

INSPECTION REPORT

SMARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smarden, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118380

Headteacher: Mr Russell Thorne

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Evans

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th February 2005

Inspection number: 267678

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 92

School address: Pluckley Road

Smarden

Kent

Postcode: TN27 8ND

Telephone number: 01233 770316

Fax number: 01233 770316

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Mr Graham Saunders
governors:

Date of previous April 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Smarden Primary School is a smaller than average primary school, providing education for 92 children, 44 girls and 48 boys, aged four to 11 years of age. The majority of children live in the village of Smarden, although a small number travel from other villages in the area. The number of children known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is above the national average, although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly in line with the national average. Because of the small number of children who join the school each year, children's attainment on entry varies year on year but is generally average. In some year groups, there is a high number of pupils who join and leave the school, and this has the effect of lowering standards in those classes.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20737	Paul Evans	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum English Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
9420	David Martin	Lay inspector	
27654	Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Personal, social and health education and citizenship Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Smarden Primary School is a **good** school, with some very good aspects, in which all pupils achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start, and pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of the present Years 2 and 6. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and governance of the school is good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All pupils achieve well and provision for the Foundation Stage is good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, and the very good teamwork with the deputy headteacher, are very good. However, subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently enabled to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and how well pupils are learning in lessons.
- Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are used well and developed effectively in other subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers in a wide enough range of other subjects, because there are too few computers.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and provision for their cultural development is good.
- Pupils form very good relationships with staff and with each other, and develop very good confidence and self-esteem.
- In a small number of lessons, pupils, particularly the more able, are not fully challenged, and some marking does not fully guide pupils how to improve further.
- The school's links with the community and other schools are good.
- Policies for child protection do not fully reflect the school's good practice.
- The curriculum is good throughout the school and the enrichment of the curriculum is very good.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement. The leadership and management of the school are now good overall. Provision for the Foundation Stage has been improved very well. ICT has also been improved very well and standards are now in line with national expectations. The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress has improved very well, and is now very good throughout the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	B	C	E
Mathematics	D	B	C	E

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. The attainment of children joining the school is broadly average. However, because the number of children in each year group is so small (sometimes less than ten), the overall attainment of each year group can differ widely because of the ability of one or two children. Children in the present reception group are in line to exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the reception class in all areas of learning¹, except their physical development, where they are in line to meet the early learning goals.

In the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils, standards in reading were below the national average and standards in writing and mathematics were well below the national average. Standards at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards in national tests must be treated cautiously because of the small number of pupils in each year group and some groups starting school with overall attainment which is below or, occasionally, well below expectations. In the 2004 tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' standards were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science when compared to schools whose pupils had similar results in their end of Year 2 tests in 2000. However, more than a third of this group joined the school in Years 5 or 6, and many of these were already identified as having special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are in line with expectations in the present Years 2 and 6. ICT is used in the teaching of a range of other subjects, but pupils have too few opportunities to promote their learning using computers in a wide enough range of subjects. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Other subjects were sampled, so no overall judgement is made about standards.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good throughout the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Levels of attendance are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** in all classes. The quality of support offered to pupils by teaching assistants is very good. The quality and use of assessment are very good throughout the school. The curriculum is good, and there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are satisfactorily cared for and receive very good support and guidance. Policies for child protection do not fully meet the latest requirements or reflect the school's good practice. The school has satisfactory links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He has a very good educational

¹ Areas of learning for children in nursery and reception classes are communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

vision for the school. There is a very good working relationship between the headteacher and his deputy headteacher, and very good teamwork throughout the staff. Governance of the school is good. Financial management is good and the governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a good working partnership with the headteacher. There are some minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus, which do not fully meet statutory requirements, but these do not impede pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with what the school provides. In questionnaires and when spoken to during the inspection, almost all were very positive about the school.

Pupils are very pleased with their school. They have great confidence in all adults working in the school. Their questionnaires show that some had concerns about other pupils' behaviour, but inspection evidence shows that the behaviour of all pupils is very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that there is consistent and rigorous challenge, particularly of more able pupils, in all lessons.
- Fully implement the school's plans to further improve and develop provision in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Implement plans to involve subject co-ordinators in monitoring pupils' standards and achievement and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Update the school's policies for Child Protection to reflect current good practice.
- Ensure that the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents contain all the required information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are in line with expectations at the end of the present Years 2 and 6. Achievement is **good** for all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- Children in the present Foundation Stage group are in line to exceed national expectations in almost all areas of learning.
- In a small number of lessons, higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well across the curriculum.

Commentary

1. In national tests in 2004, pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, these results were below average in reading, well below average in writing and in the lowest 5 per cent in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in the 2004 tests were average in English and mathematics and above average in science when compared to all schools. When these results were compared to those of schools whose pupils attained similarly in Year 2, pupils' standards were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
2. The trend in the school's results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 over the past five years is below the national trend in those subjects tested nationally. The school pays due attention to these indicators, but the overall abilities of a year group can be unduly affected by one or two pupils, as in the case of last year's and this year's Year 6 groups by the late admission of a significant number of lower-attaining pupils. Smarden Primary is a small school. The number of pupils in each year group is small, sometimes less than ten. There is also some serious turbulence in some year groups, for example, the Year 6 groups for 2004 and 2005 saw a change of more than 30 per cent of each class during its final year. In one case, all the pupils who joined were already registered as having special educational needs by their previous schools. Consequently, results in national tests should be treated with great caution.
3. Inspection evidence shows that standards for pupils in the present Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Other subjects were sampled and no judgement is made on standards. Because of good and sometimes very good teaching, and the good organisation of their learning opportunities, children in the present Foundation Stage group are in line to meet expectations in their physical

development and in all other areas are in line to exceed national expectations by the time that they join Year 1.

