

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S CE VA COMBINED SCHOOL

Lacey Green

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110465

Acting headteacher: Mr P De Wolf

Lead inspector: Ms K Taylor

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 267564

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Combined
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 251
School address: Main Road
Lacey Green
Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire
Postcode: HP27 OPL
Telephone number: (01844) 343 521
Fax number: (01844) 274 043
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Graham King
governors:
Date of previous January 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED COMBINED SCHOOL IS AN AVERAGE-SIZED SCHOOL CURRENTLY WITH 251 BOYS AND GIRLS AGED BETWEEN FOUR AND 11. THE NUMBER ON ROLL IS SET TO INCREASE IN THE SUMMER TERM WHEN ADDITIONAL PUPILS START FULL TIME IN RECEPTION. PUPILS' ATTAINMENT WHEN THEY JOIN RECEPTION IS ABOVE THAT USUALLY FOUND. NEARLY ALL PUPILS ARE WHITE BUT A MINORITY OF PUPILS ARE DRAWN FROM MIXED-RACE HERITAGE OR ETHNIC MINORITY BACKGROUNDS. THE PROPORTION OF PUPILS IDENTIFIED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IS BELOW THAT FOUND NATIONALLY. TWENTY-ONE PUPILS ARE ON THE HIGHER STAGES OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE, INCLUDING TWO PUPILS WHO HAVE A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED. PUPILS' PARTICULAR NEEDS RELATE TO THEIR LEARNING, SPEECH AND LANGUAGE AND AUTISM. THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS OF PUPILS ARE VERY FAVOURABLE. THE PROPORTION OF PUPILS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS IS WELL BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. OUTWARD PUPIL MOBILITY IS LOW, BUT THE STANDARD ADMISSION NUMBER FOR THE SCHOOL IS HIGHER IN YEARS 3 TO 6 THAN IN RECEPTION, SO THAT THE SCHOOL TAKES IN ADDITIONAL PUPILS IN YEAR 3. THE SCHOOL RECEIVED A SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN 2002, THE INVESTORS IN PEOPLE AWARD IN 2002 AND THE SWAN AWARD FOR CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN 2004. DURING THE CURRENT YEAR, THE SCHOOL HAS AN ACTING HEADTEACHER AND ACTING DEPUTY HEADTEACHER SINCE THE SUBSTANTIVE

HEADTEACHER HAS BEEN SECONDED TO WORK WITH THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22424	Kathryn Taylor	Lead inspector	History Geography Personal, social and health education
9406	Roy Cottington	Lay inspector	
23354	Evelyn Adams	Team inspector	Provision in the Foundation Stage Science Physical education
20063	Gerry Slamon	Team inspector	English French Special educational needs Information and communication technology Music
27667	Carolyn Renault	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Art and design

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St John's Combined School is a very effective school that enables pupils to achieve very well and attain high standards. What makes this school very effective is the good leadership and management, the good quality of education, pupils' very strong desire to learn and very strong support and contribution from parents, the church and wider community. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' attainment across all subjects is at least above national expectations by age 11.
- The good leadership and management and the good teaching, helps all pupils to achieve very well.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good with some excellent features.
- Parents contribute very well to their children's education.
- The curriculum is relevant and interesting and teachers make very good links between subjects.
- Curricular enrichment and links with other schools and the community are very good.
- School self-evaluation is not sufficiently critical.
- Pupils' and parents' views are not sought and acted upon regularly enough.

The school has made **good** overall improvements since its last inspection. Already high standards in English, mathematics and science have improved. Standards in a number of other subjects are also better than they were. The curriculum has improved and that for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved very well. The minor areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been given attention, but some inconsistencies in teaching are still evident and a minority of parents still feel that they lack information about school policy.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils achieve very well, academically and personally. When children start school their attainment is above that usually found. As they move up through the school pupils achieve well and sometimes very well. As a result, by age 11 pupils' attainment in all subjects is at least above national expectations, and standards in English and mathematics are high.

The table below shows the school's very good test results at age 11. In 2004, results in English were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Mathematics and science results were well above the national average. Pupils who were in Year 6 last year made progress that was well above the average for similar schools in English and mathematics, between the end of Year 2 and 6. In science, pupils' overall progress was above that found in similar schools. In 2004, test results in English and mathematics at age seven were also high. Results here have risen well, particularly during the past two years.

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

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. **These figures are based on progress from Year 2 to Year 6 when compared to similar schools nationally.*

All pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. Their attendance is excellent and their punctuality is very good. The school promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development very well and pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Relationships are very good with teaching and the support staff, and among pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' past work shows that teaching and learning are good and lessons seen ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make good links between pupils' work in different subjects so as to make learning interesting. Homework is very relevant and is well used to extend pupils' learning. The main weaknesses in teaching in a few lessons firstly related to teachers talking for too long themselves and pupils did then not have enough time to practise their skills. Secondly, questioning was not used well enough to ensure that all pupils, and especially girls, understood and were encouraged to participate fully. Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Years 1 to 6. In other subjects it is satisfactory, often better, and some good practice is developing in pupil self-assessment. Marking is good in English, but in other subjects does not do enough to inform pupils about how they can improve. The curriculum caters very well for pupils of different capabilities, including pupils who have special educational needs. It is broad, relevant and interesting and the school continues to seek ways to make it even better. Sports provision and curriculum enrichment are very good. Staff make very good use of themed weeks, visits, visitors, links with the community and after-school activities to extend pupils' learning. The outdoor accommodation is very good, except there is no designated outdoor learning space for children in the Foundation Stage of Learning, (Reception). This limits children's opportunities for outdoor learning. There are some other limitations to indoor accommodation such as the lack of a library. Standards of care are satisfactory with some good features, such as the good support and guidance and the very good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. The school's links with parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

THE SCHOOL IS WELL LED AND MANAGED. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SUBSTANTIVE HEADTEACHER, THE ACTING HEADTEACHER IS CONTINUING TO LEAD AND MANAGE THE SCHOOL WELL. THE ACTING DEPUTY HEADTEACHER, SENIOR STAFF AND THOSE WITH SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITIES MAKE A GOOD CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAY THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED, BUT STAFF HAVE RELATIVELY FEW OPPORTUNITIES TO MONITOR AND CRITICALLY EVALUATE WORK IN THEIR SUBJECTS. THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ARE VERY EFFICIENT AND MAKE A VERY GOOD CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCHOOL. GOVERNANCE IS GOOD. GOVERNORS ARE VERY SUPPORTIVE OF THE SCHOOL, CHALLENGE IT, ARE FULLY INVOLVED, AND CARRY OUT MOST OF THEIR STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES WELL.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with almost all aspects of the school. A few parents feel that communication could sometimes be better and that the school does not always welcome their views or effectively respond to them. Some of these issues were also raised at the last

inspection and in the questionnaire conducted by the school two years ago. Inspectors agree that the school should be more proactive in seeking and acting on parents' views and in communicating information about school policy. Pupils have very positive views and love coming to school. They say they are really happy, enjoy learning and being with their friends. Pupils like and trust their teachers and the support staff. They say they get lots of help from the staff, that they are kind and fair and respond to their needs and concerns. They appreciate that the recent introduction of a school council has given them opportunities to express their views and to influence changes and developments. Inspectors agree with some pupils' views that improvements are needed to the toilets.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER ARE:

- Develop more robust systems to critically evaluate the school's work.
- More regularly seek and act upon pupils' and parents' views.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards in English and mathematics are **high** by age 11 and in other subjects are **above** what is expected. Pupils of all capabilities achieve **very well**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Test results compare very well with national results and those in similar schools.
- Pupils' attainment in all National Curriculum subjects is at least above national expectations.
- Pupils achieve very well at all key stages.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and most often attain standards that meet national expectations by the time they leave.
- Higher attaining pupils and those with particular talents are challenged and provided with good opportunities to develop their skills and talents.

