

INSPECTION REPORT

ST LAWRENCE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lechlade

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115687

Headteacher: Mrs Alison Lock

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson

Dates of inspection: 23rd - 26th May 2005

Inspection number: 267845

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	232
School address:	Wharf Lane Lechlade Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL7 3AU
Telephone number:	01367 252356
Fax number:	01367 253128
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Simon Paul
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Lawrence is an average-sized voluntary aided Church of England primary school situated in Lechlade. It serves the small town and the rural area that surrounds it. Currently there are 232 pupils (123 boys and 109 girls) on roll, aged four to 11 years. When children enter the school their attainment is above that expected for their age. Most of the pupils are of white British origin with about 10 per cent coming from a mix of other ethnic backgrounds. None is at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. Four per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is close to the national average and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times of first admission or transfer to secondary school is below that found nationally, with the exception of the current Year 6, where the turnover in pupils has been high. The school gained a Schools Achievement Award in 2002 and achieved Investor in People status in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25406	Paul Nicholson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
22657	Mark Madeley	Team inspector	English Geography History Modern foreign language Special educational needs
24137	Gail Robertson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Music Personal, social, health education and citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Lawrence is an **effective** school that provides a good quality of education. As a result of good teaching and the very positive ethos within the school, pupils achieve well. The school is well led and managed and it provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good and so pupils are very well behaved and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding;
- pupils do well because the teaching is effective and standards by Year 6 are in the main well above average as a result;
- the headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by staff and governors;
- pupils receive a broad range of experiences in and out of lessons;
- in some mathematics lessons for younger pupils, tasks are not well matched to the abilities of all groups;
- there is no suitable outdoor area to support learning for children in reception;
- good links with parents and the community support pupils' learning.

The school has made **good** progress in addressing the key issues identified at its last inspection and has successfully built on its many strengths. As a result, overall standards have improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

From a typically above average start, pupils' achievement is **good** overall. The children in reception make a good start to their education. Staff help these children make good progress, and most children meet the goals expected and many exceed them, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils continue to make good progress overall, and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and science are well above average. In mathematics, progress is satisfactory and standards are above average but there is scope to raise achievement by providing more challenge for middle- and higher-attaining pupils.

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

Key: A - very high (in the top 5 per cent); A - well above average; B - above average; C - average;*

D - below average; E - well below average.

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

The table above shows that the good progress continues and in the main standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6,

which represents good achievement for the pupils. Following the 2004 tests, the school identified a dip in pupils' performance in English. It quickly identified a gap in the curriculum, which has now been addressed. Standards in the current Year 6 do not match the positive pattern of recent years, as standards in English, mathematics and science are average. Achievement for this group is satisfactory and not as high as for other pupils. On entry to the school their attainment was average, which was lower than that of other groups. Evidence showed a number of barriers to learning for this particular year group, including a significantly high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards return to their normal very high levels in the current Year 5. Pupils in the current Years 3 to 5 are progressing well and are on target to attain well above average standards. Standards in information and communication technology and in physical education are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Other subjects were only sampled during the inspection, however, examples of pupils' work seen were in line with expectations for their age. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets because provision for them is good.

Provision for pupils' personal development is **very good** overall and so pupils give of their best and their attitudes towards school are excellent. Overall, their behaviour is very good and they have very positive relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good and their social and moral development is outstanding. The pupils' rate of attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Overall, teaching is **good**. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs and they provide interesting activities in lessons. Teachers make good use of support staff to help pupils in their learning. Learning is good because boys and girls respond very well to the high levels of encouragement they are given. In some lessons, teachers do not plan as effectively as they could for the different abilities within their class. There is a well-planned curriculum, which is enriched by an excellent range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. The lack of a specific outdoor area for children in reception limits their learning opportunities. The school has effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but this has yet to be extended to other subjects. The very positive care and support that pupils receive helps them to learn confidently and with success. The school has a very good partnership with parents and very strong links with the community and other schools to benefit the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's very good leadership is having a direct impact on pupils' achievement and their personal development. She is well supported in the leadership of the school by the other key staff. Governance is good. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met, are very supportive of the school and show a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The school's development plan, though satisfactory, lacks a sharp focus on whole-school priorities for improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold very positive views of the school. Parents are very pleased with all aspects of its work. They are happy with the teaching and the progress their children make. Parents feel the staff are approachable and that the school is well led. Pupils like being at school and feel they have to work hard. They appreciate the help teachers give them and know who to seek advice from if they have a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop the teaching of mathematics so that middle- and higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do even better;
- provide a suitable outdoor learning area for children in reception;
- develop whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science;
- have a clearer focus on the most important whole-school priorities when planning for the future.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, achievement is **good** and standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are **well above average**. The exception is in the current Year 6, where achievement is satisfactory and standards average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in reception make a good start to their education.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do well in reading, writing and science.
- There is scope to improve standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- In most years, pupils in Years 3 to 6 do well in English, mathematics and science.
- Overall standards have improved since the last inspection with the exception of the current Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1. **Foundation Stage:** Children enter reception with a wide range of attainment, which overall is above that expected for their age. From this starting point children do well because of good teaching. Children do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development and most children exceed the early learning goals¹ for this area of learning. Children achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in developing their knowledge and understanding of their world. Most children reach the early learning goals for these areas of learning, and many exceed them. Children reach the expected goals in their creative and physical development. Achievement in these areas is satisfactory because weaknesses in the accommodation and resources reduce the pace of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.1 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.3 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