4. The attainment of children joining the school is average overall. However, this varies significantly dependent on the balance of children of higher or lower abilities in any one year. Some year groups have as few as nine children, consequently the ability of two or three children in the group can change the profile from well below to well above average. Because of this, the school has in place very good systems for assessing the progress of individual children in the Foundation Stage and each pupil in Years 1-6. The evidence from this information shows that the school promotes good learning and achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-6. These systems for assessing the progress of each pupil are further enhanced because each pupil's attainment is carefully matched to nationally expected levels in all subjects. Consequently, the school can track each pupil's progress and achievement in all subjects of the National Curriculum. This is a strength of the school and fully supports the inspection judgement that pupils' achievement is good in each key stage and across the school.
5. The school does not have any pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. Most of these pupils attain standards that are well below those expected nationally. They make steady progress towards attaining the targets in their individual educational plans as the result of very good assessment and well focused support by teachers and teaching assistants. Some attain standards in line with the national average by the time they leave school. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (16.8)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.3 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.0 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 12 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	27.0 (27.9)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.4 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.4 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 15 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**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **very good** overall. Pupils' punctuality is **satisfactory** and their attendance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour is very good throughout the school, which reflects the school's high expectations of them.
- Pupils show very good interest in and enthusiasm for their own learning and for other activities provided by the school.
- Attendance has risen each year since 2001.
- Pupils form very good relationships with staff and with each other and demonstrate very good confidence and self-esteem.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and for pupils' cultural development, it is good.

Commentary

6. Pupils like the school and feel that they are learning in "good" lessons, which they enjoy. They are polite and show respect for staff and visitors and for each other. In a small number of lessons, more able pupils are not always fully challenged. Teachers always plan additional activities for those who complete their work quickly, but these activities are not always truly challenging, and sometimes pupils lose interest. Most pupils show confidence and self-esteem, which allows them to be independent learners. They are eager to please and they work collaboratively with each other. Pupils understand the need for rewards and sanctions in the behaviour policy and know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Pupils willingly and effectively carry out their roles as classroom monitors, members of the school council or as buddies to younger pupils. All of these good attitudes help to improve pupils' learning and personal development.
7. Pupils who have special educational needs show good attitudes to their work. They usually maintain concentration as a result of well planned activities, good teaching and good support both in and out of their classrooms. Their behaviour is very good overall, and they are fully included in all lessons.
8. Pupils enjoy attending a very good range of extra-curricular activities, such as computing, football, netball, cricket and gardening. These activities extend the opportunities for pupils to learn and achieve higher standards.
9. The school makes good provision to reward good learning, with certificates for pupils, and it celebrates such successes in special assemblies. Pupils value this recognition: it gives them high self-esteem and self-confidence, which motivates them to work even harder.
10. There is an elected school council and pupils discuss the agenda and outcomes of council meetings during some of their circle time² sessions. During

² Circle time is time set aside for pupils to discuss issues which are sensitive or important to them.

lunchtime and playtimes, pupils are confident to approach any adult if they have concerns or are worried. Pupils have very good relationships with adults and with each other. For example, the 'buddy' system, operated by the older pupils, ensures that younger pupils have a close friend who they can talk to and who will help them. Both groups of pupils appreciate this system and, consequently, pupils' self-confidence is increased.

11. No incidents were observed by inspectors or reported by pupils during the inspection. There were no incidents of racial harassment during the inspection and none was reported in meetings with parents or pupils. There have been five fixed period exclusions during the past year, which involved two boys.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	72	5	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – Any other background	1	0	0

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

12. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Staff work hard to develop very good relationships, and moral and social development are very well promoted throughout the school. This encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong, to develop their own views and beliefs and to value and respect each other. Additionally, the school has organised fund-raising events for a chosen charity, The Goodwill Project, in which pupils have joined with parents, staff, governors and the local community. These activities give pupils an increased sense of responsibility for the school as a community, as well as for others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils respond well to responsibility and carry out their tasks reliably.
13. Spiritual development is very good, and there are good opportunities for pupils to gain insights into their own values and beliefs and those of others. Time is given for pupils to reflect on their feelings in many lessons. They develop a sense of beauty in the world around them and their place in the world. These qualities are promoted very well through geography, art and design, music and religious education and school assemblies.
14. Cultural development is good. Pupils have good opportunities to study their own community through the visits and activities provided for them. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and, although the school is somewhat isolated geographically, it works hard to promote an understanding of the multi-cultural nature of British society. The school's decision to become involved in the 'Goodwill project', which helps to educate destitute children in India and Sri Lanka, significantly supports pupils' cultural development.
15. The school provides visits, visitors and other activities to provide cultural enrichment and is planning to enrich this provision further. Although the school works hard to enrich this area of pupils' development, because of its isolated location, it does not have the rich resources available to many schools.
16. The last reported figure for overall attendance, for the year 2003/2004, is very good, being well above the national median. The amount of authorised and unauthorised absence was each well below the national median. Most parents make a good effort to ensure their children's attendance. The school's actions to monitor and improve its attendance figures are satisfactory.
17. Punctuality during the inspection period was satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** throughout the school. The curriculum is **good** and the provision of extra-curricular activities is **very good**. The school offers **satisfactory** care, welfare, health and safety and **very good** support, advice and guidance to all its pupils. Links with parents are **satisfactory** and links with the local community and with other schools are both **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment procedures are very good and the information gathered is used very well.
- The development and use of skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects is good.
- Pupils' learning is very well supported by teaching assistants.
- In a small number of lessons, more able pupils are not fully extended.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good for all pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

18. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The school's strategies for promoting pupils' involvement in their own learning are very clear in all lessons. Teachers' planning is very good, showing what pupils already know, understand and can do, what it is intended will be learned in the lesson and where that will lead. Teachers not only have good subject knowledge and understanding across the curriculum but they employ a good range of teaching methods to deliver the school's cross-curricular approach to a creative curriculum. Pupils learn well because they are enthused by teachers' attitudes to involve them in their own learning. They respect all adults in the school and they have very good relationships with each other and with staff. The combination of these factors, together with the high level of motivation provided by all teachers, promotes pupils' learning well, and the achievement of all pupils is good. Teachers' planning includes extension activities, however, in a small number of lessons, these are not truly challenging and they do not extend pupils' learning, especially that of more able pupils.

19. Teachers' use of ICT, in the form of interactive whiteboards, video or sound introductions, is good and gives good examples to pupils of how ICT can be used in teaching and learning. Because pupils are highly interested from the beginning of lessons which start in this way, pupils learn well. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers to promote their learning in other subjects. The school is involved in planning the purchase of a set of laptop computers with the local cluster of schools. This purchase is aimed at improving the use of computers in pupils' learning across the curriculum. The school has very good strategies for teaching pupils to use and develop their numeracy skills whenever they can, for example in geography or science. There is also a growing emphasis on the use and development of literacy skills across the curriculum, and this provision is good.
20. The school has a good number of very good learning support assistants who are very well used in the promotion of pupils' good achievement. They have good teaching skills, they question and guide pupils very well and they work in very good partnerships with class teachers. Both class teachers and learning support assistants apply the school's behaviour policy very well and all staff use the strategies in the policy very well. This results in pupils showing very good attitudes to their learning and very good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute very well to the overall ethos of the school and also to pupils' good learning and achievement. Homework is regularly set. There is a good range of homework. Pupils have a good attitude to their homework, are used to being given extra research to do at home, and this contributes well to their learning and achievement.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported, both in class and in small groups that have lessons outside the classroom for specific teaching. Although some are withdrawn from some lessons for this supported learning, the school ensures that pupils do not miss out on what the rest of the class is learning. Their difficulties are identified early in their school life, and pupils with specific difficulties are catered for. Pupils' progress is tracked and assessed very well as they move through the school. Teaching assistants fill in target sheets, and these are shared with individual pupils so they can see how they are getting on. This means that the targets are realistic, relevant to the needs of the pupil, and attainable.
22. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress on a day-to-day basis and as they progress through the school. Both teachers and learning support assistants make assessment notes in lessons which are used to modify future work. The very good assessment information is also used to monitor pupils' progress towards their targets and is used to identify any need for extra support. The system is easily used and, consequentially, it is consistently used throughout the school. The assessment procedures cover all subjects, not just core subjects, thus the school knows the National Curriculum level that every pupil is working at for each area of all subjects. This is very good when compared to what is seen in most schools and has the effect of giving pupils very good knowledge and understanding of their own learning, which promotes their achievement very well.

23. Because pupils enjoy their learning so much and because of the very good relationships that they have, they develop good skills in working co-operatively and steadily build up their capacity to work independently. All are fully included in all aspects of the school's work, irrespective of gender, levels of ability or ethnicity.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	12	1	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum enriched by a **very good** range of additional activities. The school's accommodation and resources for teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is carefully planned so that very good links are made between subjects and, as a result, pupils find learning interesting and enjoyable.
- Teaching assistants provide additional activities for pupils with special learning needs so that they benefit from all the curriculum has to offer, and achieve well.
- Pupils' learning is enriched very effectively by after-school clubs and a very good range of extra activities, both in and out of school.
- Resources and accommodation are used effectively to promote pupils' learning.

Commentary

24. The curriculum is very imaginatively planned, meets national requirements and is relevant to all pupils' needs. It has been improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly in the way the school links the planning and teaching of subjects to make them more meaningful. In a topic about Ancient Egypt, for example, pupils used their skills in literacy, history, geography, art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology to complete a very comprehensive picture of that civilization. The school has put in place a good creative curriculum which is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. This accounts for some work of high quality in art and design, design and technology and physical education. The school makes good use of ICT across all areas of the curriculum, particularly when pupils have to research their topics on the Internet. Not all areas of the ICT curriculum are as well developed, and are still at the planning stage. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory, and links with the secondary school provide opportunities to develop this further.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their targets are clear and relevant to their needs. Support in class and when pupils are

withdrawn for short sessions is very good, and accounts for their rapid progress.

26. A good range of visits and visitors extends the curriculum very well, as well as providing important links with the community. Residential visits are arranged annually for older pupils. Visitors with particular skills provide tuition in music, writing, art and physical education. This broad range of learning opportunities is contributing very well to pupils' good achievement. Members of the school staff and parent volunteers provide a very good range of extra-curricular activities that take place after school. Matches are played against other schools in football, netball and cricket. In addition to this, the range of clubs includes nature, needlework and the ICT Club.
27. The staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their work. Resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards, are used well and bring lessons to life. Accommodation is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection as there is now a secure play area for the youngest children.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **satisfactory** care, welfare, health and safety for its pupils. It provides **very good** support, advice, and guidance for the pupils and makes **good** arrangements to involve them in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very trusting relationships between pupils and adults.
- Good support is provided for the personal development of pupils.
- The written procedures for child protection do not reflect the school's good practice.
- Good provision is made for seeking and acting on the views of pupils.
- There are good induction arrangements for new pupils.