COMMENTARY

1. When children enter Reception their attainment levels are above those usually found. Children progress very well in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development and in their personal and social development. Pupils achieve well across all other areas of learning. Despite the fact that some children have a relatively short time in Reception, standards are above those expected by the time children are old enough to join Year 1. Children's personal development and their attainment in communication language and literacy is well above that expected.

The school's test results at ages seven and 11

Test results at age seven

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (18.0)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	17.7 (17.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.8(18.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group (19 boys and 11 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- National comparative data shows that in 2004, pupils' test results for Year 2 in reading were well above the national average and in writing and mathematics they were very high, being in the top five per cent of all schools. Results in reading, writing and mathematics were all well above those in similar schools. In science, based on teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was very high when compared with the national average and a proportion well above the national average attained the higher Level 3.

Test results at age 11

STANDARDS IN NATIONAL TESTS AT THE END OF YEAR 6 – AVERAGE POINT SCORES IN 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.6 (31.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.6 (32.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.8 (32.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 40 pupils in the year group (19 boys and 21 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Test results in English at age 11 in 2004 were very high and those in science and mathematics were well above the national average. Results in all English and mathematics were well above those in similar schools and in science were above.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in mathematics and science and very well in English. Almost all pupils attain at least the expected Levels 2 and 4 at ages seven and 11, and a very high proportion of pupils attain the higher Levels 3 and 5. At both key stages, test results over time are very good and the school's overall improvement trend is above the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 2 and 6 classes are similar to test results last year. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. Their skills in mental mathematics and scientific enquiry are good.

Standards in other subjects

- Religious education was not inspected since it was part of another inspection. Standards in ICT have improved well since the last inspection and are now in line with those expected at age seven, and above them at 11. Pupils are achieving very well in ICT and standards are improving fast. Pupils' very good achievements have not yet had time to fully impact on standards in ICT by age seven and 11. This is because the improvements to provision are still relatively new. Pupils across Years 1 to 6 achieve well across all other subjects so that standards are consistently above national expectations by ages seven and 11. This represents very good overall achievement as pupils move up through the school.
- Pupils' high standards in English and mathematics and their fast developing skills in ICT contribute very well to their learning in other subjects. In history and geography, for example, younger pupils talk very confidently about current and past events. They are good listeners and can easily read and access information from books, charts and maps. By the time they are in the upper half of the school, pupils have developed very good independent research and recording skills, which enables them to find information quickly from a wide range of sources, including using ICT and the Internet. Pupils' good mathematics skills also support their work in history, geography and

science well. There are no significant differences in the attainment and progress of boys and girls. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds progress at the same rate as other pupils and are well represented in higher attaining groups.

- The school caters well for pupils of different abilities and staff know pupils well and have high expectations of them. Pupils with special needs progress very well because they are well supported through additional teaching that is well matched to their specific needs. Particularly able pupils are challenged well in lessons across subjects, often attaining very high standards. Pupils with particular talents, for example in sport and music, have very good opportunities to extend their skills, such as by learning to play instruments and through training and taking part in sporting competitions.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' attitudes, relationships and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance is **excellent** and punctuality is **very good**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to school and learning, and their very good behaviour, make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school and to pupils' achievements.
- Relationships are very good and there is a high level of mutual respect.
- Attendance levels reflect the excellent efforts of parents to ensure their children make the most of their educational opportunities.
- Pupils' spiritual development is excellent.

Commentary

- The good provision has been further strengthened since the last inspection. Pupils therefore achieve very well in their personal development. The very positive inspection findings are also in keeping with the parents' and pupils' views. Pupils show a real enjoyment for school and being part of a friendly and inclusive community in which they feel welcome and valued. Pupils especially like the wide range of after-school activities and find most lessons interesting and at times very enjoyable. Pupils' very positive attitudes to school are also reflected in their very high attendance rates and participation in extra-curricular activities. In lessons, pupils work very hard, are keen to succeed, concentrate well and show willingness and very strong desire to learn. This has a very significant impact on standards and pupils' very good achievement. Behaviour is very good in class and around the school. There have been no exclusions as the table below shows. Pupils show very good levels of maturity and concern for others, as seen, for example, when an older pupil held open a door in a crowded area so that several much younger pupils could pass through safely. Records show that incidents of violent, racist or oppressive behaviour are extremely rare and none were evident during the inspection. When incidents of bullying are brought to the staff's attention they deal with them effectively.

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	200	0	0

White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

9. Relationships across the whole school community are very good and are founded on a strong sense of mutual respect among pupils and with staff. All pupils, irrespective of ethnic background or ability, feel a sense of belonging and are encouraged to participate in all activities. Many examples were seen of pupils supporting each other well when working in pairs or small groups. Occasionally, in lessons, however, Years 3 to 6 teachers needed to do more to ensure that girls participated fully in question and answer session and that boys and girls had more opportunities to work together on tasks.
10. Parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually. No unauthorised absences were recorded during the past year and authorised absence was much lower than in schools nationally, as the table below shows. The issue regarding the recording of attendance identified at the time of the last inspection has since been addressed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/2004 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.3	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.

11. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Teachers very successfully create a calm, peaceful atmosphere in which pupils can grow and flourish. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect, including those provided in assemblies, religious education and other subjects. Very good opportunities for reflection and self-expression were seen in English, science, history and ICT. Opportunities for listening, composing and making music together and for reflecting on the works of different artists, add a further valuable dimension to pupils' spiritual development. The very good relationships and the example set by all members of staff strongly support pupils' very good moral development, which is underpinned by the school's aims, mission statement and Christian values. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They are expected to show a high degree of respect for the difference between people and for their values and beliefs.
12. Very good social skills are promoted. Pupils have regular opportunities to take responsibility, both for their own learning and by undertaking jobs and tasks around the school. Members of the school council are encouraged to use their initiative and to contribute ideas and suggestions about how to make improvements. Pupils contribute to the school and local community by helping to develop the school grounds and by taking part in sporting, musical and church events. They contribute to the wider community through regularly collecting for charities. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' social

development is further enhanced through residential trips. Pupils' cultural development is promoted very well. The curriculum, and well-planned visits and visiting speakers and performers, promote and enrich pupils' understanding of British and other cultures. The school effectively prepares pupils for life in a multicultural society by promoting religious and racial tolerance. Pupils have good opportunities to study art, literature and music from a wide range of cultures, for example. The religious education programme also extends pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures and beliefs.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** standard of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 to 6 is **good**. Curricular enrichment is **very good**. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. Standards of care are **satisfactory**. Links with parents are **good** and links with the community and other schools are **very good**.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Reception class meets children's needs well and enables them to make a very good start to their schooling.
- Staff generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They make good links between pupils' work in different subjects.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour make a strong contribution to their learning.
- Support staff and volunteers make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- There are a few inconsistencies and some weaknesses in teaching.

Commentary

12. Teaching and learning are always at least good in the Reception class and are often very good. The main strengths are the way that the teacher and support staff work very well together and with parents. This establishes children's very positive attitudes to school and learning and very good routines from the start. Work is well planned to ensure that good attention is given to each area of learning. Children have many opportunities to learn from practical activities and first-hand experience. Parents say that when children have additional needs they are supported very well and that overall provision in the Reception class helps their children to settle into school very well. Assessment is good. The teacher knows that many children already have good skills when they start school and she therefore extends them by setting appropriately challenging tasks.
13. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6. Strengths here include teachers' high expectations of pupils, their good knowledge of subjects and good teaching of basic skills. Teachers also plan interesting and relevant work that meets all pupils' needs well and makes effective and increasingly creative use of links between subjects. The quality of homework is good because it is relevant and is used well to extend pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Some parents at the meeting before the inspection were not entirely happy with the amount of homework set and noted a lack of consistency between classes. Inspectors recognise that there is some inconsistency in how much work is set in each class. They also judged that if the school's clear,

written homework policy was applied consistently and a copy was routinely given to parents and explained to them, any issues about homework could easily be resolved.