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

¹ Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

2. **Years 1 and 2:** Overall standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 over recent years have been well above average. For example in 2004, standards in reading, writing and science were well above average. Most pupils reached the expected standard for this age, Level 2, and an above average proportion reached the higher standard, Level 3. In mathematics, overall standards were above average. All pupils reached the expected standard, which was very high compared with all schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard was similar to that found nationally and below that found in similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates a similar pattern for the current Year 2: well above average standards in reading, writing and science, and above average standards in mathematics. From their above average starting point, this represents good achievement in reading, writing and science, and satisfactory achievement in mathematics. While lower-attaining pupils make good progress in mathematics, activities do not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure middle- and higher-attaining pupils achieve as well as other pupils or perform as well in mathematics as they do in the other core subjects.
3. In information and communication technology and physical education, standards are in line with national expectations, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It was not possible during the inspection to make overall judgements on the standards in other subjects, but in the samples of work seen, standards were in line with those expected for the pupils' age.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (28.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.8 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.1 (30.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. **Years 3 to 6:** Over recent years the school's overall results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have been well above average and improving at a quicker rate than those nationally. This represents a significant improvement in overall standards since the last inspection when standards were broadly average. In 2004, results were well above average in mathematics and science because most pupils reached the expected standard, Level 4, and an above average proportion reached the higher standard, Level 5. In English, the school's performance was above average, which is lower than the usual very high scores of previous years. The school quickly identified a weakness in the curriculum and put in place suitable measures to ensure that pupils are better prepared in future.
5. Inspectors found that standards in the current Year 6 did not match the positive pattern of recent years as standards in English, mathematics and science are average. While many pupils will attain the expected standards, too few pupils are likely to achieve the higher level. This is lower than the usual very high performance of recent years. Although the school has provided adequate

additional support, achievement for this group is satisfactory and not as high as for other pupils. Inspection evidence showed a number of barriers to learning for this particular year group. On entry to the school their attainment was average, which was a lower starting point than that of other groups. There has been a notable turnover of pupils, which resulted in an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs in this group to a significantly high proportion. Within the group there is a very high proportion of boys to girls. Standards return to their normal very high levels in the current Year 5 where they are well above national expectations in the three core subjects. Pupils in the current Years 3 to 5 are achieving well and are on target to attain well above average standards.

6. Standards in information and communication technology and physical education by the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the samples of work seen in other subjects, standards were broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' age.
7. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans because they receive good support from classroom assistants and teachers. In national tests, particularly at Year 6, girls have done better than boys. The inspection did not identify any specific reasons why there was a difference in performance, and in lessons seen both boys and girls made similar progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **excellent** attitudes to everything that is provided for them. Behaviour is **very good** overall. Provision for social and moral development is **excellent**, and for spiritual and cultural development it is **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils eagerly get involved in many activities throughout the day and are exceptionally polite, friendly and considerate.
- They behave impeccably during assemblies and in many lessons.
- Very good relationships are a key feature in supporting pupils' learning and their personal and social development.
- Pupils' personal development is very strongly promoted.

Commentary

8. Boys and girls enjoy school because they are very interested in the many exciting activities offered to them. They have excellent manners and are very thoughtful towards each other. Pupils of all ages often get engrossed in the interesting lessons, which are much enjoyed. Pupils are enterprising, confident and imaginative when for example they organise their own clubs and perform for each other during assembly. They have very good relationships with other children and with all adults who work in the school. Even the very youngest children mix very happily with older pupils including when they share the playground. Pupils of all ages speak enthusiastically about what they like about

school and why. Year 6 pupils told inspectors that they will miss the many close friendships they have made. By this age they are very motivated and independent and accept responsibilities well. Pupils with special educational needs are very keen and work very hard in small group situations.

9. During the inspection behaviour was excellent during dinner and on the playground with virtually no disciplining necessary because pupils are naturally so kind and good-natured towards each other. Behaviour during assemblies is excellent with all pupils following the routines and expectations and showing great respect. Incidents of bullying are very rare. There have been some difficulties ensuring older boys remain on task throughout the day and their high spirits and sometimes awkward attitudes have been spoken about by many and were seen during the week of inspection. However, this behaviour is only evident among a very small minority who have special educational needs and only in some lessons in just one class. These pupils occasionally exhibit inappropriate behaviour but this is dealt with well by staff, who encourage them to concentrate and complete their work. On balance, therefore, across the school behaviour is very good. There were no exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection. One temporary half-day exclusion was recorded at the beginning of this school year.
10. Pupils trust staff because relationships are so good and pupils feel they get treated fairly. Significant gains over time in many important personal and social skills are evident. Moral development is very strong and pupils fully understand what is wrong and what is right. Pupils raise money for those less fortunate than themselves and regularly think of others. They try hard and do what is asked. They like a challenge and told inspectors they get plenty. The way personal and social development is promoted is very effective. The children in reception do very well in exceeding the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development.
11. The school fulfils its aim to provide a 'Christian atmosphere that emphasises respect for other faiths' and pupils are becoming very aware of other cultures, faiths and religions. Through planning extra opportunities this aspect of development is also very good and has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Displays indicate the good range of topics covered to promote greater understanding among pupils, including multicultural Britain. Spiritual aspects are likewise of great significance and in many lessons including science and literacy pupils were spellbound when something happened which was not expected. The headteacher encourages each pupil to have a quiet moment of reflection if they feel like it, around the small display outside her office door, where they can drop a small pebble into a pool of water and then watch the ripples fade.

Attendance

12. Attendance figures last year were a just little better than those seen nationally. This year they have dipped because in the spring term illness unavoidably kept a much higher than average numbers of pupils at home for up to a week. Parents are very supportive and nearly always send their children to school

every day but do occasionally take holidays during term time despite being encouraged not to do this. Punctuality has improved recently and is good. Most pupils arrive well on time. Very careful recording is undertaken with staff fully meeting requirements and office staff very efficiently monitoring attendance which overall is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.8	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good**. The school's curriculum is **good**, with **excellent** enrichment. The school's procedures for care, guidance and support are **very good**. There are **very good** links with parents, the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching is **good** and so most pupils make **good** progress in their learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching, particularly in English and science, leads to well above average standards being reached.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes and enthusiastic approach support their good learning.
- Teaching in reception ensures children make a good start to their education.
- Teachers do not always plan sufficiently well to meet the different levels of ability of pupils during some lessons.
- Teachers make good use of support staff to help pupils in their learning.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science but not fully developed in all other subjects.
- The quality of marking is variable: it is good in some lessons and less effective in others.

Commentary

13. The school has maintained the good quality of teaching seen at the last inspection. Lessons seen during the inspection and evidence from recent national test results and pupils' previous work show that teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. All staff successfully implement the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. When working individually or in small groups with support staff, their attention is maintained because tasks are varied. They make good progress against their individual targets because activities are well planned and their progress is monitored well and assessed accurately. Teachers manage their classes well and provide all pupils with high levels of encouragement. The resulting very good relationships and excellent attitudes are important factors in pupils' learning. Boys and girls work hard, co-operate very well and produce work of a good standard.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (15%)	14 (42%)	14 (42%)	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.