Commentary

28. All staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the correct procedures to follow in regard to child protection, and the school closely and diligently monitors situations which may give rise to concerns. Timetabled circle time sessions provide pupils with suitable opportunities to indicate if they have any problems. However, the school has yet to update its policy, training and procedures to meet the requirements of recently enacted legislation. There are satisfactory procedures and practices to meet the medical needs of pupils.
29. Pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. Risk assessments are completed prior to any external events, and regular property checks and equipment testing is carried out, as are fire drills. However, some minor deficiencies were noted during the inspection and the school has been made aware of these.
30. The care given to children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The teacher and the teaching assistants know the children very well and are regularly seen supporting and counselling children who are upset or distressed for whatever reason. The care, support and guidance offered to pupils with special educational needs are good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, as well as all the teachers and teaching assistants, know the particular needs of each of these children and match the level of support to the needs of the individual pupil.
31. Pupils report very good relationships with all adults within the school and would feel confident to approach them about any matters which were troubling them. They also feel that staff help them with their learning. The school provides good support and guidance for pupils' personal development. Pupils know their targets for some of their work and carry out some self-appraisal. They also use a "creative journal" to provide a personal stimulus for their learning. The "Birdy-Buddy" system in the playground is effectively used to support younger pupils and those pupils who join the school at later times.

32. The school has good induction arrangements for new pupils. Parents are provided with useful information on topics such as preparing their child for school and helping with reading. There are follow-up meetings after pupils start at school, to review the children's progress. All these strategies contribute well to parents' involvement in their children's education and consequently to pupils' learning.
33. The school makes good provision for seeking and acting upon the views of pupils through the school council, to which pupils are elected. The council has been instrumental in reacting to pupils' concerns by changing the school's behaviour policy, by introducing Golden Time and also by changing the playground activity practices. It has also raised funds for charities. Year 5 pupils are currently seeking the views of pupils and parents on a number of topics in order to influence the school's decisions regarding some potential initiatives.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have **satisfactory** links with the school. Links with the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outcomes from the school's good links with the community and other schools promote pupils' learning well.
- There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils into secondary education.

Commentary

34. The provision of information for parents is satisfactory overall. Parents receive frequent and informative newsletters from the school and are provided at the start of each half-term with information regarding curriculum and topic work, a homework schedule and information on how to assist their children at home.
35. However, a significant minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that they are not well informed about their children's progress. This view was also expressed by parents at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a written report once a year, which details what pupils have been doing and sometimes gives targets for English and mathematics and a general target. However, these targets are not always very explicit and do not generally indicate to parents how they could assist their children's learning at home and their personal development. The levels of attainment given for core subjects are not explained. There are also deficiencies in, or omissions from the school prospectus and the annual report by governors; however, these do not adversely affect pupils' achievement or the standards that they reach. Annual written reports are good and the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall.
36. Parent consultation evenings are held twice a year, and are well attended and provide parents with good opportunities to discuss their children's progress.

The school makes a strong effort to see all parents, including providing flexible timing arrangements and contacting parents who do not attend. Parents may also arrange to discuss their children's annual report, and teaching staff are readily available each day after school should parents wish to speak to them. The school makes every effort to see that each pupil has suitable support and appropriate outside agencies are involved where necessary. Parents of children with special educational needs are well informed about their children's progress towards the targets laid out in the individual education plans. Inspection evidence shows that the information provided for parents is satisfactory.

37. The school has good links with the local community, despite its isolated position, which are used to enhance pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils make trips to external venues and receive visitors, such as a local author. The school has consulted the local community on several topics, including its proposed anti-drugs policy.
38. The school also has good links with secondary schools, other primary schools in a cluster of rural schools and an overseas school. These links are used well to enhance staff development and the provision for pupils, and thus to improve teaching and learning. The school's involvement in the Rural Action Zone has strengthened provision in social development as pupils learn to work with children from other schools. It also serves to ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to secondary school.
39. There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils into secondary school. Pupils are prepared for the greater demands they will meet and spend a taster week at their destination school. These measures help pupils to transfer with confidence and settle in quickly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher's leadership is **very good**. The school is **well** managed by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and they are supported by an **effective** governing body. The leadership of other key staff is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher has developed good relationships and has built a strong team.
- The management of the school is good.
- Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
- The school's strategic planning for the future and its strategies for self-evaluation are very good.
- The governors know the school well and actively support all areas of school life.

Commentary

40. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and, together with the deputy headteacher, has identified the strengths of the school and areas for development. He has created effective teams within the school. These are having a positive effect by ensuring consistency of approach throughout the whole school. Curriculum leadership by the headteacher is very good and has had a direct impact on the raising of standards and on the continuing development of the school. The role of the subject leaders has strengthened considerably since the last inspection, and is now successful in supporting the improvement of all subjects, particularly in the arts. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation has not yet been established. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. Regular meetings between involved staff ensure that pupils are fully supported. There is a total commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school.
41. Management of the school is good. Performance management of teaching and non-teaching staff is good and is linked to the school improvement plan. The strong focus on collaboration with the Rural Action Zone has led to whole-staff training, followed up with some teachers being involved in an accelerated learning course. The system for checking how well pupils are performing by monitoring achievement and progress is well established. These rigorous assessment practices in all subjects are used effectively to help raise achievement.
42. The governing body challenges and supports the work of the school effectively. Good systems are in place to involve governors in strategic planning. The governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are not afraid to challenge judgements and initiatives as and when necessary. The governors monitor the work of the school well. They are kept up-to-date on developments, with a focus on standards and are aware of the reasons for their fluctuation. However, there are omissions from the school prospectus and the governors' annual report. While these do not affect pupils' learning, they are statutory requirements, and this is unsatisfactory.
43. Financial management is good. The head and governors, with support from the LEA, regularly monitor expenditure. There is an agreed action plan in place to protect the level of staffing against the fluctuating numbers on roll. Good systems ensure the school gets the best value from its spending.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	265 049	Balance from previous year	15 092
Total expenditure	279 267	Balance carried forward to the next	874
Expenditure per pupil	3 035		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good practice of the Foundation Stage teacher, coupled with the good leadership of the Foundation Stage, has substantially raised the quality of provision.
- The Foundation Stage teacher manages the teaching of a mixed-age class well.
- Very good assessment procedures are used very well to plan the next stage of learning.
- There is very good teamwork between the reception teacher and teaching assistants.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.