14. Teaching assistants are well trained and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, both in class and when supporting pupils in groups in the ICT suite or on specific activities elsewhere. Many parents and volunteers also give generously of their skills and time to regularly help in class and with after-school activities. Class teachers deploy volunteers well so that they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively taught in line with the particular needs identified in their individual educational plans (IEPs). The very good teamwork between teachers, the special needs support assistant and the learning support assistant enhances pupils' learning well. The specific teaching of small groups and individuals provided by the special needs support assistant is very good. The fact that most pupils with special educational needs attain the expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 reflects the good learning and support they receive.
15. Teaching and learning were very good and occasionally excellent in around a quarter of lessons seen during the inspection, as the table below shows. What made this teaching particularly effective was the very high expectations of pupils and a very good pace to lessons, whilst also ensuring that all pupils were following, understanding and contributing. Pupils' skills were therefore quickly and skilfully developed throughout lessons.
16. The main weaknesses evident in teaching in lessons seen during the inspection firstly relate to teachers talking for too long themselves, sometimes for as much as three quarters of the lesson. This resulted in pupils not having enough time to practise their own skills. Teachers' questioning sometimes did not do enough to ensure that all pupils, but especially girls, were understanding and participating in lessons.
17. Assessment in English, mathematics, science and ICT is good. As a result, teachers know their pupils' levels of attainments well, and set tasks for them that are well matched to their needs and challenge them. Senior managers and class teachers track pupils' progress in these subjects well and extra support is subsequently given to pupils who are at risk of falling behind or have additional needs. In other subjects, assessment is at least satisfactory. Marking, although regular, is inconsistent in quality. It is good in English, but in some other subjects it should do more to prompt pupils to improve and to correct any mistakes. Reviewing assessment procedures is a current whole-school focus and some good practice, which involves pupils in self-assessment, is developing.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1(3%)	8 (24%)	16 (49%)	8 (24 %)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. Curriculum enrichment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school has made a good start on developing creativity in the curriculum.
- Very good links with the community, visits, visitors and lunchtime and after-school activities all contribute very effectively to pupils' very good achievements.
- Pupil participation in sporting activities and the arts is very good.
- Outdoor accommodation is very good, but there is no enclosed outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage and some parts of the building need redecorating.

COMMENTARY

13. Good improvements have been made to the curriculum since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been developed to ensure that is based securely on national guidelines. It provides a good balance between the six different areas of learning and it is well planned to match children's needs. A weakness in provision is that children do not have regular access to an outdoor area and the full range of outdoor activities. Proposed building plans include setting up such an area, but funding has not yet been agreed.
14. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements and covers all National Curriculum subjects, religious education, sex and drugs education and personal, social, and health education. French is also taught in Years 5 and 6. The basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are given good attention and are applied and incorporated well into other subjects. The Primary Strategy for literacy and numeracy are used well as a basis for planning and are adapted appropriately. Grouping pupils according to prior attainments in literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6 has also contributed to achieving high standards. The overall curriculum is kept under review and teachers plan together to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, ensuring their inclusion in lessons and in all aspects of school life. The very good provision for extra-curricular activities, public performances and residential trips help gifted and talented pupils to develop their special gifts and talents.
15. Recent curriculum developments, including the linking of units of work from different subjects together, are enabling teachers to make better use of time and have enhanced creativity and enjoyment. For example, in Year 6 when pupils made board games, the teacher provided good opportunities for writing and for pupils to apply their mathematical, scientific, ICT and design technology skills, which resulted in high quality work being produced. Similarly, linking food technology with ICT meant that pupils in Year 1 were able to develop their knowledge in two subjects as they used computers to create pictograms of groups of fruit used in making a fruit salad. The school now needs to further develop and refine its planning in order to outline how subject-specific skills will be progressively developed as pupils move up through the school. The school makes good provision for new pupils entering the school in Year 3 and similarly makes sure its pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school.
16. Pupils benefit greatly and speak enthusiastically about the wide range of visitors, visits to places of interest and residential visits that make learning interesting and contribute to pupils' achievements. The school has very good links with the church, wider community and other schools and colleges. The vicar is a frequent and welcome visitor and pupils regularly

participate in church services. The school regularly invites local artists and musicians to work with the pupils and provide inspiration, for example in producing the decorative mosaic tiles depicting village life and in presenting musical and dramatic productions of high quality. Coaching by members of local football and hockey clubs and by specialist teachers from local secondary schools enhances sports provision and the school is also a member of a local school liaison group for sport. Pupils participate well in village life by their contributions to the village magazine and by joining in village activities such as the annual Pancake Day Race, Carol Concert and Village Day. Every teacher contributes to at least one of the after-school activities which include sports, arts and crafts, Latin, nature and bell ringing. Participation in the school choir and orchestra contribute well to the pupils' personal development as well as enriching their musical experience and providing the opportunity to perform.

17. Staffing, resources and indoor accommodation are satisfactory. There is a planned programme of redecoration but there is not always money available to carry out the planned work. Pupils themselves would like to see improvements to the building and the toilets. The extensive school grounds are well used to support the curriculum including helping pupils to develop positive attitudes towards keeping fit and healthy by using the Fitness Trail. Pupils benefit from having an outdoor swimming pool on site.

Care, guidance and support

The standard of care is overall **satisfactory**. Pupils receive **good** levels of help, support and guidance. The pupils' involvement in the life of the school is **good** and they are given many opportunities to take responsibility.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Provision for pupils' medical and welfare needs are good.
- Pupils are helped to settle into school very well and quickly when they start.
- Pupils develop very trusting relationships with staff.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are supported very well.
- The recent introduction of the school council provides an effective forum for seeking pupils' views and initiating change, but there are as yet relatively few other opportunities to formally seek pupils' views.
- Teachers and other staff know pupils well and respond to their individual needs.

Commentary

18. Most parents feel that pupils are well cared for and the school's efforts contribute to a contented and confident pupil population. Very good arrangements ensure that children are helped to settle down quickly and become confident and happy when they start in Reception and there are good procedures to settle-in pupils who join in Year 3. Staff keep a good overview of pupils' personal development and academic progress. Procedures for providing first aid in the event of injuries, illness or specific medical needs are well established and there is a quick and effective response. Pupils who show signs of emotional distress are supported well. The very good and trusting relationships enable teachers to respond to any problems or concerns. Lunchtime staff and the local vicar also play an important role in this respect. Child protection procedures are securely in place and follow the local authority guidelines. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Pupils' learning, social and emotional needs are clearly identified, and their day-to-day care is well managed. They have full access to all outside support agencies. Parents and carers are consulted at all stages to ensure that all aspects of the care are used to help these pupils gain maximum benefit from all they do at school.

19. The school's health and safety policy identifies clear roles and responsibilities. The premises manager carries out daily health and safety checks to ensure that potential risks are actioned. Inspectors found that whilst the short-term activities are well carried out, senior managers and governors need to apply far more rigour when conducting whole-school risk assessments.
20. The contribution that pupils make to decision-making is an area the school is currently extending. Pupils' views are surveyed, but this only occurs every two years. In consultation with the local education authority the school has recently designed an age-appropriate questionnaire that the school now plans to use annually. Pupils feel that the school council is already having some impact. All pupils are given many opportunities to develop independence and take responsibility, including responsibility for their own learning. As part of their preparation for transition and to extend their confidence and self-esteem, older pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility around the school. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory in this area.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school links **well** with parents. Links with other schools, colleges and the community are **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents support the school and their children's learning very well, and this makes a very good contribution to pupils' achievements.
- The school needs to continue to develop its procedures for consultation and communicating with parents.
- Links with the community and other educational institutions make a very good contribution to learning and pupil development.