14. Teaching in reception is good overall, particularly in children's personal, social and emotional development where teaching is very good. The caring staff know the children very well and they are alert to their needs. A wide range of stimulating activities and the effective use of assessment information ensures that learning in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

15. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching in English is consistently good as teachers have good subject knowledge and they use and develop pupils' reading and writing skills well in other subjects. In mathematics, the quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. In the main, it is good in Years 3, 4 and 5, and satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 6. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not consistently plan to challenge middle-and high-attaining pupils in order to ensure they achieve as well as they could and that a suitably high proportion reaches the higher standards. Learning is good in science because teachers make effective use of practical and experimental activities and the outdoor environmental areas. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress in their learning. Overall, teachers make satisfactory use of pupils' information and communication technology skills to support learning in other subjects, though this is inconsistent across the school. Their use of interactive whiteboards is still at an early stage of development.
16. The best lessons seen were characterised by a clear focus on what pupils were to learn, which was shared with the pupils and reinforced throughout the lesson. The teachers' good subject knowledge resulted in clear explanations and effective questioning to monitor pupils' understanding. The good use of practical resources and the effective deployment of support staff also helped pupils' learning. In lessons where learning was satisfactory rather than good or better, a number of minor areas for development were noted. The pace of learning is slow when teachers spend too long explaining activities, leaving insufficient time for pupils to consolidate their learning through their activities. Sometimes activities do not provide sufficient challenge or are too controlled by the teacher and do not help pupils to develop their own ideas.
17. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in reception and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Data is used effectively to amend the curriculum. In other subjects, procedures are inconsistent. For example, assessment is satisfactory in information and communication technology, does not focus sufficiently on the development of skills in physical education and for a number of subjects, including geography and history, there are no whole-school procedures. The quality of marking and individual target setting is also variable, ranging from good to unsatisfactory. In some books marking provides comments that encourage pupils and help them understand what they can now do and what they need to learn next. However, in some other books, marking gives insufficient guidance to the pupils on how to improve the content of their work. The use of individual targets is developing, but pupils are not involved in assessing their own progress. Not all pupils know how well they are doing and what they can do to improve their work.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good** and there is **excellent** enrichment. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The activities planned are exciting and promote good quality learning for all pupils.
- The high quality of enrichment from visits and visitors to the school combine to give pupils exciting and challenging experiences.
- The school provides a wealth of extra-curricular activities, including sport, drama, music and other activities; they are popular and well attended.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is very good and prepares them very well to transfer into the next stage of education.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do not have an area outside the classroom for adventurous activity and creative learning.

Commentary

18. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are good and meet statutory requirements. The school is continually striving to expand the curriculum and in addition to teaching all subjects that it should, it teaches French to the older pupils and is planning to introduce this subject to all. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and standards have risen. Pupils now have a rich curriculum, which provides a broad and balanced range of activities matched to their needs. Quality time is given to all subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education, and pupils' personal, social and health education. The school's arrangements for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy are good and help pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics. Pupils reported how they really enjoy learning what the school plans for them. Learning is fun because the teachers plan a wide variety of activities that are meaningful to these pupils.
19. Teachers plan good links between subjects whilst ensuring that skills and progression in each subject are addressed. For example, in science when pupils learn about parts of a plant, they use their art skills to make delightful still-life pencil drawings then use their literacy skills to label in detail the parts they know. The school is also effective in evaluating initiatives and innovations to support the curriculum.
20. The school cares passionately about all its pupils and provides well for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress as a result. Individual education plans are well written and accurately reflect the pupils' needs. Progress towards most targets is easily measurable and help from support staff and the specialist teacher is good.
21. The school caters very well for the personal, social and health education of pupils. It sets time aside for them to talk about social issues. These focus well on ensuring that pupils are capable of making sound decisions. For example, in work about drug awareness the pupils consider which people might be safe to trust and which might not. There are effective plans for sex education. The school recently encouraged pupils to use sports equipment at lunchtimes through the Huff and Puff club. These good arrangements contribute well to pupils' very good personal and social development.
22. Opportunities for pupils to take part in activities beyond the school day are excellent. The school organises a varied and popular programme of clubs, from orchestra to badminton, which caters for a wide range of interests. The school is strongly committed to sporting activities, music has a high profile and pupils are given a wealth of opportunities to develop their artistic talents.
23. Many good improvements have been made to the school buildings. A computerised library and an outdoor courtyard are the latest additions. The appearance of the school is important in helping promote pupils' creative, aesthetic and spiritual awareness. A good start has been made on the outside environment and the woodland and pond area is in constant use, supporting subjects such as literacy and science. Although there are development plans in

place, to ensure the Foundation Stage has an outdoor environment this is an outstanding issue from the last inspection. Resources are generally satisfactory although the role-play costumes for the Foundation Stage are not stimulating enough. Other resources such as musical instruments are rather well worn. Pupils also reported that they would like to have more resources in information and communication technology and art and design.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for safety, health and welfare including care is **very good**. The school also provides **very good** advice and guidance for every pupil. Consultation with pupils is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents often choose this school because of its very high standards of care and welfare.
- Staff have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the proper care of pupils.
- Pupils are given very good advice and support which helps them achieve well.
- The school council is an especially important part of school life.

Commentary

24. Many parents told inspectors during a pre-inspection meeting, as well as informally during the inspection, of the very caring attitudes at many levels in this school. Parents really trust staff and believe the headteacher has the wellbeing of every individual child very much at the centre of every decision she makes. They are right to think this. There were many incidents during the inspection when staff, who clearly know the pupils very well, treated them very sensitively.
25. Governors are very committed also in ensuring that standards of health and safety are very good. Activities are risk assessed well. Their wide-ranging expertise is well used. Many improvements have been made in recent years to the buildings and the site. The caretaker works tirelessly in his role and standards of cleanliness are high. Mid-day supervisors oversee their responsibilities carefully. All staff are aware of procedures and have training in child protection and many have a first aid qualification. The headteacher very much leads by the example she sets in establishing very good and trusting relationships with all pupils and their families.
26. Links and liaison with agencies that work with the school are very good and pupils are given very good advice and support when difficulties arise. A male employed by a trust fund works effectively part time to help maintain good behaviour and positive attitudes with older boys. Staff keep a pastoral file which includes notes on every child and this information helps ensure that when pupils move to the next teacher they are very well known. Pupils can leave a confidential note in a 'post box' if they are worried or anxious and they say this is dealt with promptly. There is also much informal discussion throughout the

day among staff; the headteacher is always fully involved when decisions as to what is the best next step are made. Induction into the school is very well managed and helps pupils settle and feel secure in a short space of time.

