investigations in science and geography. These frequently use ICT programs. Very good use is made of directions and co-ordinates in geography, building on work started in mathematics lessons. Results of investigations in science are recorded in tables and often include measurements of length or weight.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good gains in their learning because of very good teaching.
- Pupils use the process of investigation well to increase their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- Lessons are very well planned so that they are relevant and interesting for pupils.
- Resources are used very well.

Commentary

62. Results of teacher assessments at age seven indicate consistently above average scores and these are reflected at age nine, where pupils also attain above average standards. At this early stage in the year elements of attainment at these above average standards are already apparent.
63. The quality of teaching is consistently very good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils achieve very well. Lessons in science are greatly enjoyed: *"I love science, It's my favourite"*, stated pupils. The lessons observed were all based upon investigations and this engaged pupils' attention and challenged their thinking. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to observe and predict. Pupils frequently work together in groups. This means that they have very good opportunities to discuss what they will do and they work together well as a team. Very good questioning means that teachers can extend skills of investigation and ensure that pupils learn to reflect upon their hypotheses. For example, how to ensure that a scratch test to investigate the hardness of materials is fair or how to improve the effect of making 'raindrops' to test how waterproof a material might be. Teachers are adept in valuing all the answers that pupils give and use them very effectively to extend understanding. This approach to learning is very effective and allows pupils of different abilities to be challenged very well.
64. Leadership and management are very good. The commitment of all staff to continuous development can be seen in the number of staff meetings devoted to improvement. The quality of lesson planning is very good and reflects the current initiative for improvement in science. Issues raised in the last report over the quality of investigation have been addressed very well. Resources are plentiful and used very well. Pupils become used to having a range of equipment to choose from and this contributes effectively to their independence and learning. Links with other subjects through the creative and thematic approach to curriculum planning also add relevance and meaning to pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very good because it is integrated into all subjects.
- Resources are good and allow pupils independence in their learning.

- Teachers and pupils make good use of cameras to record what is going on in lessons.
- Basic skills are taught well by all adults.
- Pupils enjoy ICT.

Commentary

65. At the end of Year 2 standards are above average and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 4 pupils attain well above average standards and achieve very well.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall and are very good for the oldest pupils. Adults have good knowledge and understanding of computing and they teach pupils basic skills at an early age. They use the correct technical vocabulary and expect that pupils will do likewise. Lessons are well prepared and organised, with good care taken to ensure that pupils of all abilities can take part. Careful selection of specific resources ensures that older pupils have the opportunity to put together a multi-media program, for instance in personal, social and health education. This resource allows pupils to work collaboratively, making choices in animating pictures and adding text and sounds to establish the best effects. The most able pupils do this with a good awareness of their audience and this is most evident in Year 4. Pupils have very good attitudes to ICT and take great care with the presentation of their work, for instance when designing posters of how to join the Roman army or in importing text and graphics in 'Dream sequences'. Pupils use cameras with confidence, whether to assess and evaluate their own work or to provide a resource for future learning, as when pupils photographed the folds in cloth to establish the effects of light and shade.
67. Leadership and management are very good and the subject leader provides a good example to others in moving achievement forward. The school is working towards a national award in ICT and involvement in a global learning initiative which will involve pupils e-mailing children in other countries. Staff receive good opportunities to improve their skills. Assessment is secure and reflects what pupils can do. The school takes good care to ensure that parents give their permission for pupils to use the Internet. The school has sustained the quality provision noted at the time of the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. This aspect is very good. ICT is securely embedded in the curriculum. It is used well in subjects such as art and design to give pupils a chance to produce work in the style of famous artists. It is used exceptionally well in dance to allow pupils to develop, evaluate and refine their work. Older pupils have easy access to digital microscopes in science and are confident to log their books in and out in the library.

