

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Rickmansworth

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117447

Headteacher: Mrs W. Awbery

Lead inspector: Mrs S. M. Barnes

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th July 2005

Inspection number: 267881

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: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 223

School address: Stockers Farm Road
Rickmansworth
Hertfordshire
Postcode: WD3 1NY

Telephone number: 01923 776529
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr C. Bayley

Date of previous inspection: 15th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's is an average sized Church of England primary school on the outskirts of Rickmansworth. The 223 boys and girls who attend come from a range of mainly privately owned homes in the area around the school. Pupils are organised in seven classes, plus a part-time Nursery. The Nursery building is apart from the main school, but shares the same site. Fewer pupils than nationally are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is less than the national average, but there are variations between different year groups. Most of these pupils' needs are related to speech and language, but also include specific learning, moderate learning, physical needs and the autistic spectrum. The proportion of pupils with statements is broadly average. There is a higher than average number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds compared to national figures but none of these are currently at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is broadly average overall. The school is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools and the networked schools project. Religious education and worship are inspected separately and reported elsewhere.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16249	Mrs S. M. Barnes	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Music
32676	Mr N. Power	Lay inspector	
16493	Mrs G. Robinson	Team inspector	English History Geography
24137	Mr N. Sherman	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with a significant number of very good and some excellent features. Pupils are taught well and achievement is good. The standards pupils attain are well above average in English and mathematics by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Leadership and management are good and are a major factor in creating the caring atmosphere in which excellent relationships thrive. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the time they leave the school in Year 6, pupils' achievement is good and standards in English and mathematics are well above average.
- Relationships are excellent and provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Teaching is good and stimulates pupils well.
- Leadership and management are good and are effective in driving standards forward.
- There are very good extra-curricular opportunities, which effectively extend the good curriculum.
- Assessment is good, particularly in the core subjects, and is used well, but it is not yet developed fully in all non-core subjects.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (the Nursery and Reception class) is good but is limited by accommodation and resources.
- Links with the community are very good and parents are provided with good information overall, but too many parents are dissatisfied with aspects of home and school communication.

There has been a **good** level of improvement since the previous inspection. The issues raised by the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. There are good opportunities for challenge, particularly for more able pupils. Co-ordinators are developing their roles effectively, including monitoring resources. In addition, the good standards in English and mathematics have been built upon further and are now well above average. Standards in information and communication technology have also improved and are now above average. Behaviour remains very good and provision for pupils' care and welfare has been developed further and is now also very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

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

Achievement is **good** overall. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and exceed the early learning goals (the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year) in most areas by the time they start in Year 1. Achievement and standards

in physical development for young children are in line with those expected overall, but are inhibited by limited resources and space for them to climb and move energetically on a daily basis. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are overall above those expected by the time pupils start in Year 3. The results of national tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were well above all schools in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools they were above average in reading, well below average in writing and average in mathematics. The school responded to these results by increasing the emphasis on writing. Standards in writing and reading and history are now above average at the end of Year 2. Standards in science, music and ICT are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2.

In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good and standards are well above those expected in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave school. In national tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 6, standards were well above average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. Compared with results these pupils attained at the end of Year 2, achievement was average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Current standards in science are above average at Year 6 due to the focus school has placed on developing the subject. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and music are above those expected at the end of Year 6. Standards in history are above those expected at the end of Year 6 and achievement is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their individual learning targets. Currently there are no pupils at early stages of learning English as an additional language in the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' relationships with others are excellent. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is good and extra-curricular provision is very good. The grounds are spacious and attractive, but overall accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school provides very good levels of care and guidance for all its pupils. The extent to which all pupils have good and trusting relationships with their teachers and other adults in the school is excellent. Links with the community are very good and with other schools are good. The quality of information provided for parents is generally good and links with parents are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. Leadership is effective and has ensured the school continues to improve at a good rate. Management is good and daily routines and administration are efficient. The governing body has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and governance is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents support the work of the school and know that their children are happy. However, a significant proportion would like a more open and interactive relationship with the school.