COMMENTARY

21. Based on the results of the pre-inspection questionnaire, the school's own parental survey conducted in 2003 and the views provided during the parents' meeting, the great majority of parents continue to express very positive views about all aspects of the school's work. They see as particular strengths as the induction arrangements, the quality of teaching and the leadership of the school. The inspection findings endorse parents' positive views. Where there are concerns, expressed by a minority of parents, these include the extent to which the school seeks and acts on parents' views, the information about pupils' progress, bullying and the level of homework. The inspection team explored these concerns during the inspection and found that the school can improve on some of these aspects. Based on school records, direct observation during the inspection and discussions with pupils, the concerns about bullying are not justified. Whilst there are occasional disagreements between pupils, there is an overall absence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. There is some justification for the concerns about consultation with and information to parents, issues that were also raised at the time of the last inspection. The school has introduced several initiatives, for example parental meetings for each year group at the start of every academic year and the presence of a member of staff who travels on the coach with pupils from a neighbouring village. The existing level of formal consultation, however, every two years, is insufficient to enable the school to keep in close touch with all parents' views so as to respond to them. The school plans to survey parental attitudes annually in future and to further develop its website as a means of consultation and providing information to parents.

22. Information about school policies and procedures also needs to be more readily accessible to parents. For example, although parents at the meeting before the inspection were unsure if there was a homework policy, inspectors found that the school does have such a policy, but that parents do not receive copies of school policies unless they specifically ask for them. Parents have good opportunities to discuss their children's progress through parents' meetings, informative annual progress reports and one-to-one discussions with teachers.
23. Parents make a very significant and very valuable contribution to pupils' learning and very good achievements in several ways. Firstly, parents are very keen for their children to succeed, take an active interest in their education and provide very good support at home. Secondly, a large number of parents regularly help in school in various ways, as was evident during the inspection period. Finally, the school and its pupils benefit hugely from the hard work and enthusiasm of the Parents' Association. In addition to raising substantial funds for the school, the group provides very good opportunities for parents, pupils and staff to meet in a social setting.
24. Links with other schools and colleges are very good and make a major contribution to teaching and the pupils' achievements. The school links very well with other schools to ensure the very effective induction of new pupils into the Reception and Year 3 classes. Key features include very good opportunities for parental involvement and visits by prospective pupils for the purposes of familiarisation and assessment. Similarly, the transition of Year 6 pupils to local secondary schools is very good and again closely involves the parents, pupils and other schools, as well as support from the local education authority. Other links include contacts with a local sports college, a local grammar school involving a modern languages initiative and numerous sporting links with other schools.
25. There is a very wide range of links with the local and wider community, all of which benefit pupils across the whole school. Records show that there have been over 40 occasions to date during the current academic year when pupils have either had the benefit of educational visits directly linked to the curriculum, or have received visitors who have contributed in some way to pupils' learning and development. Overall the improvements in this area of the school's work have been good since the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **well** led and managed. The acting headteacher provides **good** leadership. This has enabled the school to respond well during the time that the substantive headteacher has been seconded to the local education authority. It has ensured that high standards of work and pupil behaviour have been maintained and the momentum of school development has been kept up. Governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, challenge the school and support it very well.
- The headteacher and acting headteacher have a clear educational direction and vision for developing the school.
- Senior managers and subject leaders are making a good contribution to the way that the school is led and managed.

- Procedures for school self-evaluation and the monitoring of teaching and learning are in place, but need to be developed further and applied with greater rigour.
- Finances are managed very well and administration is very efficient.

COMMENTARY

26. Under the good leadership of the substantive headteacher and the acting headteacher, the school has improved well since the last inspection and has maintained its high academic and sporting standards. Senior managers have high expectations of all members of staff and a firm commitment to their professional development. Collectively, they support the staff very well and ensure they have a clear idea of their roles and responsibilities and help staff to identify their training and development needs. There is a clear vision for further developing the school, its curriculum, building and grounds.
27. The acting deputy headteacher is working very hard and makes a good contribution to the way in which the school is led and managed. She, and other senior managers, work well with the acting headteacher. Staff and governors are clear about the school's goals and what they need to do to help achieve them. The administrative staff are highly efficient, which assists with the very smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis and ensures that purchases are made in accordance with best-value principles.
28. Subject leaders and those responsible for the Foundation Stage of Learning have a good understanding of their roles. School self-evaluation, through monitoring and evaluating strengths and weaknesses in subjects and other areas, is developing but is not yet rigorous. Due in part to financial constraints, the time available for subject leaders to be released to observe teaching and learning and to see where further improvements are needed, is somewhat limited. Nevertheless, teachers with subjects and management responsibilities are knowledgeable, hard working and enthusiastic. All aspects of the administration of special educational needs are well organised. Documentation is up-to-date, and individual education plans are working documents that are regularly reviewed and updated. The recently appointed link governor is very supportive of the work of the school.
29. Members of the governing body have a very good range of professional expertise that is well used for the benefit of the school. They are well informed, share the school's vision and are able to rigorously question the school leaders as well as to suggest priorities. Governors take a keen interest in school development, monitor spending closely and are prudent when making financial decisions. This has enabled the school to be reasonably well staffed and resourced within a moderate budget. The governors are fully involved with school improvement planning and budget setting processes. They visit the school regularly and unreservedly support the school and its Christian ethos. They are justifiably proud of the school's reputation in the local village community.
30. Senior managers, staff and governors ensure that the school and its policies promote high standards of academic work and pupil behaviour. This is borne out by the introduction of initiatives to make the curriculum more creative and interesting, raise the achievement of pupils who are gifted and talented and enrich the curriculum with a wide range of out-of-school activities, ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to

realise their talents and achieve their potential. Taking account of pupils' very good achievements, the good quality of education, the good governance and leadership of the school and moderate costs, the school provides very good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	479, 523
Total expenditure	487,141
Expenditure per pupil	2,266

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,555
Balance carried forward to the next year	8,937

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception class is **good**.

At the current time there are 17 children in the Reception class, all attending school full time. Another eight children will join the class after Easter. When children start school, although attainment covers a range of ability, overall it is above that usually found. None of the children have been identified as having special educational needs. Children of all abilities achieve well. As a result, by the time they are old enough to join Year 1, all children will have at least attained the goals that are expected of them in each of the six areas of learning, and a high proportion will have exceeded the level expected.

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by an experienced teacher. This has meant the school has maintained the good provision found at the time of the last inspection. She has undertaken extensive research into the possibility of developing an outdoor learning area and these plans have been drawn up and costed. The curriculum is good with strong emphasis given to each area of learning. The three part-time teaching assistants, who work in the Reception class at different times during the week, provide very effective support. There is also a very good level of support from parent-helpers and parents are welcomed into the classroom, to read with their children, each morning. Currently the children who do not start school until Easter transfer late to Year 1 in January rather than September. Changes to local education authority policy on admissions, however, means that this practice will cease at the end of the current academic year. As most children have already had pre-school experience before starting school, the majority would cope well with the transfer to Year 1 in September.

Teaching and learning are good and often very good. The class teacher has a very clear understanding of how young children learn and high expectations of children's work and behaviour. The children respond appropriately, showing a high level of interest and enjoyment in their work. All members of staff use their good assessments of children's learning effectively to ensure that work is interesting and challenging for children of all prior attainments. Staff provide an attractive classroom environment within which children's work in all six areas of learning is displayed effectively. The classroom accommodation, and the extra room for practical activities, are used well, but the lack of an outdoor learning area limits children's opportunities for first-hand experiences in the open-air on a daily basis. This does not, however, impact negatively on their progress and attainment as the Reception teacher makes good use of the school hall and grounds to support children's physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well.
- Induction arrangements help children settle in quickly.