27. Pupils in every class begin the year with a discussion about rules and sanctions, the general expectations for behaviour as well as aspects of the school's 'vision wheel'. The opinions of individuals are sought and valued within lessons and throughout the day. Staff listen and respond to pupils fairly and patiently. The school council meets fortnightly and pupils involved take their role seriously and sensibly. Older members encourage the younger ones to join in their discussions. Their achievements are shared with the school community during assembly and with parents in school newsletters. The impact the council is having is very good in the school and pupils spoken to were very enthusiastic about their involvement.

Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and with the community including the church are **very good**. Partnerships with other schools are **very good** also.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think very highly of the school and recognise its many strengths.
- Parents are kept very closely informed because communication at every level is very good.
- The work of the friends of the school association is very supportive.
- Links within the community are strong and it too is very supportive of the work of the school.
- Church links have improved recently and are now very good.

Commentary

28. Parents trust the school and have confidence that their children are very well cared for and they really appreciate the many opportunities that are provided for them. They know it is well led and that the headteacher has children's best interests at heart. They are sure that staff know their children very well and most importantly they think their children are very happy in school. They especially like the fact that the headteacher listens carefully to their opinions and then makes decisions taking everyone's views on board.
29. The sharing of information gets off to a very good start with new families when home visits are made to parents of reception age children who request them. Parents receive a very good range of information and this includes the excellent monthly newsletters, which the pupils themselves have just started contributing to. The inspection report criticised the quality of information within annual progress reports and this key issue has now been well addressed because these reports are now consistent in style and in the detail given on pupils' achievements. The prospectus and the web site also provide very good quality information. But the key strength to communication is the accessibility of all staff including the headteacher who is always available for all parents.

30. The friends of the school are a very dedicated group of parents and staff who work very hard for the school when they organise events. Just last year they raised the impressive sum of nearly £10,000, spent promptly on extra resources for the school. Recently funds have helped to refurbish the library, to provide much needed storage space inside and out and to enhance the school in many other ways. The group is forward thinking and always planning the next event and the impact they have on school life is significant. Parents as well as members of friends of the school work regularly alongside pupils in classes and several parents are very committed governors.
31. The school succeeds in giving all pupils a sense of belonging to the local community. This has not just happened. It has been planned and promoted by the headteacher who sees it as very important. Consequently community support for the school which has always been good has also improved in recent years. The headteacher has made it her business to tell the community what the school is doing and how well the children are achieving. She has an increasingly high profile in the community and many businesses and organisations generously contribute towards school funds. Visits into the locality, for example for field work in geography to the adjacent River Thames, are organised for all classes and in addition members of the community show their support by volunteering as governors or when they offer to help in other practical ways. Fourteen elderly members of the community recently came along to talk to the pupils about their experiences of Life during World War 2. Links with the church are very strong. The newly appointed vicar is becoming an ever increasingly familiar face when he leads assemblies on a regular basis as well as welcoming the pupils to church services fortnightly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership and management of the school are **good**. The governance of the school is **good**. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **very good**. Leadership by the other key staff is **good**. Management is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher knows and cares for every child and member of staff.
- The core subjects are well led and managed.
- The current school development plan is difficult to monitor.
- Governors visit the school frequently and use the information gathered in their decision-making.
- Day to day financial management is very good.

Commentary

32. Since her appointment three years ago, the headteacher has won over pupils, staff, parents and governors through her total commitment to the school and by involving them in its running as part of a team. In doing this she has developed teachers professionally. She and colleagues have an agreed vision for the school, which stems from collective discussions which also proved to be a good

team-building exercise. This vision expresses the need for all pupils to reach very high academic standards and the desire that they be well-mannered and caring towards each another. The school is making good progress towards achieving these aims. She has also re-forged links with the local community and church to the benefit of all pupils.

33. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. It is extremely supportive of the school and the headteacher. Governors are fully involved in the management of the school and have a good picture of its strengths and weaknesses because of their well-planned visits and genuine interest in school-life. They use the information gathered well to inform their decision making, for instance, the Foundation Stage governor is fully involved in planning the proposed outdoor play area.
34. The main co-ordinators provide good leadership and management. They know standards in their subjects and monitor teaching and learning closely. Procedures for helping new staff settle into school are very good because there is trust between staff members and quality teamwork. Teachers and support staff feel positive about performance management because it is helping them develop and improve. They feel that they have good access to training.
35. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, if modest in some aspects. Good use is made of test data and the school's many priorities are based on a good review of learning patterns. Three years ago there were many tasks which needed to be accomplished, following the appointment of the headteacher, and strategic planning reflected this in that it was very wide-ranging. Though well written, with generally clear success criteria and financial costings, it is difficult to pick out the main priorities and thus monitor their effectiveness. The headteacher and governing body realise this and intend to look at different models that provide a sharper focus and fewer priorities for the next plan, which will commence in September.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	603 981	Balance from previous year	34 647
Total expenditure	609 192	Balance carried forward to the next	29 436
Expenditure per pupil	2 592		