Pupils are very pleased with their school and take part in activities and lessons with enthusiasm.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop assessment systems in non-core subjects and use them to monitor the progress and achievement of individual pupils and groups;
- improve the accommodation and resources for children in the Foundation Stage and in particular the facilities for their physical development;
- involve parents more through seeking and acting on their views.

The school has already identified these areas for improvement in its development plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** overall. Achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 is good, and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Standards in the core subjects are above average by Year 2 and in English and mathematics they are well above average by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and have a good start to their education overall. They achieve particularly well in personal and social development.
- Achievement in the area of physical development for young children is only satisfactory due to limited space and equipment for them to use on a daily basis.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school in developing language and mathematical skills.

Commentary

1. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning due to the good quality of education they receive. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is broadly average and children have a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs are supported well and their achievement is good in line with their individual targets.

Foundation Stage

2. Standards on entry to the Nursery are average overall, although there are some fluctuations year-on-year between different year groups. Standards in personal and social development are overall below those expected when children start school. Children in the Foundation Stage have a good start to their education and achieve well in most of the six areas of learning for Nursery and Reception children. Achievement is good in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and pupils exceed the early learning goals (the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception) in these areas by the time they start in Year 1. Achievement in personal and social development is very good and children exceed the early learning goals in this aspect of their learning by the time they start in Year 1. Achievement and standards in physical development are satisfactory overall due to limited resources and space for the children to climb and move energetically on a daily basis. The school is aware of this and has plans to increase opportunities to climb in the immediate future. Development of the Nursery and Reception accommodation and resources is also planned.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (17.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.6 (16.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (18.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are overall above those expected by the time pupils start in Year 3. The results of national tests in 2004 were well above all schools in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools they were above average in reading, well below average in writing and average in mathematics. The school responded to these results by increasing the emphasis on writing. Standards in writing, reading, personal, social and health education and citizenship, mathematics and history are now above average at the end of Year 2. Standards in science, mathematics, music, geography, design and technology, art and design, physical education and ICT are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.8 (27.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.0 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good and standards are well above those expected in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave school. In national tests in 2004, standards were well above average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. Compared with results these pupils attained at the end of Year 2, achievement was average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Current standards in science are above average at Year 6 due to the focus school has placed on developing the subject. Standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT), history and music are above those expected at the end of Year 6. Standards in art and design, geography, design and technology and physical education are in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes and behaviour are **very good** throughout the school. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and punctuality is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils very much enjoy their learning and take a full and active part in all that is planned for them.

- Pupils behave very well and understand very well the impact their behaviour has on the well being of others.
- Relationships at all levels are excellent and pupils value the trusting and genuine rapport staff have established with them.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' personal development and staff make creative use of the potential in different subjects to enhance pupils' understanding of the world in which they live.