HUMANITIES

Geography

69. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about provision and standards in geography as no lessons were seen. However, discussion with pupils and examination of their previous work shows that achievement is at least good. Conversation with Year 2 pupils demonstrates that they understand the purpose of maps and use geographical language well to give directions. Year 4 pupils have a clear understanding of past and future settlements as

their 'traveller's log' and models of settlements show. The curriculum is rich and makes good use of the local environment, and this helps pupils to become good citizens as they understand the impact of changes to their environment. Pupils make good use of their mathematical skills, for instance when they carry out a traffic survey, and very good use of their literacy skills when they write persuasive letters to request a visitors' centre in a country park. Geography makes a very good contribution into pupils' moral and cultural development through, for example, their studies of India and the rainforest. Leadership and management are very good and are clearly focused on improving learning and achievement still further.

History

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- History makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Drama is used extremely well to support pupils' learning.
- Literacy skills are used well and pupils have good opportunities to develop their ideas.
- Art and design is used well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the period studied.
- Visits, visitors and artefacts enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

70. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 4 and pupils' achievement is good. This is because of the very good curriculum, where history is viewed as being part of pupils' multi-cultural education.
71. Overall, teaching and learning is good. In an outstanding lesson seen in Year 3, the teacher fascinated the class when she acted out the role of Henry the VIII, complete with painful knee. This lesson gave pupils very good opportunities to develop their speaking skills, as they had to ask their questions in a formal manner. Challenging aspects, such as how and why Henry VIII married and disposed of his wives, were dealt with sensitively and enhanced pupils' learning and their moral development. Lessons are well prepared. For instance, Year 1 pupils were given good questions to consider while they thought about artefacts such as a *bean slicer* and decided what they were used for. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the day that a Roman soldier came to visit them, bringing along items of his fighting equipment. ICT is used well to record pupils' pleasure and attainment on such occasions. Teachers are imaginative, for example letters are written as scrolls where this is appropriate. Well thought out opportunities for pupils to show what they know, such as when pupils painted the Great Fire of London or reproduced Henry VIII's jousting helmet, provide enlivening displays and develop pupils' cultural understanding.
72. Leadership and management are very good and are clearly focussed on raising achievements. Good quality training has enabled the subject co-ordinator to be an effective role model for others. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Assessment procedures are in place and pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the number of resources have all improved.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good opportunities to reflect on their own feelings.
- Religious education contributes very well to spiritual and moral development.
- The curriculum is very relevant and links very well with current themes.

- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths.

Commentary

73. Limited evidence suggests that pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the age of seven and exceed expectations for their age at nine. There is a good emphasis on lessons that allow pupils to reflect upon feelings. Pupils learn effectively that their knowledge has an impact on how they act and can thus reflect on the actions of others. For example, extensive discussions about how we come to make difficult decisions are linked well to the choices made by Jonah. In this reflective mode pupils make very significant progress in their spiritual development. Particularly good links with the local church community also reinforce this aspect.
74. Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well. Good links are made between issues in personal, social and health education and religious education. Pupils have good opportunities to work together in groups and the good use of 'discussion partners' means that all have a voice in lessons. The creativity of the curriculum ensures that relevant learning links are made for pupils. Challenging activities ensure that older pupils begin to engage with some of the difficult issues related to belief. For example, '*What did people think Jesus was like and what did he look like?*'. These topics often link well with subjects such as art and design and music. ICT is also used well in lessons. Pupils use their writing skills well in this subject, using a wide variety of recording ranging from letter writing to evaluations of a design and technology project to make a stable for their nativity scene. The study of special books and places gives pupils very good opportunities to learn about other world faiths and begin to understand what it might mean to be part of another faith community. In this way, religious education contributes very well to pupils' cultural development.
75. Leadership and management are good. Assessment is regular and effective. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

76. Insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection to make a judgement on provision in this subject. Pupils sing well. They are tuneful and can maintain separate parts well. The musical expertise of teachers ensures that pupils experience very good levels of accompaniment and support with singing. The very good quality of curriculum planning means that music lessons link directly to the themes being taught. For example, children learn about notation by learning songs linked to their study of the Tudor monarchs. Older pupils very effectively compose meaningful percussion pieces to accompany a dance, which they then learn to modify and improve. A number of pupils are able to learn to play orchestral instruments and their expertise both informs and enlivens music lessons. Pupils have many good opportunities to listen to music of all styles and periods and this contributes effectively to their spiritual and cultural development. Leadership and management are both good.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for art and design is very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to presentation of their work.
- ICT is used well to support art and design.
- Art and design makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and adds much to the ethos of the school.