- There are very good relationships between the staff and children and with parents.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes are very good at all times.

COMMENTARY

31. CHILDREN QUICKLY SETTLE INTO A CARING AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE CLEAR ROUTINES AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS ARE THE BEDROCK OF GOOD PRACTICE. AS A RESULT, CHILDREN ACHIEVE VERY WELL AND MOST HAVE VERY GOOD SOCIAL SKILLS BY THE TIME THEY ENTER YEAR 1. THE VERY GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF AND PARENTS ENSURE THAT CHILDREN SETTLE WELL EACH MORNING AND PUPILS HAVE TIME TOGETHER WITH THEIR PARENTS AT THE START OF THE DAY. THE POLITE, FRIENDLY AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF PROVIDE A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR CHILDREN. PARENTS CONTRIBUTE VERY WELL HELPING IN CLASS AND SUPPORTING SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.

32. Very good induction arrangements ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones. The school has good links with the local play school. The teacher meets with staff from other nurseries and playgroups at Foundation Stage meetings, thereby gaining a good knowledge of the children before they enter school. Children spend time in the Reception class during the term before they start school, thereby ensuring that they are familiar with the building, the staff and the routines when they start school. Very good teaching, which includes many well-planned activities that require co-operation, results in very good social development. The Reception teacher places great emphasis on the development of children's good behaviour, confidence and self-esteem. Girls and boys respond very well to the activities provided and work and play co-operatively, demonstrating a high level of maturity for their age.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is imaginative and children achieve very well as a result.
- Themed activities and cross-curricular links engage children's interest and support their learning very well.
- Teaching assistants and parent-helpers provide good support.

COMMENTARY

33. Children achieve very well in this area and overall standards are above those expected, and for some children they are well above. Most children have good speaking and listening skills for their age when they start school. They make very good progress and soon develop confidence to express their ideas to the whole class. The teacher makes very good use of opportunities to engage children in activities that extend their communication skills. Every day children work with their teacher, on whole-class activities, to develop good speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. In small group activities they work purposefully with adults on activities to develop their sound and letter recognition and their writing skills. Children make very good progress

with their writing and many children can already write words and sentences. The teacher plans activities with a theme. This term's theme on 'Pattern', results in children developing a broader vocabulary in order to express their ideas and opinions and also results in children linking their learning to the wider world and bringing in objects of interest from home to talk about. Most children come to school with a good knowledge of books and stories and this is developed through daily whole-class and individual reading activities. Children have a very good vocabulary and respond very thoughtfully and positively to stories, such as "Elmer the Elephant", demonstrating a very good understanding of the thoughts and feelings of the characters. Children read daily to adults at home and at school. It also results in children making rapid progress with their reading and achieving levels beyond those expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teachers' records are used well to track children's progress.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is challenging and children achieve very well.
- Children's mathematical learning is well linked to other areas of learning.
- Children enjoy their work and respond well to the activities provided.

COMMENTARY

34. Children achieve very well in this area and overall standards are above those expected. They develop good number recognition and counting skills, for example when counting the number of children present and completing the date chart each day. Children develop their understanding of capacity effectively through regular activities using sand and water and through cooking activities where they are encouraged to weigh and measure using non-standard units. This term's work on pattern effectively develops children's knowledge and understanding of shape and repeating patterns. This is supported by activities such as those using a peg-board, bead threading and pattern making linked to creative activities such as printing patterns on elephant templates linked to the "Elmer" story. Good teaching captures children's interests and effectively links mathematics to other areas of learning. Expectations are high and children respond positively to challenging mathematical problems such as adding together the dots on a series of dominoes using correct mathematical symbols.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning are good so that children achieve well and standards are above those usually found.
- Themes and links across different areas of learning support children's learning well.

COMMENTARY

35. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences that help extend their understanding of the world around them. Activities, such as the visit to the local church to look at design and pattern in the windows, pews and font, are well used to develop children's understanding. This also gave children an opportunity to develop a good understanding of patterns and shapes found in the environment. Religious education effectively supports children's understanding of their own beliefs. Children are encouraged to act out roles, for example as receptionist and secretary in the 'Office' activity corner. Lack of direct access to the outdoors limits children's opportunities to regularly work outside and to observe the changing seasons, on a daily basis, but the

teacher makes good use of the excellent school grounds by taking children on walks to observe mini-beasts and wildlife.

36. Children have regular access to computers and there is a good range of relevant educational programs to support their learning. Children use the computer confidently and competently, using the mouse with control and accuracy. The teacher's planning effectively links areas of learning and engages children's interest very well. Children are keen to bring in objects and artefacts from home that are linked to the topic they are learning about. For example, a girl brought in a cushion from home that she had noticed had different tapestry patterns around the border. She described the cushion confidently using correct vocabulary to describe the zigzag and curved patterns. The cushion also presented an opportunity to link back to the story of 'Elmer' as it had a tapestry of a giraffe in the centre that the children enjoyed talking about.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.
- The lack of direct access to an outdoor area restricts children's opportunities for physical activities outdoors.
- Good use is made of the school hall and school grounds to support physical development.

COMMENTARY

37. The quality of teaching and learning are good and virtually all children are on course to reach the standards expected of them for their age or to attain standards above those expected. They have regular opportunities for physical activities such as dance, running, jumping and balancing in timetabled lessons in the school hall. Children achieve very well in these lessons. Children also have frequent planned opportunities during the day to use small tools and instruments such as paintbrushes, printing materials, pencils, scissors and musical instruments to develop their fine motor skills. They use small tools and construction materials confidently. The supervision and management of children is very good which ensures that they use the tools and apparatus safely and competently. The lack of an outdoor learning area for children in the Foundation Stage restricts opportunities for physical development with wheeled toys, balls, and other large-scale equipment.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy activities and achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.

- Very good links are made with other areas of learning.

COMMENTARY

38. The teacher and learning support assistants encourage children to express themselves through creative activities. As a result all children at least reach and many exceed the standard expected for their age by the end of the Reception year. Teaching promotes children's creativity and self-expression well. These are successfully fostered through a wide range of experiences such as painting pictures, printing patterns, drawing, making constructions and exploring different materials. When children were printing patterns on elephant templates they were encouraged to talk about the colours and patterns and link the activity back to the story of 'Elmer'. The role-play areas are used regularly and these provide good opportunities for children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. Children use a range of musical instruments that they play with care and thoughtfulness, for example, when playing Indian Bells and Rhythm Sticks very quietly, 'like a lullaby'. Children's good paintings are well displayed around the classroom creating a colourful and stimulating learning environment for young children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good** and it has improved very well since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are very high by Year 6 and pupils throughout the school achieve very well.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils' literacy skills are very well developed through other subjects and pupils' very good skills make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- Visits, visitors and drama productions are well used to enrich the curriculum.
- Work in English makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