Commentary

44. There are presently 13 children in the reception year. They are taught in a mixed-age class with 12 pupils who are in Year 1. The number of children who join the school each year is low, and while the attainment of most groups is in line with expectations for their age, just two or three children with particularly high or low attainment can substantially change the profile of a class. At the time of the last inspection, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage was a weakness of the school but there has been very good improvement since then and the quality of teaching and learning is now good overall, and is very good in some lessons. An advantage has been made of teaching Foundation Stage children and Year 1 pupils together. The teacher skilfully matches the needs of the children to the level of provision, and as children move beyond the expectations of the early learning goals³, they are included in some Key Stage 1 activities. Similarly, if any Year 1 pupil is in need of accessing the Foundation Stage provision in any area of learning, the teacher and teaching assistants enable this to happen. The very good assessment and tracking systems are very well used in these circumstances, and the learning of both those children in reception and those pupils in Year 1 who are involved in this provision are enriched.
45. By the time they start in Year 1, almost all children's attainment is at least in line with national expectations in all six areas of learning and, in the present reception class, most will exceed this in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Observations show that while the quality of teaching and learning in physical

³ The Early Learning Goals are the national expectations for the attainment of children when they reach the end of the reception class.

development is good, a majority of children are not well co-ordinated in their movements when moving to music, and some do not handle large scale toys well. Almost all children achieve well and make good progress in their learning. This good achievement is encouraged well by the good teaching and high levels of support which children receive. The weaknesses recognised during the last inspection have been rectified and significant improvements have been made to the accommodation and the play equipment. The school has created a very good outdoor area for the reception children, which is used at every opportunity. The children are provided with a good learning environment that they can use for exploration and discovery. This has brought about improved opportunities for the children to extend their learning outdoors since the last inspection.

46. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher is now the leader of this area of the school. A significant strength of the teaching is very good teamwork between the teacher and the teaching assistants. The use of assessment to monitor the development of the children is very good, and enables the teacher to plan effectively for future learning experiences. There are no children with special educational needs in the present reception group.
47. Provision in the area of **personal, social and emotional development** is very good, and all children are in line to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1. Children enter school with differing social skills, dependent upon their background and the pre-school group that they have attended. The teacher and teaching assistants ensure that the environment helps children to quickly feel safe and secure. Children are given good opportunities to play and work together. The support of an adult is provided, when needed, to encourage them to take turns, to share and to show consideration for others. Expectations are high and the children respond well to the enjoyable supportive atmosphere that they work in. The planning and use of time during the 'child-initiated activities' are good, and provide many opportunities for children to develop their own ideas through play and to make choices about what they can do. The warm and trusting relationships help children to recognise that each of them is valued, and this helps to promote their self-esteem. Overall, the children are enthusiastic learners who already show good levels of interest in all activities.
48. Most children in the present reception class achieve well and are on course to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year in **communication, language and literacy**. Provision in this area of learning is good. High priority is given to promoting language skills and the good teaching ensures that children make good progress. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through role-play. They are all given many opportunities to share their ideas and their news with the class.
49. Good teaching is characterised by a clear understanding of the needs of young children and by well organised and exciting activities that motivate them. The early stages of writing are developed well, with many opportunities being provided for children to express themselves by making marks on paper. There is a good focus on the teaching of letters and their related sounds and, as a result, many children are beginning to hear and say the initial sounds in words. All children recognise their own

name and are encouraged to read it at every opportunity. Activities, such as looking at pictures, are carefully planned to develop children's language skills, and adults make good use of resources for learning to encourage discussion. Some children are still at the early stage of 'reading' the pictures or 'pretend reading' the words that accompany the illustrations. However, others have good knowledge of words that they see regularly, and are beginning to sound out words. This good teaching has a positive effect on children's learning.