Commentary

77. By the end of Year 4 standards are well above average and standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Achievement is good at Year 2 and is very good at Year 4.
78. Overall, teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum for art and design is very good and whole school topics such as *'The Abstract or The Human Figure'* lend themselves to innovative and creative teaching and learning. Pupils are taught the skills they need and sketchbooks are used well to allow pupils to experiment with media and to develop their skills. Teaching is imaginative and develops pupils' learning as a project progresses, as when Year 1 pupils translate their observational drawings of a spiral into textiles using stitching, felt and binca. It is evident that Years 1 and 2 pupils of all abilities develop a good appreciation of line, colour and tone in their multi-media work. Good opportunities for pupils to say what they like about their own and others' work help everyone to develop their skills in art appreciation. Because of very good teaching for the oldest pupils, they are very skilful in observing natural objects such as horse chestnut blossom. Their paintings are very high quality in terms of texture and tone and some have an ethereal quality. Gifted teaching in Year 3 has created an Indian weaving and some abstract patterns using a restricted palette of orange, yellow and browns. This work has a reflective, spiritual quality. Pupils take great care with the presentation of their work and the way that adults display such work enhances pupils' self-esteem and shows the school's very positive ethos.
79. ICT is well used to allow pupils to develop their skills and enhance their learning. Graphic programs allow Year 2 pupils to work in the style of Mondrian and Kandinsky to create abstract prints. Pupils use cameras very well in Year 4 to support their work. For instance, in a project on angels pupils posed in white robes so that classmates could see how light and shadow developed in the folds of the cloth and interpret this in their work.
80. Leadership and management are very good and focused on improving learning and achievement. Pupils visit art galleries so that they get a good grasp of artists' work. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent in all aspects, but particularly in the contribution that art and design makes to pupils' cultural development.

Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very good and well linked to other subjects, such as ICT.
- Pupils can explain what they do to construct and refine their projects.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to make choices about the materials used.
- Pupils make good use of visits to the local community.

Commentary

81. Standards are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. This is because design and technology is embedded in subjects such as English, history and science.
82. Teaching is good and so pupils learn well. Pupils have very positive attitudes and this aids the presentation of their work. This can be seen in their good quality, decorated 'spell boxes'. Pupils have a good understanding of designing, for instance a pizza, so that it is fit for its purpose and enjoyable to eat. They were given good opportunities to take Polaroid pictures of their cooked pizzas as a basis for discussion. Pupils are given good opportunities to make effective use of their mathematical skills in measuring. Teachers ensure that skills develop progressively. For instance, younger pupils were asked to turn a carton inside out and fasten it together with masking tape, whilst the oldest pupils had to make a cube from scratch and fit it together with slots and tabs. Good advice from adults helps pupils to improve their work, whether it is a reminder about the amount of cheese to put on a pizza or a tip about not using too much glue so that cellophane remains transparent. There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate their work and say how they could improve their learning. Adults make good efforts to ensure that pupils of all abilities take part in these activities.
83. Leadership and management are good, with a clear focus on improving achievements further. Good assessment is in place so that pupils' achievement is recognised. Resources are good and pupils use a good variety of tools and techniques to fix and secure things together. The school makes good use of the community, for instance by visiting a 'pizza parlour' in town so that pupils understand the purpose of the product that they are making. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils age nine attain high standards in dance and games skills.
- Pupils achieve very well by age nine due to their ability to evaluate their own and others' work.
- The subject leader provides excellent guidance to staff and pupils alike.
- Pupils benefit from expert teaching.
- Many clubs and additional opportunities contribute very well to the standards attained.