36. The governing body is very careful in allocating the school's budget to the priorities laid out in the development plan. Every priority is considered in detail and virtually all the funds devolved to the school are used for the education of the pupils currently attending. The finance committee reviews spending at every meeting seeking explanations from the finance officer and the headteacher if there have been any dramatic changes from plan. A small carry-forward is retained for unforeseen contingencies. The finance officer maintains all records accurately and is able to provide managers with up-to-date information on the school's financial position. Best value is sought in all minor purchases by considering a good use of a range of suppliers and using

contacts with other schools. All larger work, such as buildings, is controlled through the diocese. The governing body is good at comparing achievements in the school with similar schools elsewhere.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and has been maintained since the last inspection when there was a different set of guidelines to judge children's achievements and progress. Children's attainment is generally above average when they enter school, but there is a very wide spread of abilities. They quickly settle well and form friendships with one another. Children love school. Children achieve well because of the caring teaching and a wide range of stimulating activities that arouse interest and are matched carefully to their needs. Staff are fully committed to implementing the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. All boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall and achieve well. This is due to the good teaching and assessments made of their need and next learning stage. Children receive a very good grounding for their transfer to Year 1. Parents appreciate the excellent arrangements for beginning school, and like the daily informal contact with staff.
38. The co-ordinator sets a high standard. Her leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Staff know the children very well and they are particularly alert to their needs. There is close contact between the two classes with useful meetings to exchange information and share some of the planning. Parents feel the classes run smoothly and their children take all the arrangements in their stride. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there is no specific outdoor area solely for the Foundation Stage to use as an integral part of the school day.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop excellent attitudes towards school.
- Staff have great respect for the children and teaching is very good.
- Children are encouraged to work independently and they take responsibility well.
- Children develop very positive relationships and have a very well developed sense of fair play.

Commentary

39. Most children enter the reception class with mature skills in personal, social and emotional development. At the end of the Foundation Stage, all reach their Early Learning Goals, which are the standards expected nationally at the end of

the reception year, and most exceed them. The teaching of this area is very good. Children's development in this area of learning is critical to the school's ethos and forms a very large part of its work. They achieve particularly well and their high attainment is due to every child being treated as an individual, and the staff's expertise in developing every child's potential. Children are confident and happy; they know and understand the routines well. They show great consideration for each other and are very good at sharing and taking turns. Children often display maturity far in excess of their years. They are very good at tidying up at the end of sessions and responding well when told to do so. Staff are successful in developing very good relationships and share a common view of how children can learn effectively through play.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's listening and speaking skills are very good.
- Vocabulary develops very well through paired discussion and adult interaction.
- Staff encourage a love of books.
- Children want to write and their achievement is high.
- The lack of an outdoor area limits the development of children's creative language.

Commentary

40. A high number of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class. Staff give a very high priority to communication, language and literacy and ensure that all activities have a strong language focus. The quality of teaching is consistently good and the high level of support given ensures that children make good progress and achieve well. Staff are very skilled at providing an exciting and stimulating range of activities for children to enjoy and talk about. All children are treated sensitively; children are not forced to respond if they do not want to. As a consequence, children's confidence grows and they talk unselfconsciously about the exciting activities. They are articulate speakers, talk in long sentences and contribute well in-group discussions. They can use language well to clarify their thinking and develop imaginative role-play, for example, in the 'shop'. There is no outside area for activities that would further develop children's adventurous and creative language and the role-play costumes limit the range of imaginary situations in which communication can take place.
41. Children think of themselves as readers and writers because staff encourage them well. Good supplies of paper, pens, envelopes, crayons and pencils are always readily available and so children happily make books, lists, notes and letters. Staff make good use of a wide range of stories with repetitive passages and rhymes. This enables children to develop a good sense of the patterns of language. Staff read stories, rhymes and poems with a great amount of

expression, which captures the children's attention. Parents support this area of learning well when children take home books to read.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide many very effective activities to develop mathematical skills.
- Children enjoy counting and working with numbers and so make good progress.
- There is no outdoor area to support children's mathematical development.

Commentary

42. Most children attain the Early Learning Goals for this area and some will exceed them. All children enjoy counting and are keen to learn. More able children successfully identify numerals well, they can say the number that preceded and came after it, and refer to the number as 'more' or 'less'. The quality of teaching is consistently good and children's achievement is good. Staff successfully develop children's understanding by encouraging children to use mathematical vocabulary, such as the terms 'bigger', 'smaller', 'taller' and 'same size' when they compare objects, build towers and play for long periods of time with bricks in directed play outside. Children learn well because teachers carefully develop children's mathematical thinking. Staff have a good awareness of each child's current level of mathematical understanding and they consolidate and extend children's understanding of concepts through a wide range of tasks. Occasionally, staff do not take advantage of opportunities that present themselves in other subjects to further develop children's mathematical understanding. The outside environment has not been developed to encourage children to explore the world of mathematics outside the classroom.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan a wide and exciting range of experiences.
- Children are very curious and inquisitive because of the very exciting planned activities.
- Extra-curricular visits enrich the curriculum.
- There is no outdoor area to support children's learning.

Commentary

43. Children achieve well and reach the Early Learning Goals for this area. Good teaching provides the children with a range of stimulating experiences. The activities teachers provide have a major emphasis on 'hands on' experiences, including the effective use of early information and communication technology skills. Because of this, children make astute observations based on careful handling or by watching carefully. Children are aware of different times of the year and staff plan very good opportunities to reinforce this and other early science concepts, such as the lifecycle of a frog or growing a sunflower seed. Staff encourage children to create 'hypotheses' about what might happen. The lack of an outdoor area to support children's learning on a regular basis limits overall progress. Children are taken on local visits and visitors talk about their work, this successfully enriches and extends their learning experiences beyond the school.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities ensure children's fine hand control is very good.
- There are no outdoor resources for climbing and balancing.