COMMENTARY

39. Overall standards in all aspects of English are well above those expected by the end of Year 2 and very high for pupils in Year 6. Over the last four years test results at ages seven and 11 have almost always been very high, when compared to the national average. They have improved at a rate above the national trend, from a strong starting point. The continued improvement in standards is a direct result of good teaching and pupils' high level of interest in the subject. Teaching styles are appropriately matched to meet individual needs. As a result, pupils of all ethnic backgrounds and abilities, including pupils who are gifted and talented and those who have special educational needs, achieve very well. Teachers have a very good understanding of how English should be taught and applied across subjects. They form very strong, positive relationships with their pupils, which, along with pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour as well as their capacity to work independently and collaboratively, strongly support their learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively and provide good support to pupils' learning. When pupils with special educational needs work on a one-to-one basis with a learning support assistant, they make very good progress.
40. Pupils are confident speakers and listen well to their teachers and to each other. In most lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are involved during whole-class discussions and in answering questions. In a small number of lessons, only those who volunteer are asked to answer. As a result, some pupils, often girls, play a passive role during whole-class teaching sessions. However, there was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the overall attainments of boys and girls. Pupils of all ages are confident in speaking to visitors and in presenting their work to the class. Regular opportunities to take part in public performances such as 'The Pied Piper of Lacey Green' do much to support pupils' speaking skills as well as their social development.
41. Pupils in all year groups read aloud confidently and with good expression. By the end of Year 2, they have a good awareness of sounds that letters make because these skills are very well taught. Nearly all pupils read accurately and with confidence and

use punctuation very effectively to inform expression. Parents give very good support to pupils' reading at home and as volunteers in school. As a result of this and the good teaching they receive, pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and talk confidently about the wide range of books they have read. They enjoy both fiction and non-fiction and their well-developed reference skills enable them to find information on different topics across the curriculum with comparative ease. Pupils combine information from a variety of sources, including the Internet and interpret it accurately and creatively. Skills of skimming and scanning are well developed. In Year 5, for example, pupils' work shows that they scan texts to identify similes and metaphors. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were all highly involved using advanced reading skills as they converted parts of the text 'Children of Winter' to a play script. Despite the current lack of a designated library, the co-ordinator has worked hard to provide pupils with attractive library spaces to support their interest in reading and research.

42. Pupils' writing skills are well above those usually found and they have a well-developed sense of audience. Pupils choose vocabulary very carefully, using phrases and sentences that engage the reader. A significant strength of the curriculum is the way teachers identify opportunities for writing in many other subjects. Very good evidence of this was seen in subjects such as science, history and geography. Examples of high quality writing were seen. In Year 4, for example, pupils wrote well-designed newspaper articles and designed letters to persuade people to buy an Ancient Egyptian house. Year 6 pupils produce very interesting newspaper reports on the Trojan Horse and advanced play scripts on the Persian War. Very good examples of extended writing for a variety of purposes were also seen in Years 1 and 2 where pupils rewrite the story of Jack and the Beanstalk in their own words, and compose letters to the police and fire service inviting them to visit the school. As a result of such activities, all pupils have a very good understanding of the many purposes for writing, and also use computers effectively to produce work of high quality.
43. Teachers provide rich opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural awareness within English. This is strongly reflected in pupils' thoughtful writing, including imaginative poetry and work on environmental issues. The co-ordinator, who provides good leadership and management, organises a very good range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Visitors such as storytellers and authors, and theatre visits are well used to enrich pupils' experiences and to support their personal development.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

44. As is evident in the commentary above, pupils have many rich and interesting opportunities to apply their reading and writing skills in different subjects. This has resulted in continually improved standards in English and other subjects since the last inspection.

French

45. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 learn French. Pupils achieve well. They listen attentively to discriminate sounds and to develop accurate pronunciation. They respond with developing ability to questions and instructions couched in familiar language. Due to the emphasis on spoken language, pupils are growing in confidence in speaking, trying hard to reproduce precisely what they have heard. The quality of teaching is

good. Lessons are interesting and fun. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to hold pupils' attention and consolidate their learning. In the Year 5 lesson seen, for example, pupils were highly motivated when questioning others using familiar phrases such as *Comment t'appelles tu? Ca va? Ou habites-tu?* and *Quel age as tu?* Pupils enjoy interacting with teachers and each other and are keen to do well. Teaching of French is a valuable part of the curriculum. It is very worthwhile in itself and prepares pupils well for the next stage of education. It also helps to expand pupils' cultural horizons and further develops their awareness of the structure and potential of language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well and pupils' attainment is above that expected at age seven and well above it at age 11.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and lessons generally are well paced with good mental and oral work.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons.
- There is an overdependence on worksheets for setting tasks and recording mathematics work in Years 1 to 4.
- Assessment is good overall, but marking is inconsistent.

COMMENTARY

46. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and develop good mathematical skills. A very high percentage of pupils attain standards above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of lower ability or with special educational needs usually attain standards that meet national expectations. This is because they are well supported in lessons, by teachers and well-trained support assistants. There are no differences in boys' and girls' attainments or achievements. Test results over time are also high. In the current Year 2 and 6 classes, all pupils are working at least at the expected levels for their ages and approximately half of pupils are on course to attain higher standards.
47. By Year 2, most pupils have good mathematical knowledge and a very good command of mathematical vocabulary. For example, in a lesson on time pupils were familiar with the terms "analogue" and "digital" and could mentally convert analogue time to record it as digital and vice versa. Year 6 pupils have, for example, a very good grasp of operations with decimals and fractions and demonstrate a very good understanding of shape and measure. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are familiar with the properties of triangles and able to use this knowledge to estimate the size of vertically opposite angles.
48. The school places high priority on pupils acquiring good understanding of number and algebra so that understanding of place value and the four rules is well established by the time they are in Year 4. This means that lessons are planned with an emphasis on mental and oral work, after which pupils work through a very structured scheme of published materials to consolidate and reinforce their understanding. Although all aspects of mathematics are covered there is greater weighting towards number and algebra. The overdependence on worksheets for recording mathematics in Years 1 to 4 tends to inhibit pupils from making very good progress as well as inhibiting the development of pupils' ability to organise their work

and refine ways of recording. After pupils have completed Year 4 work, the teachers and mathematics co-ordinator devise a different programme of work, which reflects pupils' already good attainment and responds better to the needs of particular groups of pupils. More emphasis on pupils' recording independently from this stage on develops pupils' abilities to record in a wider variety of ways and there is a more balanced programme across all aspects of mathematics.

49. Teaching seen during the inspection was mainly good and sometimes very good. Teachers have at least a secure, and often good, knowledge of mathematics. Expectations are high, with teachers challenging pupils' thinking during mental and oral work and encouraging them to participate and work hard. This was very evident, for example, in a Year 2 lesson seen. Grouping of pupils according to ability in Years 3 to 6 enables teachers to pace lessons accordingly. This meant that pupils in the highest attaining group in Year 6 achieved very well during a lesson on angles, acquiring new understanding about the sum of angles at a point, drawing on previous knowledge and practising skills in using a protractor. Meanwhile, pupils of lower ability were able to work at a slower pace, reinforcing their understanding of area and perimeter of rectangles and beginning to apply this to compound shapes with good instruction from the class teacher and good support from the support assistant. In all lessons seen the pupils demonstrated very good attitudes and enjoyment and they worked well together. Homework is well used to reinforce and extend pupils' class work, although there are inconsistencies in the amount of homework assigned by teachers.
50. Assessment is well used throughout the school to enable teachers to plan appropriately for all pupils, including those who are gifted in mathematics. The planned introduction of an electronic system of tracking pupils' progress should enable teachers to devise specific short-term targets for all pupils in order to raise standards even further. Marking is satisfactory overall, but there are inconsistencies from class to class. This needs to be reviewed in order to help pupils know what they need to do in order to improve and for all teachers to demonstrate rigour in following up pupils' mistakes and corrections.
51. The co-ordinator provides very good, enthusiastic leadership. She has a strong sense of pupils' needs and has the ability to extend good practice so as to make teaching even better. Her own teaching serves as a model of good practice. She has had some opportunity to observe teaching and learning in lessons and has set realistic targets for improvements, including developing more cross-curricular practical activities. She has worked well to support staff, including training support assistants. Work in mathematics has continued to improve steadily since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

52. Good use is made of mathematics to support work across the curriculum. For example, there are improving links with ICT and some good links with art and design, design and technology, history and science. Pupils can apply their mathematical skills well to practical tasks, which contributes effectively to their learning in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils of all ages to achieve well.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to learning and work is generally presented well.
- The curriculum is being developed well to make good links with other subjects.
- Environmental science is a strength in provision and the grounds provide an excellent resource.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the impact of curriculum development is limited.