Commentary

5. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and the school has maintained well the provision made in this aspect of its work since the previous inspection. Pupils work hard in lessons and a key feature of their work is the way they strive to solve problems for themselves and only ask the teacher when they are genuinely stuck. Levels of independence are very good, as are the skills pupils demonstrate when asked to co-operate with one another. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and are appreciative and sensitive to the views of others. They understand well, for example, that not all of their friends are as confident when speaking aloud to a wider audience as others and the sensitivity shown to those who fall into this category helps to boost their self-esteem. There are high levels of participation by pupils in the extra-curricular life of the school, demonstrating further the strong commitment by the pupils and the very warm affinity they have towards school and their teachers.
6. Behaviour in and around the school is very good and the quality of relationships at all levels is excellent. Pupils are polite and extremely courteous and are respectful towards any visitor to the school. They are thoughtful and sensitive towards their classmates and understand the impact that their behaviour can have on the well-being of others. Any instances of pupils falling out are an extremely rare occurrence and pupils have a clear understanding of the school's procedures for tackling this if it should occur. Pupils feel valued and appreciated by all staff and this helps to ensure that relationships at all levels are of the very highest quality. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to exceed the early learning goals for their age in personal and social development by the time they transfer to Year 1.
7. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Of note is the creative way in which teachers utilise the potential in many subjects to promote pupils' understanding of the world around them. In geography, for example, pupils have explored life in Africa and how it contrasts radically to their own and have established links with a primary school. Pupils respond extremely well to the rich and varied opportunities provided to collect for others less fortunate than themselves, with many demonstrating good levels of initiative in devising interesting ways to do this. The many opportunities in day-to-day lessons to work in small groups add further to the very good provision to promote pupils' understanding of what it means to be a member of a wider social group. In subjects such as art and design, music and history pupils have regular opportunities to extend their understanding of culture. In addition, teachers draw on some of the pupils' different cultural heritage, which make a valuable contribution to the understanding all pupils have of the multi-cultural aspects of society.
8. Pupils' attendance at school is broadly in line with the national average. At the time of the last report attendance was good. The school has identified this and measures put in place to encourage parents not to take holidays in term time are working. Current figures indicate that attendance is now above the national median at 96.0 per cent. Unauthorised absences remain below the national median. There were no exclusions in the last reporting year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Assessment is **good** overall, although not as well developed in some non-core subjects. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage and for Years 1 to 6 is **good** and the school provides a **very good** range of extra learning opportunities. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. The school provides **very good** levels of care, support and guidance and pupils are effectively involved in choices about school life. The school's partnership with the community is **very good**, with other schools it is **good** and with parents it is **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. It is good for the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 3 to 6. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Assessment is good overall. It is particularly good for the core subjects but less well developed in some non-core subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, teachers engage and encourage pupils effectively.
- Teachers in all classes promote equality of opportunity well and insist on the highest standards of behaviour and application.
- Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teaching and learning of personal and social development is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Formal homework is given to pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 and work is checked, but teachers rarely indicate this in pupils' homework diaries.
- Assessment is good, especially of the core subjects, but assessment of other subjects is not as effective.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2 (6%)	21 (66%)	9 (28%)	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.

9. Teaching is good overall and leads to pupils making good gains in their learning and achieving well. A particular strength of the teaching in all classes is in the way teachers work to make lessons interesting. As a result, pupils pay attention and stay

on task and this has a beneficial effect on the quality of their learning. Teachers and all staff work hard to ensure that lessons enable all pupils to take part. Care is taken, for example when pupils go out of class for various reasons such as extra music tuition or special needs support, that this does not impact negatively on any one lesson and that they all have equal opportunity to succeed. All adults in school maintain high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them at all times. Their consequent very good behaviour and attentiveness ensure that no time is lost in lessons and so pupils apply themselves well to their learning.

10. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is carefully and efficiently managed. Pupils have a good balance of support in lessons and a small amount of withdrawal for specific aspects. This is managed well and pupils' subsequent confidence and self-esteem are good because of this.
11. Teaching of English, mathematics and history are good throughout the school. Teachers are confident and pupils make good gains in their learning and achieve well as a result. During inspection all teaching was at least satisfactory and much was good. Good teaching occurred in virtually every class. On occasion teaching and learning were very good. Consistently good and better teaching occurred in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Teaching of personal and social development is good overall throughout the school. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. This good start is built upon effectively as pupils move through the school and contributes to the very good ethos and harmonious relationships.
12. Assessment is good overall. Teachers' marking of work is good. It helps them know what standards pupils are attaining, what they are capable of achieving and what to plan for future learning. Homework is satisfactorily planned and linked to the work pupils do in school. Teachers make generally good use of homework, which is given formally to all years from Year 2 upwards. This homework is checked by teachers, but rarely is any indication of this given in pupils' homework diaries or any written response made. As a result, this opportunity to communicate with parents and involve them in dialogue about their children's progress is missed. There are a number of good assessment systems in school to help teachers plot pupils' progress and predict future assessment.
13. The results of assessments in English, mathematics and science are analysed and used to determine what to do to improve. In other subjects assessments are often carried out at the end of topics and an evaluation of pupils' performance is made and reported each year to parents. There is no recording system to enable these evaluations to be monitored, which would help teachers to be secure about standards in class and subject leaders to have a clear understanding of standards across the school.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good**. The curriculum is made all the more exciting by offering pupils a **very good, rich and diverse** extra-curricular provision. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is interesting, stimulating and well planned for the pupils.

- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- Pupils are very well prepared for transition to secondary school.
- The school provides many extra-curricular activities, including sports and arts, which are popular and well attended.
- The school has started to develop purposeful, interesting links between subjects.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.