Commentary

44. Children make satisfactory progress in the development of their physical skills and most attain the Early Learning Goals when they leave the reception class. Teaching and achievement in this area are satisfactory overall. Staff successfully develop children's confidence through gentle encouragement. As a result, children confidently and happily run, jump and skip in the playground and show a mature awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. Staff provide a wide range of activities that help children become particularly able when handling small equipment indoors. Their control of pencils and scissors is very good. As there is no outdoor area for reception, regular and frequent access to large equipment is limited. Children have to wait for their slot on the school's timetable to use the school's physical education climbing apparatus. This use of this equipment is not always appropriate for young children.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are well linked to other areas of learning.
- The accommodation restricts the amount of activities offered each day and some resources need updating

Commentary

45. The majority of children make satisfactory progress towards meeting the Early Learning Goals and attain them by the time they complete the reception year. All children enjoy creative play and staff successfully encourage positive attitudes. This enables the children to work independently and be responsible for tidying up at the end of sessions. Teaching is satisfactory because a suitable range of activities is provided. Staff provide a satisfactory range of activities that allow children to explore various media and materials. Activities are well linked to the children's work in other areas of learning and so consolidate their understanding. Opportunities to paint, make models, work with a variety of materials and play creatively in a range of environments are available on a rota so children extend their knowledge, skills and understanding steadily. Consequently, achievement is satisfactory. Staff plan carefully to ensure that all children explore and develop their creativity but resources for imaginative role-play are tired and are not creative enough to stimulate and challenge the children's imagination. There is no daily access to a suitable outdoor area to stimulate their imagination and creativity.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

The quality of provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in most year groups because teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed.
- Pupils' writing is often imaginative because many of them are well read.
- Spelling homework could be better matched to the ability of individual pupils.
- Teachers' marking could give pupils more information about how to improve.
- Good analysis of test data leads to positive changes in the curriculum.

Commentary

46. In the Year 2 national tests in 2004, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was well above the national average compared to all schools and above average compared to similar schools. Teachers' assessments were accurate in that they matched the test scores. Pupils' scores have been rising consistently over the last five years. Currently pupils' attainment is well above national expectations, with their speaking and listening skills being very high. Pupils' reading is well above average with almost all of them reading fluently. Higher attaining pupils are particularly confident, even with more difficult texts. Pupils' writing is well above average. They use a good cursive style and present their work very neatly when writing in a broad range of styles from simple narrative to recipes. These standards represent good achievement because these pupils entered Year 1 with above average standards.
47. In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 6 scored above average compared to all schools, which is lower than the usual very high scores of recent years. These pupils made good progress through Years 3 to 6. The school has analysed their results and found that an omission in the curriculum meant that pupils' understanding of non-fiction text was not as good as it could be. The co-ordinator has put in place measures to ensure that pupils are better equipped in future. Currently pupils' attainment in Year 6 is in line with national expectations, but pupils' attainment returns to its normal very high levels in the current Year 5 where it is well above national expectations. Standards in the current Year 6 are lower than the norm for this school because the class has a very high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and too few pupils who are likely to achieve the higher level. Pupils speak well and listen attentively to each other. Their reading skills are satisfactory, though too many boys and a few girls do not read sufficiently widely enough to improve their vocabulary and spark their imaginations. Consequently writing skills are below expected levels for many pupils. Higher attaining pupils write very well, for

instance creating wonderful imagery when writing, “She was deaf to my whimpering cries” as part of work on evacuation. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory because they entered Year 1 with average standards.

48. Teaching and learning are consistently good across the school. Very positive relationships and strong parental support encourage pupils to be attentive, work very hard and co-operate with each other when required. They complete tasks well and their books are very neat and tidy. However, individual pupils’ targets and teachers’ marking are not used consistently to show pupils how to improve their work even further. Teachers know their subject, which helps them to use imaginative methods to get pupils to write high quality poetry. Pupils’ work is assessed thoroughly and frequently matched to the national expectations for their age. Although girls do marginally better than boys, this difference is similar to that shown nationally. Pupils make little use of computers as a tool for drafting and editing their work. The inspection team agrees with parents’ views that spelling homework is not always matched well enough to pupils’ abilities.
49. Leadership and management are good. Careful analysis of test results has led to improvements in the curriculum, and teaching and learning are monitored closely. The curriculum is enriched by the frequent use of high quality literature and visits by authors. Improvement since the last inspection is good because standards have been raised considerably.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Pupils’ use of their literacy skills in other subjects is good. They are keen to use their very good speaking skills when answering teachers’ questions. The use of a published scheme that explores links between subjects and identifies useful opportunities to extend pupils’ writing is successfully helping pupils’, especially in Years 2 and 5, to develop and use their literacy skills. Staff are now exploring opportunities for pupils to use their writing and research skills in history but too often the worksheets ask questions of fact rather than challenging the pupils to think for themselves.

Modern foreign language (French)

51. The school teaches French to Years 5 and 6. The curriculum teaches pupils basic communications skills. Only one lesson was observed so no overall judgement on provision can be made. In a well-planned lesson, pupils in Year 5 showed that after two terms they already have a sound understanding of the vocabulary used in greetings, numbers and colours. The pupils were extremely keen on learning French because the teacher used a wide range of stimulating teaching methods. The teacher used the computer-based resources well to help pupils learn. Pupils used the inter-active whiteboard very well to match French words to pictures and joined in enthusiastically with action songs.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the main, standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 5 is good and pupils achieve well as a result.
- Middle-and higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 could do better in mathematics.
- Provision for the subject has improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

52. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Inspection evidence and results in national tests show that almost all pupils reach the expected standard for their age, which is well above the proportion found nationally. Just over a quarter go on to reach the higher standard, Level 3, which is similar to the proportion found nationally but lower than that found in similar schools. Overall achievement in Years 1 and 2 for boys and girls is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils make good progress because of the effective support they are given in class. Middle-and higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Activities for these pupils, which are often similar to those of their classmates, do not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure a quicker rate of learning. Consequently, these pupils do not do as well as other pupils or perform as well in mathematics as they do in the other core subjects.
53. The overall pattern, with the exception of the current Year 6, is of pupils attaining well above average standards and achieving well in mathematics by the time they leave the school. Over the last four years (2001-2004), pupils' results in national tests at Year 6 have been consistently well above average and overall the school's performance has compared favourably with that of similar schools. Girls have done better than boys, a difference that is slightly greater than that shown nationally. No significant variation in learning between boys and girls was noted during the inspection. Pupils in the current Year 5 are progressing well and are on target to attain similarly well above average standards. However, inspection evidence found that standards in the current Year 6 are average. On entry to school, the attainment of this year group was average overall. From this lower than normal starting point, the performance of this particular year group has been influenced by a number of factors, including a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, a high proportion of boys to girls and a significant turnover of pupils. Achievement for this group is satisfactory despite the additional support provided by the school.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall: it is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 6 and good in Years 3 to 5. Lessons seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good. There are a number of common strengths in the teaching. Throughout the school, teachers manage the pupils very well and provide very good levels of encouragement. The resulting very positive relationships and pupils' high levels of interest are key features in supporting learning. Learning support assistants are well-deployed in lessons. Their reinforcement of teaching ensures that the groups that they support,

particularly those with special educational needs, understand what is expected of them and make good progress in their learning.