COMMENTARY

53. THE WELL ABOVE AVERAGE STANDARDS ATTAINED AT THE TIME OF THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION HAVE BEEN MAINTAINED AND CURRICULUM INNOVATION IS KEEPING SCIENCE AT THE FOREFRONT OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT. THEREFORE, IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION IS GOOD. TEST RESULTS AT THE END OF YEAR 2 AND 6 ARE CONSISTENTLY WELL ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. WORK SEEN IN BOOKS AND LESSONS DURING THE INSPECTION CONFIRMS THAT, IN ALL YEAR GROUPS, PUPILS' ATTAINMENTS ARE ABOVE NATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AND BOYS AND GIRLS ACHIEVE WELL.
54. Teaching and learning are good at both key stages and some very good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and can explain scientific concepts clearly. This was seen, for example, in a lesson on the Rainforest where different layers of the rainforest and the wildlife that live there were discussed using correct terms. All teachers plan and prepare lessons carefully and the curriculum is covered very effectively in all year groups. Work is presented to pupils in a variety of ways, and pupils' work is generally neat and accurate, but there is an over-reliance on worksheets in some year groups and, in some lessons a tendency for teachers to talk for too long. This slows down pupils' learning and achievements in some lessons. Pupils have good opportunities to carry out experiments and they record these well and use the correct scientific vocabulary. Pupils' good attitudes in lessons, along with their very good general knowledge and wide vocabulary, help to ensure they learn well. Homework is used effectively to extend and support pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding.
55. The curriculum is covered well at both key stages. Curriculum innovation has resulted in good links developing between science and other subjects. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of this new approach is limited and science links with other subjects are as yet not fully utilised in Key Stage 1. The recent appointment of a good, knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader has supported significant developments to the school grounds and the establishment of an environmental science club. The excellent grounds have enabled pupils to participate in the creation and maintenance of a Millennium Garden, a willow tunnel and a natural hedgerow. The subject leader has also successfully secured external grants and funding for further developments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good** and is improving fast.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The very good improvements to provision are enabling pupils to make rapid progress.
- Teaching is good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

COMMENTARY

56. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 meets national expectations, and by the end of Year 6 is above national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are now achieving very well because of the improved facilities, the good teaching and the increasingly regular opportunities to apply their skills across a range of subjects. Pupils' very good achievement, however, has not yet had time to fully impact on overall standards by age seven and 11. This is because the computer suite is still relatively new and pupils still have some catching up to do.
57. Improvements to provision are a direct result of the very good leadership and management of ICT. As a result, resources are much better and teachers are confident to teach the required skills. The curriculum is good, is well linked to national guidance and ensures that all pupils experience the expected subject strands. Lesson observations, examples of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as discussions with staff and pupils, show pupils are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet and data handling as well as control, monitoring and modelling.
58. Teaching, learning and assessment are all good. Planning is good and learning intentions are clear. As a result, teachers and support staff are well focused on what they want pupils to learn. Members of staff have received training in computer technology and this has increased their subject expertise and helped to improve teaching and learning throughout the school. Lessons have a good pace, challenging activities are set and pupils respond accordingly. Pupils' excellent responses were seen for example in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were using computers to classify animals by answering carefully worded questions, and in Year 1 where pupils were creating accurate charts using a graphic package.
59. In addition to regular timetabled lessons, pupils benefit from additional opportunities to develop and apply their skills. The computer suite is open for use throughout the school day, and pupils regularly and independently choose to use it to support and enhance their work in other subjects. Pupils' maturity and capacity to work independently strongly supports their work. Pupils are highly motivated and discuss their work confidently and enthusiastically.

Example of outstanding practice

A YEAR 6 LESSON IN WHICH PUPILS CARRY OUT INDEPENDENT RESEARCH TO DEVELOP POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS RELATING TO THEIR WORK ON RAINFORESTS.

In this outstanding lesson the teacher's excellent use of resources and of pupils' skills resulted in a very good pace to pupils' learning throughout the lesson. A high level of direct teaching of skills helped pupils' to learn and to develop pupils' understanding at all stages. The excellent relationships established resulted in all pupils working very hard and collaboratively, asking questions confidently when the need arose. The teacher was very clear about what she wanted pupils to do and she was firmly focused on this throughout the session. As a result, boys and girls achieved highly during the lesson and produced Power Point presentations of very high quality.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. The use of ICT throughout the curriculum is very good. ICT consistently supports learning in other subjects. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were seen independently using Internet Explorer to research information on different animals found in the Rainforest. Pupils in Year 5, used good quality word-processing skills to write a play script based on the text they were reading in English lessons and produced reviews after seeing a performance of the 'Firework Maker's Daughter' at a London theatre. Pupils in Year 1, improve their data-handling skills to produce pictograms using computers. Teachers and pupils make good use of the digital camera to record activities and computer-generated photographs are used effectively as part of attractive displays throughout the school. Work samples across many subjects show pupils successfully incorporating the use of ICT into their work.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history are reported on in full. Religious education was not inspected since it was inspected as part of a separate inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' attainments are above national expectations by ages seven and 11.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to work and their very good English and mathematics skills support their learning particularly well.
- The school is successfully developing a more creative curriculum that links geography with other subjects.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The presentation of pupils' written work is sometimes careless and untidy.

Commentary

61. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well as a result of the good provision. Through in-depth topic work pupils develop good mapping skills and a good knowledge of geographical features and locations. By the time they are in Year 6 pupils have a mature understanding of some of the global environmental issues.
62. Teaching and learning, as evident from the scrutiny of pupils' past work, are good. Teachers plan many interesting and meaningful activities and make good links between subjects. Most teachers mark pupils work regularly, but there are few comments to guide pupils about how to improve their work and presentation. Teaching was seen in a few lessons during the inspection and this was satisfactory. Strengths included good subject knowledge and good

attention to teaching geographical skills. Questioning was often good. In Year 6 this resulted in pupils being led to think and to consider global issues in some considerable depth. A weakness in lessons was that the whole-class teaching input went on for too long and teachers sometimes did not do enough to encourage all pupils, and especially girls, to answer questions.

63. Pupils say they enjoy geography and show considerable interest. This is evident from pupils' past work. When pupils in Year 6 were working independently and in groups to plan and prepare power point presentations on Rainforest Destruction, their attitudes, behaviour and capacity to work independently were outstanding.
64. The school is working successfully to make the geography curriculum more interesting and relevant by increasingly incorporating other subjects and skills into geography teaching. Pupils' good English and mathematics skills contribute well to their learning. Much use is made of ICT and the Internet, as part of work in geography, which also enables pupils to extend their computer skills as they research information and learn to present their work in a variety of formats. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
65. Geography is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is working successfully with other subject leaders to develop a more creative geography curriculum. She is aware that more work still needs to be done to develop whole-school planning that identifies when and how all of the geographical skills are to be taught over time. She has some opportunities to monitor pupils' work and teachers' planning, but opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in lessons are limited.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' very good English skills contribute very well to their attainments and good achievements in history.
- Teachers make very good links between history and other subjects.
- Homework is used well to support pupils' learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Marking and presentation of pupils' written work could be better in some classes.

Commentary

66. There have been good improvements to history provision since the last inspection, and standards and teaching in the lower school are now better than they were. By age seven for example, pupils show a good understanding of key historical characters and about changes in their own lifetime and the more distant past. They are keen to pose and answer questions. Pupils progress well and by the time they are in Years 5 and 6 have developed good and, for some higher attaining pupils, very good historical knowledge, understanding and skills. By this stage, pupils' very good skills in research, reading and writing enable pupils to learn fast. Throughout the school there are many examples of pupils' very good and interesting written work and of pupils writing in different genre, including that from the point of view of historical characters.