Commentary

14. The school has worked hard to improve its curricular provision since the last inspection. The headteacher is fully involved in shaping the school's curriculum and knows well its strengths and areas for future improvement. Pupils have a rich curriculum which, as in the last inspection, is broad, balanced and matched well to their needs. Learning is fun because teachers plan a wide variety of interesting activities that are relevant and meaningful to all pupils. Pupils report that learning is enjoyable. Quality time is given to teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy and this helps pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics.
15. The school is continuing to develop its curriculum and will be planning further links between subjects so that appropriate skills and knowledge learned in one subject will boost the learning in others. For example, in an interesting geography lesson, the pupils had to plot where bombs had damaged the local area during World War II. This meant Year 2 pupils reading entries made in a tabular form, finding the location and sticking an appropriate number of dots on a map of the area. This combines history, geography, reading and mathematics in an enjoyable and memorable way.
16. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress as a result. Pupils' access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs, is very good. This is because the school cares about all its pupils. Most curricular areas include first hand experiences and there is very good use of visits and visitors to bring learning alive for the pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils visit Batchworth Lock when studying the Victorians where they learn about canals and how important they were for 'fast' communication. Particular attention is given to help pupils understand the cultures of other people. During the arts week, artists from different countries perform for pupils.
17. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good, balanced and relevant curriculum for their age. This helps them make good progress overall in the different areas of their learning. These children learn through well-planned opportunities to play in a purposeful way that develops their understanding and skills.
18. The school has developed a very good programme for supporting pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education including sex education and drugs awareness education. It is closely linked to other aspects of education provision, particularly opportunities to talk about feelings and pupil responsibilities. The programme runs from the Nursery class to Year 6 to ensure a clear progression in the development of the pupils.
19. Opportunities for pupils to take part in activities beyond the school day are very good. The school organises a varied programme of clubs that caters for a wide range of interests from orchestra to French to scrabble club. These clubs/activities take place during lunchtimes and after school. The clubs are popular with pupils and parents and

make a significant contribution to school life. A large number of pupils learn to play the recorder, sing and play other instruments, have a great commitment to sporting activities as well as having the chance to perform on stage for the school's production.

20. Classrooms are small and every available space in the school is used well for teaching or storage. The new ICT suite is in constant use, but will comfortably accommodate only part of a class. This limits pupils' opportunities to work on computers in a class lesson. The school grounds are superb and the school makes good use of them for science and sports activities. Each class has a garden, there is a reflection/quiet area and a wonderful nature area. The playgrounds do not have adventurous outdoor activity equipment, although pupils reported that they would like to have some for physical activity during lunchtimes. The Nursery outdoor area is extremely cramped and does not allow a full programme for their physical development. This has a negative impact on children's development of physical skills and stamina. There are suitable resources for all subjects and an appropriate match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives its pupils **very good** support, advice and guidance. The school ensures the care and welfare of its pupils **very well**. The school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are safe and cared for very well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
- The arrangements to help pupils to improve their work are very effective.

Commentary

21. The school takes pupils' welfare very seriously. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous. The school's risk assessments are thorough and work well. Pupils feel safe and secure and this helps them to apply themselves to their work: they achieve well. St. Mary's is a very caring school and pupils understand this. Parents appreciate the support and consideration the school offers when there are difficult personal circumstances such as bereavement or illness.
22. Relationships between staff and pupils are based on mutual respect and trust. The school is a happy place where adults and pupils enjoy each other's company. Pupils like their teachers very much and are confident that they will receive very good support, advice and guidance from them. All staff at the school know their pupils very well and as a result give them very good support in both academic and personal matters. This helps them to develop very well personally. Teachers listen to pupils' opinions and take them seriously. However, pupils are not always sufficiently involved in helping to shape the development of the school.
23. Pupils' work is carefully and helpfully marked. Teachers offer helpful advice on how pupils can improve their work and pupils appreciate this. As pupils get older they are given more responsibility and are encouraged to assess their own work before the teacher reviews what they have done. This encourages pupils to do as well as they can and develops their appraisal skills. Teachers have very good systems to help

pupils to do their best. For example, older pupils use a 'must', 'should' and 'could' approach to help them to strive always to do better by indicating what they ought to be able to achieve.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's has **satisfactory** links with parents. Links with other schools are **good**. Links with the community are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Community links very effectively enrich pupils' learning and personal development.
- Links with other schools support pupils' education well.
- The school provides good, useful information to parents.
- Too many parents are dissatisfied with some aspects of the school communication.