55. Teachers' planning is satisfactorily based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Some inconsistencies in other aspects of teaching highlight the differences between the satisfactory teaching and the good and better teaching. In the best lessons, there is good pace, tasks are well matched to the different ages and abilities within the class and effective use is made of practical resources and the interactive whiteboards. The short mental activity at the start of the best lessons has a sharp focus on developing pupils' skills and suitable strategies are clearly reinforced. In other lessons, these aspects are satisfactory but lack a sufficiently sharp focus on planning for the wide range of ability within the class. An examination of pupils' books showed that the quality of marking, target setting and presentation of work was in the main good but less effective in some classes. Teachers make satisfactory use of computers to support pupils' learning but the use of the interactive whiteboards is still at an early stage of development.
56. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership because overall provision is satisfactory, though good in some year groups. She has a clear vision for the subject but has yet to ensure that the good teaching and learning seen in some classes is consistent across the school. The subject is well managed and, with the exception of the current year group, standards by Year 6 have improved since the last inspection. There are now good procedures for monitoring teaching and assessing pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Overall, teachers satisfactorily reinforce pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects. Pupils apply their number well in science but opportunities are missed to use data handling and measuring skills in other subjects, such as design and technology. Overall, the use of computers and interactive whiteboards in mathematics satisfactorily supports pupils' learning in information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Teaching provides many opportunities for scientific investigation.
- Well-planned practical work gives pupils many good opportunities to work together.
- Excellent use is made of the school's woodland area, pond and playing field to enhance learning.
- The effective use of marking was seen in some classes but it is not consistent across the school.

- The use of information and communication technology to support learning has improved but remains inconsistent across the school.

Commentary

58. In the 2004 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard was very high, and the percentage attaining the higher standard was above average. Inspection evidence found a similar picture and by the end of Year 2 pupils achieve well and attain standards well above those expected. This is because there is a good focus on practical and investigative work and pupils have a good understanding of different aspects of science.
59. Results in national tests over recent years show that by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well overall and standards for both boys and girls are well above average. In 2004, for example, the school's results in national tests show that all pupils reached the expected standard and half went on to reach Level 5. This is a good improvement in standards since the last inspection. Standards in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations, which is lower than the norm for this school because the class has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and too few pupils who are likely to achieve the higher standard, Level 5. Pupils' attainment returns to its normal very high levels in the current Year 5 where pupils are on target to reach well above average standards.
60. Teaching and learning are good overall and often very good in both Key Stages. The very good teaching is one of the main reasons why pupils achieve so well and why pupils have confidence to make predictions and get so much enjoyment from their work. Teachers' explanations and effective use of resources mean pupils' learning is at least good. Teachers' use of the outdoor environment is excellent in the way it teaches pupils to be observant and to respect the environment. As a result, pupils have great respect for their school grounds. Teachers' strong subject knowledge and understanding mean that they use the vocabulary of science very well and challenge pupils' thinking. In the main, teachers' marking challenges pupils to think further, but marking is not always of this good standard. Teaching assistants work closely with slower learners in class and it is through constant conversations and support that these pupils achieve as well as others.
61. Throughout the school, teachers emphasise the experimental aspect of science. Since the last inspection, investigative work has been a focus and science teaching is now firmly rooted in investigation. Pupils write up their practical work in the correct way, often using tables to make the information clear. They use their literacy skills well and very good examples of this were evident in their workbooks. The use of information and communication technology has much improved since the last inspection but is variable across the school. In some classes, pupils use their mathematical skills well to measure and classify and then make good use of their information and communication technology skills to record on a database and produce block graphs. Pupils now make satisfactory use of the Internet for research and

investigation. The very effective use of the interactive whiteboards as a teaching tool was seen in one class.

62. Leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator has enormous enthusiasm for the subject. She monitors teaching and learning well and has ensured that the subject has good very well organised resources. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and this information is used well to help teachers in their planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage the pupils well and give clear explanations.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and their ability to work independently support their learning well.
- Overall, teachers are not yet confident enough in using the newly introduced interactive whiteboards.
- The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning is developing, but is inconsistent across the school.

Commentary

63. Standards throughout the school are in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. There is no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection because the school has recently invested in new computers in each classroom. Pupils' keyboard skills are good and they know how to load programs and to save and print their work. They are confident in using the Internet and have a satisfactory understanding of spreadsheets. In Year 6, pupils show satisfactory skills in producing simple procedures for controlling lights and motors. Teachers manage and encourage the pupils very well and consequently pupils are well motivated and very well behaved. A major strength in the pupils' learning is their capacity to work both independently and in pairs when it is their turn to use the computer.
64. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in their learning as they move through the school. Lessons seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to good. Teachers make effective use of questioning to remind pupils of previous learning and most give clear explanations on how to use new programs. There are varying degrees of confidence amongst staff in the use of the newly installed classroom interactive whiteboards as a means of explaining and demonstrating new learning. Where used successfully, interactive whiteboards ensure good progress is made in learning new skills. Pupils have a specific short time each week during which they complete the activity taught in the weekly information and communication technology lesson. Helpful prompt

sheets remind pupils of the key commands to follow and so learning in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall. There is some inconsistency in the efficient way in which these short periods are organised

65. The joint co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership and management for the subject. There are suitable procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. The curriculum and newly introduced procedures for assessing pupils progress are satisfactorily based on national guidelines and ensure all aspects are taught at an appropriate level for the age of the pupils. The co-ordinators have correctly identified the need to expand the use of the new interactive whiteboards through further in-service training for staff and to develop pupils' involvement in assessing their own progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Currently, the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, though inconsistent across the school. In some classes there are good and frequent opportunities to use computers in a range subjects. Pupils, for example, use databases, tables and spreadsheets to record their work in science. In other classrooms opportunities are more limited and tend to focus on word processing and the use of the Internet. Staff make insufficient use of the interactive whiteboards to support their teaching because of their lack of experience with these new resources. Pupils' use of computers to further develop their skills and support their learning in other subjects is restricted to some degree by the limited access to 'hands-on' opportunities to use computers. The small number of computers in each classroom limits the use in some lessons to one or two individuals or pairs. It is not easy for larger groups to access computers.