Commentary

84. Most pupils aged seven attain standards above those expected for their age. At age nine these standards are maintained, with particularly high attainment observed in dance and games. An example of outstanding practice in dance ensured that pupils had very good opportunities to improve their work, using constructive suggestions from their friends. This aspect of 'review to improve performance' is also a significant factor in the high standards attained in games.

85. Teaching is very good. All classes have a good allocation of time in which to teach physical education. Particular care is given to the explanation of the purpose of the lesson so that pupils know what they are expected to do. They are given ample opportunity to reflect on what they have learned previously and to apply their knowledge to current activities. For example, pupils are able to select captions that have words like 'levels', 'pathway', 'timing' and 'speed' to remind them how to improve and perfect their sequences of movement. Older pupils are able to invent competitive games using their skills and teach their friends how they are played. As a result, they learn effectively about tactics and rules. Links with music are particularly strong and this is a regular feature from the reception class onwards.
86. The subject is led and managed in an outstanding manner. The curriculum is very well structured and pupils and teachers have benefited from the expertise of the subject leader's specialist knowledge. Her influence on the content of the curriculum and the planning of lessons has contributed to pupils' very evident enjoyment and very good achievement. Pupils learn traditional, as well as improvised, dance and so physical education contributes effectively to cultural development. The large selection of games and physical education clubs provides very well for those pupils with particular interests and expertise. As a result their performance improves and this also contributes to the high standards seen in lessons. Very good additional opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities during their residential excursions and they are also given suitable opportunities to learn how to swim whilst at school. Movement towards national endorsements for physical education skills is being successfully managed by the subject leader. This subject offers enjoyment, expertise and strives admirably for perfection for pupils. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the quality of teaching improved and so improvement since the last inspection is very good.

An example of outstanding practice

This was the last in a series of improvised dance lessons in Year 4. Pupils were arranged into two groups of dancers and musicians.

Particularly good use of interactive ICT enabled pupils to view a previous dance lesson. Having improved their percussion and violin composition the previous day by introducing a conductor, pupils were able to offer constructive criticisms of the dance. Focused questions from the class teacher led pupils to suggest that more pronounced rhythms and percussive sounds were needed to accentuate the *shock* moment and more emphasis was required to establish levels and pathways from the dancers in the following *confusion* sequence. In the hall further practice took place. Flowing costumes enhanced the effect. The concentration was palpable! Observations were used very well to enable further improvements to be made to dance motifs. The following rehearsal demonstrated a vastly improved quality of interpreted movement as well as sensitive amendments to the accompaniment. The dance was now impressive and imaginative. This lesson was well structured, varied and lively. The fusion of music and dance was very effective and accurately typifies the school's thematic approach to curriculum planning. The use of review for improvement was used in an exemplary manner through the considered opinions of pupils. Very high expectations of behaviour and commitment to work were demonstrated in this excellent lesson.

The class was almost ready for Friday's performance!

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very well planned lessons that use ICT very effectively.
- The subject has good links with religious education.
- The school council helps pupils to learn to be good citizens.

Commentary

87. Standards are above average because the curriculum is very well planned. Pupils' achievement is good from the youngest to the oldest.
88. Teaching is very good and helps pupils' moral development considerably as they study topics such as *'Belonging'* or *'Friendship'*. The *'choices'* topic in their religious education lessons blends admirably with the topic of rights and responsibilities. All adults provide very good role models for discussions. Pupils are very effectively encouraged to participate in lessons and give their views, for instance by discussing in pairs before they share their ideas with the class or by brainstorming their ideas. ICT is used to best effect to produce cartoons that encapsulate the subject under discussion and motivate pupils still further.
89. Citizenship is well covered. The school council is a very effective group whose members take their responsibilities seriously and meet regularly. They write to parents to express their concerns on occasion. Their decisions on fund-raising and dealing with concerns have a significant effect on school life.
90. At present there is no subject leader. However, there is a good scheme of work and the subject is firmly embedded in the day-to-day life of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	3
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
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	1
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).