Commentary

24. The school has very good links with local churches and businesses. These are used very well to enrich pupils' education. For example, the local Anglican Church is very involved in school life through lessons, assemblies and at Christian festivals and celebrations. It makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. The school is also raising funds through its 'SMILEY' (St Mary's Investment in Learning for the Early Years) project for new Nursery facilities. A proportion of the money raised is used to support the Wamba school and village charity in Kenya. This encourages pupils to consider those less fortunate than themselves and enhances their understanding of issues faced by other countries and cultures. The school supports a number of other charities and enjoys the support of several local businesses.
25. Local secondary schools are keen to be involved with St Mary's and the school welcomes their involvement as it increases the opportunities available to pupils and supports their education well. For example, the involvement of Rickmansworth secondary school during the performing arts week was very much appreciated by all involved.
26. The school keeps parents well informed about events and day-to-day activities at school through newsletters, notice boards and email. Parents are supportive of the work of the school and know their children are happy and enjoy school. Annual reports to parents indicate what pupils can do and also give information about what they need to do to improve. However, not all reports show how pupils are doing in relation to national expectations and a significant number of parents indicated that they would appreciate this information.
27. Although the information provided to parents is good, about a quarter of all parents still expressed dissatisfaction at some elements of home-school communication. This is an unacceptably high proportion and needs to be addressed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. Leadership of the school is **good**. Management is **efficient**. Governors are **effective** in their role.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and promotes inclusion very effectively.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement.
- Leadership of special educational needs is good.
- Foundation Stage is well led and managed.
- Financial control is efficient.

Commentary

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	633,417	Balance from previous year	79,363
Total expenditure	625,908	Balance carried forward to the next	86,872
Expenditure per pupil	2,733		

28. The quality of leadership and management of the school are good overall and as a result lead to a good quality of education and high standards by the time pupils reach Year 6.
29. The leadership of the headteacher is good and is firmly focused on ensuring that all pupils, whatever their background or prior attainment, receive equal, very good opportunities to take part in activities and work to their potential. As a result of this good, strong leadership, relationships throughout the school are very good and all pupils have excellent and trusting relationships with staff. The Christian ethos of the school is developed effectively and is appreciated by parents and pupils alike.
30. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and have a good, clear understanding of its strengths and the areas for improvement. All statutory requirements are met. Governors play an important role in shaping the direction of the school. They offer good levels of support and challenge. Preparations for workforce reform are well underway.
31. Leadership of special educational needs is good and all staff know what each pupil's individual needs are and support them effectively. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good and as a result all children get a good start to their school career and achieve well. The school is well aware of the restrictions of some aspects of the accommodation and there are plans to improve facilities for children to climb in the very near future and plans are being developed to reorganise and rebuild the accommodation, particularly for the Nursery.
32. Financial management is good and the school applies the principles of best value well. Budgetary control systems are very good and the recommendations of the most recent auditors' report have been implemented. The school is saving money to fund the development of the new Foundation Stage building project and so is carrying money forward each year to fund this. Financial planning is effectively linked to performance management and the school development plan. Self-evaluation is good