HUMANITIES²

67. In humanities, work was sampled in geography and history and so no overall judgement can be made about provision. Only one lesson in history was observed and pupils' work was carefully scrutinised and aspects of humanities were discussed with staff and pupils.
68. The **geography** topics taught meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and pupils benefit from walks in the locality and a residential visit to Devon. Older pupils are keen on geography and talk knowledgeably about places in England and around the world. Their topic folders are very neatly presented. They contrast life in the countries they have studied authoritatively with life in their small town. They use their literacy skills well but there is little evidence that they use computers. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum is well organised but pupils' skills are not assessed formally, making it difficult for teachers to plan the next stage in pupils' learning.

² Because the school is a voluntary aided school, the inspection of religious education and collective worship is carried out under Section 23 of the Schools Inspection Act 1996 (Denominational Education) by an inspector approved by the diocese and appointed by the governing body.

69. The **history** curriculum meets statutory requirements. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is likely to be above national expectations whilst in Year 6 it is in line with them. Pupils are keen to learn about the past and produce good quality topics. They make good use of their literacy skills, reading and analysing materials well but their computer skills are used only satisfactorily. Sometimes pupils are expected to undertake tasks that are too simple, like matching captions to pictures and sticking them in their topic file. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Additional sessions, like the Aztec fun day, which bring history to life for the pupils have been organised and were highly successful but the subject has yet to have any sort of formal assessment system to guide teachers' planning so as to build consistently on pupils' skills.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. **Art and design, design and technology** and **music** were not a focus for the inspection and so were sampled, but not in sufficient detail to provide judgements on provision.
71. In **art and design**, standards of the work seen were average and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about their work in art and how much they enjoyed painting their World War II posters and making clay models of mountains. Pupils' knowledge of famous artists appears weak. Although pupils had studied different artists during their time in St Lawrence, Year 6 pupils could only recall one artist and no famous paintings. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a positive attitude to managing the subject and has written a satisfactory subject action plan. There are no whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' progress and this makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stage in pupils' learning.
72. The quality of work seen in **design and technology** indicates that standards are average and that teaching is satisfactory. The scrutiny of planning and pupils' work shows that National Curriculum requirements are satisfactorily met. Pupils satisfactorily investigate and make a suitable range of artefacts, including wind-up models and musical instruments. Photographic evidence and models seen during the inspection indicate satisfactory development of pupils' making skills. Pupils take great care in decorating their models. They add labels to their simple planning sketches, list materials and write suitable brief evaluations of their work. Their plans and evaluations are completed for each activity but, while neatly presented, the design skills used do not develop sufficiently as pupils move through the school. They do not, for example, communicate design ideas in different ways, include alternative ideas and involve measurements. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils' skills are not assessed formally and this makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stage in pupils' learning.
73. Standards in **music** are average. One short music lesson was observed. Pupils' singing skills are satisfactory. Some pupils learn to play instruments

such as recorders or receive instrumental teaching from specialist teachers. These pupils achieve high standards and are confident players of the violin, flute and clarinet. There is a good school orchestra in which staff also perform and enjoy making music with the pupils. Music plays an important part in the daily routines of the school. Pupils' entry and exit to assembly are accompanied by music, and some lessons, such as art and design and creative writing, are enhanced by suitable music. In discussion with pupils, they recalled how much they enjoyed learning about listening to jazz. Pupils found visitors to the school, such as professional musicians showing how their instruments are played, stimulating and enjoyable. The subject co-ordinator is a leading music teacher and feels passionately about the subject. Pupils enjoy performing in front of an audience and rise to the occasion.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage the pupils well.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and they behave very well.
- Demonstrations are not used well to improve pupils' performances.
- Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress do not focus on the development of skills.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum.

Commentary

74. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils move on and over simple apparatus with suitable control and co-ordination. They satisfactorily learn and perform simple dance sequences and in games their bat and ball skills are suitable for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress and achievement is satisfactory.
75. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge and so pupils make satisfactory progress in dance, games and gymnastic activities. Teachers encourage and manage the pupils very well and they respond by showing great interest and behaving very well in lessons. Pupils enjoy the activities. During the inspection, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. In the best lesson seen, there was a good pace and a clear focus on developing pupils' gymnastic skills and good progress was made in developing pupils' balance. In other lessons, planning is satisfactory and suitable activities are chosen that keep pupils fully active. Pupils' demonstrations are used successfully to praise pupils and encourage their classmates, but rarely to highlight what it is others can learn from the demonstration. Pupils are given few opportunities after a demonstration to practise and refine their own performance.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and there are suitable procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. There is a satisfactory curriculum for the subject. Pupils are given adequate opportunities to be physically active, including a suitable programme for swimming for pupils in Year 3, which ensures that most pupils reach the expected standard for their age. The subject co-ordinator has correctly identified that current procedures for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory, as they do not focus sufficiently on the development of pupils' skills. He intends to address this weakness by introducing new procedures.
77. A very good range of well-attended sporting activities outside lessons enhances the curriculum. Pupils take part in a good number of inter-school games and tournaments with a good degree of success. These activities make a very positive contribution to pupils' social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. This subject was sampled: planning was scrutinised, discussions took place with staff and pupils and three short lessons were observed. Indications are that the subject is very well planned. There is a high emphasis throughout the school on children's and pupils' personal development. All adults provide really positive role models, which helps to promote the very good relationships that pervade the school. Emphasis has been placed within the curriculum on helping pupils understand the importance of their role as citizens. Teachers successfully develop important concepts such as human rights by encouraging decision-making in the lessons and during everyday life in the school.
79. All pupils are expected to be responsible and successful in the way in which they conduct themselves in lessons and around the school. Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence because they are trusted and respected by peers and adults. Pupils respond well to the school's expectation that every pupil will take some responsibility for the smooth running of the school, whether this is through being a member of the very good school council, a buddy or helping another pupil. Every pupil is keen to take responsibility and the product is, as a group of pupils described 'an enjoyable, fun school'.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	1
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	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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	2
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).