50. The school's provision for mathematical development is good. Achievement in **mathematical development** is good and the quality of teaching and learning is good. Regular sorting activities, games and number songs that involve counting numbers are successful strategies for promoting learning. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills and particularly the development of mathematical language. Practical experiences, such as exploring repeating patterns through different artistic activities, support the children's use and understanding of numbers and shapes, and promote their use of language. Most children are in line to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1.
51. All children achieve well in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**, and some achieve very well. The provision for children's development of their knowledge and understanding of the world is good. The quality of teaching is good. When they first start school, some children have a general knowledge which is below the expected level for their age. The teacher provides a stimulating environment that ensures the children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm are captured and stimulated. Children are given a wide range of activities that includes finding things that need pushing or pulling to make them move, and investigating a range of materials. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore and actively learn by doing things. The construction work is purposeful, and reclaimed materials, as well as commercial kits and large building bricks, are provided for children to create models. Children have regular access to computers and the good teaching of ICT skills enables children to learn how ICT can help them. Children's awareness of religious and cultural traditions is effectively enriched through special events, such as the celebration of festivals, and through role-play. Most children are in line to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the time that they join Year 1.
52. Provision for the development of children's physical development is good. Some children reach standards in their **physical development** which are in line with national expectations by the time that they join Year 1, and some exceed this. They use a good range of large-scale equipment in the outdoor area and they take part in physical education lessons with their Year 1 classmates. Children progress satisfactorily in these physical education lessons, although some children show a certain lack of co-ordination. Some skills in handling large objects are not yet well developed. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and children achieve well in their physical development. This is because the teacher combines several areas of learning in each lesson, for example, listening to music, talking about how it makes them feel and then moving to the music, trying to keep in time with the pulse. In this way, young children are being prepared for the creative curriculum and the development of their thinking skills, which are beginning to be developed throughout the school.
53. All children develop their manipulative skills of smaller equipment well through drawing, painting, handling dough and using construction materials. For most, their hand-to-eye co-ordination is well developed, and they use pencils and scissors accurately. The teacher gives the children a wide variety of experiences intended to

improve their manipulation of small equipment when undertaking tasks, such as cutting and sticking a range of materials.

54. Children achieve well in all aspects of **creative development**, and most will exceed the national goals by the end of the reception year. Provision for the development of children's creative development is good. The quality of teaching is good. Good learning in this area is particularly due to the many creative activities on offer that allow children to explore and use their imagination. Resources are organised well, enabling children to select activities in the classroom and outdoors. They work with a range of different media and paint with care, expressing themselves well and developing good observational skills. Their observational drawings show a growing attention to detail.
55. There are many opportunities for imaginative play, and the children need no encouragement to participate. Adults provide sensitive support to the children while they play, without dominating their activities. Children play willingly and quickly learn to play co-operatively with other children. The classroom organisation enables all children to experience the activities on offer. The children are steadily building up a good repertoire of favourite songs and rhymes. There is a lot of fun and laughter when children sing action songs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Teachers promote literacy effectively in other subjects.
- More able pupils are not fully challenged in all lessons.
- Learning support assistants are used very well to support the learning of those with particular needs.
- The school has very good procedures to track pupils' progress as they move from class to class.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. However, marking does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils on how they might improve their work.
- The subject co-ordinator does not regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

Commentary

56. The results of the 2004 Year 2 National Curriculum results for reading and writing indicate that standards are well below the national average in writing and below average in reading, when compared to the results of all schools nationally and when compared to the results of similar schools. The 2004 National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils indicate that pupils reach standards that are in line with all schools nationally, but well below average when compared to the standards of pupils whose test results were similar in the end of Year 2 tests.

57. All these figures should be treated with some caution, as there are small numbers of pupils in classes (often less than ten), and one pupil can sometimes represent 10 per cent or more of the class. There are also times when a number of pupils change very close to tests. For example, in the Year 6 groups for 2004 and 2005, more than one-third of the classes changed during Year 6. Many of the children joining the class were already identified in their previous schools as having special educational needs, and this impacted on the results the school achieved. The school demonstrates, through its very good assessment and tracking procedures, that once settled, these pupils all achieved well.
58. The findings of the inspection are that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of the present Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good throughout the school. Standards in reading are above expectations for a number of pupils and the school's recent focus on writing has raised standards well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.
59. Reading standards are well above expectations for some pupils towards the end of the school, with some older pupils reading very difficult texts with real interest and understanding. Standards in writing improve steadily as pupils move through the school, and pupils throughout the school often write at length. Pupils are consistently guided by teachers to understand that written language is to be used to express themselves at the highest level whenever possible. This high expectation leads to pupils using and developing their writing skills well in other subjects, such as history, geography, religious education and science. Pupils learn and progress well because of the good quality of teaching and because all teachers have high expectations of pupils' writing in all subjects. The school has evaluated the success of its focus on writing and is determined to raise standards even further. Most pupils use joined handwriting and apply everyday spelling conventions in their writing. Pupils' work is detailed and is capable of holding the interest of the reader. The school also has high expectations of pupils' speaking and listening skills, and many pupils are justifiably proud of their high levels of Standard English. Sufficient scope is given for pupils to express their views and opinions in day-to-day lessons. Many pupils speak expressively and explain ideas with clarity.
60. However, on a very few occasions, more able pupils are not fully challenged by the activities that they are given. In a small number of lessons, they finish their set task and move on to the extension activity planned by the teacher. Too often, this is a repetition of the previous task and does not truly challenge the pupils to think behind the text or to write opinions about why the writer felt as he/she did. When this happens, or when the extra challenge set by teachers is not testing enough, these pupils do not make the progress that they should.
61. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan pupils' learning well and devise writing tasks, for example, that allow pupils to draft and edit their work in order to improve its quality. Pupils learn about the importance of outlining and reshaping ideas before moving on to produce a final draft. In all classes, teachers make good use of the skills of very good learning support assistants and pupils' learning is promoted very well by their very good support. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils'

progress. Teachers and learning support assistants are regularly seen assessing pupils' progress in lessons. The information gathered is used very well in planning future lessons and to track pupils' progress and achievement as they move through the school. However, in a small number of lessons, the quality of marking does not always give pupils clear enough guidance on how they might improve their work. All teachers make very good use of ICT in their teaching. Literacy skills are sometimes extended when pupils use the ICT suite.