and the school has highlighted the most important steps to raise standards still further. The school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception class in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Children start in Nursery in the mornings in the September or January following their third birthday. They transfer to the Reception class after their fourth birthday. Children have experienced a wide range of different early years settings before starting school. Standards on entry are broadly average overall, although there are some fluctuations year on year. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In personal and social development standards are generally below those expected when children start in the Nursery. During their time in Nursery and Reception, children make good progress in their learning overall as a result of the good quality of teaching they receive in all areas of learning. Their achievement is good in most aspects of the curriculum. It is very good in personal and social development. Standards attained are above those expected for the early learning goals expected for children's ages in nearly all aspects of learning for young children. However, in physical development, children's achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly in line with those expected by Year 1. Induction into the Nursery and Reception class is good and is one of the reasons children settle into school so happily. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good overall and the standards noted at the previous inspection have been effectively maintained. Leadership of teams within classes is generally good but on occasion teachers do not make clear to other staff who is overseeing children working on their own. As yet the co-ordinator has not monitored teaching in the Nursery class. The accommodation is satisfactory. The Nursery building is old but kept in a clean and attractive condition by the hard work of all staff and volunteer helpers. The Nursery garden area provides good opportunity for children to learn about the world in which they live as it is planted with a wide range of fruits and flowers, but it is too small for energetic play on tricycles and there are no facilities to climb. The Reception play area is larger, but still limited and again there are no facilities to develop upper body strength and lung capacity. The classroom is laid out well by the staff, but hand washing facilities inside the Reception classroom are a significant distance from the toilet area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly learn classroom routines.
- All staff have high expectations of children's attitudes.
- Class discussion is used well for children to learn that they have different preferences and dislikes.

Commentary

33. All staff who work in the Nursery and Reception class establish clear routines from the start. As a result children quickly learn what it is they need to do and what is expected of them. Teaching and learning are very good in the Nursery and Reception and children make very good progress in learning to work together amicably. Their

achievement is very good and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals for their age by the time they move into Year 1. On occasion, however, children in both classes play roughly with equipment when not watched closely. This is generally while the teacher works with one group and does not make clear who is monitoring other parts of the classroom and playground. Generally teachers and support staff have high expectations of the children, which they respond to well, for example remembering to dress appropriately for various activities and washing their hands when they need to. Class discussion is used well for children in both classes to learn to take turns to speak and to listen to each other. In this way, they learn that some of them like some things and their friends like other things.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's vocabulary is developed well.
- Staff provide children with good opportunities to look at books and learn to write.

Commentary

34. There is a strong emphasis on developing skills of communication in both classes. Teaching and learning are good in the Nursery and in the Reception class and children's achievements are good. By the time they start in Year 1, children are likely to exceed the early learning goals expected for their age. Adults working with children in both classes pay good attention to developing language skills and to extending children's vocabulary. Many good opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning and, as a result, children talk confidently in the main and make their views known. Children have developing confidence in speaking to others about their games, negotiating tasks and roles, such as when playing in the *Travel Agents* or when building with milk crates in the garden. They enjoy an increasing range of books and handle them carefully, often choosing to sit quietly perusing a book by themselves. Many are beginning to use writing as a means of recording and have a good awareness of the sounds different letters make.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching and enjoyable lessons.
- Children are given good opportunities to learn about money and coins.

Commentary

35. Teaching and learning are good in the Nursery and in the Reception class. The children make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure and achievement is good. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for children of this age in this aspect of their learning. There is a good range of games and puzzles specifically designed to support early understanding of number. These are used well and children enjoy their lessons. In the Nursery children are learning to count and to recognise some numbers

when written down. Good use is made of counting games, although the use of children's recording of numbers can pose a problem for children playing the game later in the morning as the writing of children who played the game earlier is not always clear to decipher. Most children in Reception can count confidently and handle simple addition with numbers to five and ten. While many can recognise numerals, some confuse one, seven and ten. Reception children use number easily in everyday contexts such as when playing shopping games with their teacher. Good use is made of real coins, which makes the game more realistic for the children. They confidently use language such as 'more' or 'less' to compare two numbers and know that if they have ten pence to spend they cannot buy a sweet that costs thirteen pence.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan work well.
- Children have good opportunities to learn about fruits, herbs and flowers.

Commentary

36. All aspects of this wide area of learning are suitably thought out and children in the Nursery and Reception class achieve well and attain standards above those expected for their ages by the time they move into Year 1. Teaching and learning are good and teachers make good use of all opportunities to develop children's knowledge of the world around them. For example, linked to the current topic on map work, children walk around the school with their teachers marking noteworthy features on plans as they go. There are regular good opportunities for children to develop their information, communication and technology skills through using the class computers. A significant feature of the curriculum for Nursery and Reception children alike is in the opportunity they have to watch plants grow and observe as fruits and flowers develop. As a result, their observational skills are well developed. For example, Nursery children confidently point to herbs in the millennium garden that they like the smell of and those that they dislike.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of opportunities for children to develop manipulative skills and dexterity.
- There are limited opportunities for children to develop upper body strength.
- The Reception playground is not overlarge and the Nursery playground too small for energetic play.