67. The school is developing an increasingly good and interesting history curriculum. There are particular strengths in the links being made with other subjects, especially English, ICT and geography. A very varied programme of planned visits enhances pupils' learning very well and pupils write and talk about these with great enthusiasm. History makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
68. Teaching and learning across the school are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' achievements. They plan interesting activities that match pupils' age and interests well. They keep a sound overview of pupils' progress. As part of the current whole-school focus on reviewing assessment, some good pupil self-assessment and end of unit teacher assessments is developing, especially at the top end of the school. Marking of pupils' work could, however, do more to provide feedback to pupils and encourage some of them to improve the presentation of their work. Homework is used well to extend pupils' learning.
69. The good leadership and management of history have had a positive impact on developments. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well, but has limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning. She has clear ideas about how she wants to develop provision further, for example by introducing more opportunities for drama and even better links with other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Physical education and music were inspected in full. Art and design and design and technology were sampled.
71. As it was not possible to observe many lessons in **art and design** during this inspection, a judgement cannot be made about the overall quality of teaching and provision. However, from the work on display, from discussions with pupils and from looking at portfolios and sketchbooks it is clear that the school provides a wide range of different opportunities and all pupils' achievement is good. Pupils' standards throughout the school are above those expected for their age, with some excellent examples of careful sketching and drawing throughout the school, and good painting in Year 1 and 2. There are some good examples of three-dimensional work such as clay pots and mosaic tiles and textile work such as batik and tie-dye in Years 3 to 6.
72. Pupils' work shows that they are keen and enthusiastic about the tasks they are given. They show an increasing level of skill, such as in the development of awareness of line, form and shadow in their drawings. Pupils are encouraged to be expressive, using the underlying skills they have been taught in order to do this. They are encouraged to experiment with the qualities of different media, for example, exploring different effects obtained when using oil pastels. Teachers' planning makes very good links with other subjects, such as the study of Indian patterns and creating batik designs, which linked well with a recent RE topic on Islam in Year 5. This approach enhances pupils' understanding of the intrinsic nature of the subject. However, teachers' planning needs to be refined to ensure that pupils' skills in all areas of art and design are developed more systematically, especially painting skills and three-dimensional work.
73. The use of sketchbooks is variable from class to class. In the best examples the pupils are able to explore different media such as charcoal and pastels to discover different effects. They also are used well by some classes to collect visual information and to

evaluate their work. In some classes the same sketchbooks are also used for design and technology, and whilst there are good links to be made between these subjects, it is important for teachers to ensure they develop subject specific skills. A more detailed scheme of work would support this and the art coordinator has recognised this as the next step in planning. The leadership and management of art is good. The coordinator provides good advice and makes arrangements for visits and visitors, which provide expertise and inspiration to help pupils, develop their understanding and skills. Resources are satisfactory. The subject has been satisfactorily improved since the last inspection.

74. It was only possible to observe one **design and technology** lesson during this inspection and therefore a judgement cannot be made about the overall quality of teaching and provision. The available evidence shows that standards are above national expectations and achievement is at least satisfactory. The provision is broadly similar to that found at the time of the last inspection, with some improvement in the opportunity given to pupils to produce three-dimensional work. The school has devised a programme of studies based on annual opportunities for pupil to take part in work involving resistant materials, textiles and food technology. Assessment at the end of each unit of work is becoming established but is not yet embedded. Refining the curriculum map to identify the skills to be developed in each unit of work is necessary to help teachers plan for progression as pupils move up through the school. Recent changes to planning which aim to make better links between subjects has been effective, particularly in ICT where pupils often use computers to create a design or record their findings. Pupils are taught how to handle tools safely and health and hygiene education is reinforced during food technology. The provision of a dedicated area for design technology enhances the school's provision.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Extra-curricular provision is good.
- Pupils sing very well.

COMMENTARY

75. No lessons were seen in Year 2 so it is not possible to make a judgement on attainment by age seven. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at age 11. Pupils in Year 6 recognise how pitch, dynamics, duration, tempo, timbre and texture can be structured to create varying moods and effects. They lead the rest of the school very effectively in singing at assemblies and are very good role models in the way they all participate with enthusiasm and joy. Throughout the school the quality of singing is very good and this makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development.
76. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan interesting activities so that a good pace to learning is maintained. A high number of pupils have specialist music lessons

and teachers make good use of their knowledge and expertise in lessons. Teachers also make good links with work in other curriculum areas. The work currently being undertaken in Year 5, for example, is linked to a topic on the Tudors. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to listen to music, to perform and to compose.

77. Pupils' enjoy the subject and show very good attitudes to learning. The number of pupils attending the high quality lunchtime 'Bells' Club' and choir, reflects their interest in music. Boys and girls work well together and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in lessons.
78. Regular performances incorporating drama and music do much to enhance the music curriculum and to extend pupils' experiences as well as their social and cultural development. The curriculum is further enriched by many opportunities to attend productions and concerts of good quality, as, for example, the Albert Hall Concert and visits by performers such as noted drummers and a Gospel Choir. Pupils' personal development is also supported through opportunities to sing for local senior citizens, to participate in the village carol concert and to take part in music festivals. The recently appointed co-ordinator has appropriate plans for future development. She has already identified the need to introduce a new, updated scheme of work to support teaching and learning even better. Since no firm judgement was made about the overall provision and standards in music in the last inspection report, it is not possible to make a judgement on improvements since that time.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched by a very good range of after-school activities and sporting links with other schools.
- The very good outdoor facilities are used well.
- The school is very successful in inter-school tournaments.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour supports them to attain good standards and achieve well.

COMMENTARY

79. The very good provision ensures that pupil participation in physical activity is high, standards by the end of Year 2 and 6 are above national expectations and pupils achieve well. The school has a very strong sporting tradition and is very successful in inter-school tournaments, for example in netball, cross-country running, "kwik" cricket and hockey. An impressive array of sporting cups and trophies are therefore proudly displayed in the school entrance. Pupils take part in a wide range of after-school clubs and sporting activities provided by staff, parents and external providers. These also include coaching sessions run by Wycombe Wanderers Football Club. All pupils also have access to some specialist teaching.
80. Teaching is good and is supported well by clear planning. Lessons are well paced and offer pupils a good mix of support and challenge. Teachers use resources well and ensure that pupil participation is high. The quality of pupils' movement is good and

in all lessons seen pupils demonstrated a high level of skill and confidence when, for example, running, jumping, skipping, hopping and balancing on the floor or on apparatus. Pupils are generally strong, robust and confident to undertake activities. They listen attentively and their positive attitudes and motivation helps to ensure they achieve well. Many pupils say how much they enjoy taking part in physical activities.

81. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader. This ensures that all subject strands are covered well. The school places strong emphasis on physical education and all pupils have two one-hour lessons each week. In addition, many pupils attend after-school activities and all pupils also have regular access to games equipment and the running track at break times and lunchtimes. Residential trips make a good contribution to provision. The school has very good resources, which include extensive grounds and an outdoor swimming pool used in the summer, which means that all pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

82. The provision for pupils' personal health and social education is good. The school's overall curriculum gives good attention to personal development and includes sex education and drugs education. Pupils develop confidence as they move up through the school and they develop a very good understanding of their individuality and personal worth as well as an awareness of their place within the school community. The very good contribution of staff, parents and pupils' involvement in the local community contributes well to helping pupils develop self-confidence and to understand how to work together effectively. Pupils therefore show considerable respect towards each other and towards all adults.
83. Teaching promotes pupils' personal development well because pupils are taught and given many opportunities to work together co-operatively and collaboratively, both in class and as part of the many after-school activities. One weakness in some lessons and classes is that boys and girls are grouped separately, so they do not have as many chances to work together as they otherwise would. Pupils have regular PSHE lessons, which in the lower school include circle time. The recently introduced school council is enabling pupils to have regular, formal opportunities to contribute to the school's decision-making process. Pupils appreciate this. They say it has already enabled them to highlight some things they would like to see improved, and to resolve a long-standing issue.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	1
Attitudes	2

Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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