62. There is good leadership and management in the subject. The quality of teaching and learning is not monitored well, although this is a priority in the school's development planning. The co-ordinator has successfully implemented various initiatives, and the pace of change since the previous inspection has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use and development of literacy skills in other subjects is good. The school has made good progress in ensuring that, where possible, other subjects of the curriculum are used to extend pupils' use of literacy. Science, history and religious education are used well in order to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. There is a clear policy for developing literacy skills in other subjects, and this is promoting pupils' learning well. This is a part of the school's good strategies for promoting a creative curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Numeracy skills are well used and developed in other subjects.
- In a small number of lessons, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- The subject co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Assessment is used very effectively to help pupils learn.
- Teaching assistants provide good support.

Commentary

64. Standards in the 2004 national tests in Year 2 were well below the national average. However, pupils achieved well because half of those with special educational needs reached the required Level 2. When these results were compared with those of similar schools, they were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally.
65. In Year 6, standards were in line with the national average, with an above average number achieving the higher Level 5. When compared to schools in which this group of pupils had similar results at the end of Year 2, these results were well below average. Standards vary greatly from year to year because of the variation in numbers in each year group and the different proportion of pupils with special educational needs. A higher than average number of pupils joined the school during Years 5 and 6 and this, together with the above

average number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6, explains the lower standards this year. Despite this, overall standards of work throughout the school are average, and achievement is good. Improvement since the last inspection is good, especially in mental calculations.

66. Teaching and learning are good. Lively counting and a variety of games and activities motivate pupils and they learn well. These skills are systematically developed through the group activities, and they reflect what the teachers expect the pupils to learn. For example, pupils learn to subtract by counting using a number line. Their good understanding of counting in tens helps them to work quickly and accurately. Work is generally well planned and matched to pupils' ages and abilities. On occasions, however, some work for the most able, older pupils is not consistently and rigorously challenging. Teachers give clear explanations and demonstrate examples using the interactive whiteboards effectively. They make good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to help them build on what they have learnt before. They give the pupils the opportunity to discuss their ideas in pairs, which ensures that all the pupils join in. The emphasis on using the correct mathematical vocabulary means pupils are confident when explaining their answers. However, in some lessons where teachers question individual pupils for too long, the pace slows and other pupils in the class lose interest and concentration. High expectations of pupils' recording are evident in the very good marking, which also encourages pupils, and shows them how to improve their work. Skilled teaching assistants are deployed effectively and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress as a result.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Very good use is made of regular assessment of pupils' work to track individual achievement and to highlight areas where pupils need to consolidate their knowledge and understanding. However, although the school has plans to correct the situation, the subject co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Teachers make good use of mathematics across the curriculum. In ICT, pupils consolidate their mathematical skills well when making calculations using spreadsheets. In science, they make careful measurements and record their work on testing materials on graphs. In design and technology, pupils measure accurately when making models of houses.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an emphasis on the investigative aspects of science throughout the school to raise standards.

- There has been good improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- The subject co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support to enable them to achieve well.
- The co-ordinator brings a high level of scientific experience to the leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

69. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, pupils reached standards which were above average when compared to all schools nationally, but when compared to pupils who had similar results in their end of Year 2 tests in 2000, these results were below average. This is because the pupils who took the tests in Year 6 were not the same ones who took them in Year 2. In Years 5 and 6, this class changed by more than 30 per cent, and many who joined the school were already identified as having special educational needs. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2004 showed that pupils' standards were broadly average when compared to schools nationally and to those of similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils assessed as reaching the higher level 3 was below average.
70. Standards in the current Year 6 and Year 2 are in line with expectations. However, the very good systems for assessing pupils' progress and for tracking their progress through the school show that almost all pupils are achieving well both in lessons and over time. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, even though there is a gender imbalance in small cohorts. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to enable them to achieve well in line with their classmates.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a good emphasis on the investigative aspects of science throughout the school, and this has had the effect of raising the levels of pupils' learning and achievement. Teachers match tasks to pupils' differing levels of ability well, and all pupils make good progress and achieve well.
72. Teachers often use imaginative strategies to enthuse pupils about their work in science, which has the effect of promoting good attitudes to their work, which in turn leads to good learning and achievement. Discussion with pupils indicates that they understand the principle of a 'fair test'. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics are often linked well to activities, for example, when using their knowledge and understanding of metric measures in measuring the quantity of liquids to be used in testing. Assessment is very well used to inform teachers' planning and to track pupils' progress.
73. The leadership and management of science are good. The highly experienced co-ordinator is leading the school's science focus on investigation and experimenting very well. A scheme of work is being used which helps to ensure good progress for all pupils – especially important in classes with two age groups. A great deal of monitoring and analysis of test results has been

undertaken, which has identified areas for improvement and resulted in improved pupil achievement. However, although the school has plans to rectify the situation, the subject co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Resources are good, enabling teachers to satisfy the requirements of the National Curriculum and to give pupils the opportunity to participate in practical investigative work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use the interactive whiteboards very well in most lessons.
- Because there are too few computers, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers to promote their learning in a wide enough range of other subjects.