Commentary

37. Teachers provide children in the Nursery and Reception class with good opportunities to develop control and skill in manipulating small objects and tools such as pencils, scissors and construction toys. Teaching and learning are good in this aspect of physical development for young children. However, there is no climbing equipment for

young children to use on a daily basis. Although some sessions are held in the hall each week, all in all there are too few opportunities for children to take their weight on their arms and develop upper body strength and lung capacity. The school is aware of this and new climbing equipment is on order. In the meantime children make broadly satisfactory progress in their development. Standards are likely to be in line with those expected by the time children start in Year 1.

38. The school is also aware of the limitations of the Reception outdoor area and the cramped nature of the Nursery garden. Although both areas are set out attractively, the Reception area with a book corner, for example, and the Nursery garden planted with a wide range of fruits and flowers, their use for developing children's physical skills is limited. While the Reception area is broadly satisfactory, the Nursery area does not allow for energetic play to be undertaken safely by more than one or two children at a time. As a result, quarrels break out more frequently than need be and children's physical development and stamina are inhibited. The school plans to resolve this when the new Foundation Stage development takes place as soon as sufficient funds have been raised.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative activities are used well to support learning in other areas.
- Teachers provide opportunities for a wide range of different experiences.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are good. Children's achievement in this area is good as a result. Creative activities are used well as a stimulus for learning in other areas. For example, children learn to develop their imagination and communication skills through participating in role-play in the travel agents, while also learning about the world in which they live. From Nursery onwards, children are given a wide range of good opportunities to sing, paint and use their imaginations. Equipment is at hand for children to select for themselves what models they will make and what materials they will use. In the Reception class children learn to mix paint to achieve a range of tones. Attainment is likely to be above that expected for children's ages by the time they start in Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of reading is very good and pupils quickly develop confidence as readers.
- The school's strategies to improve standards in writing have had a positive impact on pupils' progress in developing writing skills.

- Assessment is good and is used well to record pupils' achievements and show progress.
- Teachers set pupils targets, but these are rarely used and referred to.

Commentary

40. Year 2 pupils attain standards which are above average. The school's results in national tests in 2004 were average in writing and well above average in reading compared nationally. They were above average in comparison with similar schools in reading and well below average in writing. There is every indication that the 2005 results will be higher. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above the national average in writing and well above the national average in reading, speaking and listening. The improvement in writing is the result of carefully focused work providing more opportunities to improve their written work in a range of styles. In the 2004 national tests, eleven year olds attained standards that were well above average in English compared nationally and average in comparison with similar schools. In the 2005 tests, initial results indicate that standards are higher than those of 2004. During the inspection pupils' attainment in all aspects of English was well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Pupils' progress accelerates significantly in the juniors and they achieve highly in Year 6. The school has improved its standards in English since the last inspection, when they were judged to be above average for infant and junior pupils alike.
41. Teaching and learning are good overall. The consistent use of 'talking partners', where pupils are encouraged to discuss issues with a partner across many areas of the curriculum, is supporting the development of speaking and listening skills extremely well. This strategy raises pupils' self-esteem very effectively and gives them confidence to join in discussions and speak in a range of situations. Achievement is good because of the detailed planning of opportunities for all pupils to develop these skills. There is a high emphasis in all lessons on key vocabulary being used and vocabulary is often reinforced both orally and visually to ensure understanding. Listening skills are very good at the end of Years 2 and 6.
42. Pupils' attainment in reading is well above average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The school has introduced a range of structured programmes to encourage and develop pupils' reading skills and consequently the achievement of all pupils is very good. Teachers make good choices of reading materials to share with the pupils and plan interesting and challenging lessons to capture the interest of both girls and boys. For example, in Year 2, pupils correctly answer questions about a story and are confident to provide the teacher with evidence using the text. Pupils in Year 6 are currently enjoying a range of texts and many are well able to respond to the novel by identifying key features and characters and giving their opinions of how characters are feeling. By the end of Year 6, all pupils have a secure understanding of the different genres of writing available for them to read and enjoy reading for both pleasure and information.
43. Pupils' achievement in writing is good and standards are good at the end of Year 2 and very good at the end of Year 6. Teachers very effectively use opportunities to develop literacy skills across the curriculum and this impacts very well on the pupils' standards in writing. For example, pupils write diaries in history, they label diagrams correctly and record investigations in science, and in physical education they write newspaper reports about their sporting fixtures. A structured programme for teaching