Commentary

74. The standard of pupils' work at seven and 11 years is broadly in line with expectations, but information and communication technology is not yet used broadly to promote pupils' learning in a wide range of subjects. This is because the school is part-way through the implementation of its plans to raise the provision for ICT throughout the school. There are too few computers. However, the local small schools' cluster is in the process of buying a set of laptop computers which will be shared. The aim of this is to raise the standard of provision in several schools who could not afford the expenditure on their own. Provision for ICT has been improved since the last inspection and pupils achieve well from a low level by the end of Years 2 and 6.
75. Younger pupils confidently load programs and talk about what they are doing. In one lesson seen, pupils learnt how to search the Internet for information related to their geography topic. However, because there was only one computer in the class, pupils did not have the opportunity to develop their individual skills. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils combined graphics and text by following instructions to insert and resize pictures to illustrate the work they were doing in history. Half the class worked in pairs in the small suite of computers and achieved satisfactorily. Year 6 pupils demonstrated some examples of the work they had covered in ICT this year, such as PowerPoint presentations and using a web-based resource. Teachers are confident in their use of the interactive whiteboards as a teaching aid. They use them very well to demonstrate new skills in ICT and to clarify explanations in other subjects. The quality of teaching is good overall.
76. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. Resources have been systematically improved and the expertise of staff developed so that the use of the whiteboard in every classroom is a useful aid to teaching. The subject leader is very keen and committed to improving provision and has drawn up a

clear action plan for the shared use of a suite of laptops, in collaboration with other primary schools in the area. This is with a view to preparing pupils for what they will encounter when they go to secondary school. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, although the school has plans to enable this.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. There is satisfactory use of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils use computers to word-process their poems and other written work. The computers are used well as tools for research in history, geography and religious education. Pupils use a digital camera to take pictures of their work in design and technology. However, while the school is only part-way through implementing its plan to improve provision in ICT, the range of subjects in which ICT is used to promote pupils' learning is still relatively narrow.

HUMANITIES

78. **History** and **geography** were not a focus for the inspection, and no overall judgement was made about provision in these subjects. Planning shows that, where possible, the subjects are linked, thereby making the learning more meaningful to the pupils. For example, pupils locate Greece on a world map and learn about its climate in conjunction with their studies of Ancient Greece. Conversations with pupils and staff, displays of pupils' work and scrutiny of planning indicate that the curriculum is covered at least satisfactorily in these subjects.
79. Although no lessons were observed in **history**, an ICT lesson was used as an example of how to combine the facts the pupils had written about Ancient Egypt with pictures of artefacts they had made. Scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that the curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched well with visitors and visits, such as the one Years 4, 5 and 6 recently made to the British Museum. Historical artefacts are used very effectively to motivate learning. In the two **geography** lessons seen, although both classes were studying the water cycle, the work showed how the older pupils were expected to study this in greater depth and use more technical vocabulary. Planning for work in Years 5 and 6 has been changed. This was to cover the recent world issue of the tsunami disaster, which teachers used well to develop pupils' understanding. Literacy skills are developed well, for example, in writing factual accounts of individual research, and pupils are encouraged to organise their work in paragraphs. The leadership of both history and geography are satisfactory.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn about a variety of religious faiths and customs, and this has a significant impact on their spiritual and cultural development.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting.
- Resources for religious education are good.

Commentary

80. Standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at age seven and 11 years, and achievement is good. The interactive whiteboard and a good range of artefacts were used well in both lessons to interest pupils. All the main events in the Christian calendar are celebrated in school, and pupils learn about celebrations in other faiths. As a result, they talk confidently about different religions, showing a good understanding and respect for religious festivals and the purpose and meaning of symbols and religious traditions to people's beliefs. Written work is good, and pupils write down what they learn in their own words.
81. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. They review previous work by effective questioning, make good use of artefacts to enhance learning and set tasks that develop pupils' understanding. The very good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils enable them to make good progress in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils respond very well in religious education lessons and show very positive attitudes to the subject.
82. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. All aspects of the locally agreed syllabus are planned well to ensure sound learning about religions. Displays in every classroom indicate that the curriculum covers all major faiths well. There are good links with other subjects, such as art and literacy. Resources, including artefacts relating to various faiths, are good, and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, although the school plans to rectify the situation, the subject co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Due to the school's timetabling and the need for the inspection to focus on other subjects, **music, art and design, design and technology** and **physical education** were sampled. No judgements can be made on the quality of teaching and learning, standards of attainment or the school's provision in these subjects. It was possible to observe only one lesson in **art and design**, in which the quality of teaching and learning was good, and none was seen in design and technology. The statutory curriculum for both subjects is covered

fully, with work in art and design being quite detailed. For example, there was a good display of colourful masks, using a good range of colours in paint, which resulted from the visit of an artist from the local secondary school, and a display of very good pencil sketches which resulted from Year 4 pupils studying some Tudor houses in the village, linked to a study of local history. Work in art and design is very well-supported by the use of computers, for example, to re-create art work in the style of Lowry, and the pupils' artistic efforts are presented well and displayed proudly around the school. Artwork is also in evidence in the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of multi-cultural issues, as seen in a display of well designed and well finished Rangoli patterns. In **design and technology**, pupils' work is displayed around the school, often showing well made models, which have well designed joints, for example, in support of their history studies.

84. From looking at the school's plans and teachers' planning and from talking to pupils, it is clear that **music** and **physical education** are taught throughout the school, and all the requirements of the national curriculum are met in both subjects. In **music**, pupils sing well and they have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments. In **physical education**, pupils are taught the full range of the subject. There is a good range of sporting clubs, and the school has been successful in a good number of local sports events and competitions. Swimming is particularly strong. The school has been given the opportunity to compete in national competitions, led by a parent who is a qualified instructor. Pupils achieve national swimming awards at a variety of levels, and one pupil is a British Schools Diving Champion.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. There were no lessons seen in these subjects. However, the school has satisfactory procedures for developing pupils' awareness of healthy living, including sex education and the awareness of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. It works closely with the local community by supporting a parish initiative so that pupils have an input into the development of their village. The school council provides a good way for the pupils to begin to learn about living in a community and the responsibilities they have. From looking at school planning, it is clear that all aspects of the required curriculum are taught to all pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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