individual and groups of letter sounds helps pupils to make good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words and gives them confidence to communicate in writing. In Year 3, pupils prepare an opening for an adventure story, using imaginative vocabulary to capture the interest of the reader. Older pupils write short responses to a problem, offering sensible advice. By the end of Year 6 the pupils are confidently using both formal and informal styles of writing, where appropriate, using complex and simple sentences organised into paragraphs. The average pupils readily organise their writing appropriately for different purposes and show some understanding of structure. Year 5 poems of *The Seven Ages of Man* in the style of William Shakespeare and Year 6 Reflection poems show maturity in writing well beyond their age and contribute very effectively to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

44. Pupils have appropriate targets that they know, but they are not evaluated regularly, nor referred to during lesson times. They work hard in lessons to acquire new knowledge and understanding and are eager to put these into practice. The presentation of their work is very good. Spellings are usually correct and handwriting is consistently formed and legible.
45. The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning and has initiated innovations in teaching and learning to raise standards, especially in writing. The resources and accommodation for English are satisfactory, although the class book corners are not always as attractive and comfortable as they could be.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in many other subjects such as history, geography, religious education, science and ICT. They make very good use of their speaking and listening skills in a range of activities including discussions, debates and constructing interviews. Their writing skills are seen in many different styles in nearly all subjects. For example, they recount famous events in history and religious education and describe scientific investigations and geographical features such as the water cycle using specific vocabulary accurately.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Boys and girls achieve well.
- Pupils' ability to calculate is not always matched by their ability in practical situations.
- Teaching in setted groups in Years 5 and 6 allows pupils to learn at an optimum pace.
- Older pupils are starting to be involved in assessing how well they are doing.

Commentary

47. Results of the national tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were above average compared with all schools nationally. When compared with results of pupils in similar schools, based on known eligibility for free school meals, results were average. Results of tests for pupils in Year 6 were well above average for all schools. They were above the results of similar schools. When compared with the standards these same pupils had attained at the end of Year 2, achievement was average.

48. Current standards are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. Pupils make overall good progress and achieve well. There are some differences in attainment between boys and girls in the subject in school, but tracking and analysis of data indicates that pupils from all groups achieve equally well. Skills such as comparing data and converting measurements in mathematical exercises are generally well developed. However pupils' lack of confidence and awareness of actual measuring skills, for example trying to measure the length of a tie while holding it in the air or estimating the length of an object after they have measured it, suggests a limited experience of practical tasks.
49. Teaching and learning are good overall, with consistently good teaching in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, some opportunities to match the tasks very closely to the needs of individuals are missed. Overall pupils in these classes reach standards in line with those expected nationally for their age. Teachers throughout the school are confident in their knowledge of the subject. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught in set groups. This allows teachers to ensure that pupils who require extra time and support receive them, while maintaining challenge and pace for potential higher attaining pupils. These older pupils are also involved in assessing how well they are doing with the teachers' guidance and so, in seeing the progress they are making, their self-esteem and confidence are enhanced. Because of this they feel able to make suggestions to the class, such as simple ways they have thought of to remember the meaning of terms such as 'mode' and 'median'. In Year 4, pupils are regularly involved in assessing how well they have understood the task and decide when they know they can attempt very challenging work or when they need it to be explained again. Because of the lack of stigma attached to needing further explanation, queries are resolved very quickly and the pace of learning is good.
50. Throughout the school, teachers are good at setting the tone where there are high expectations for pupils' behaviour and response. As a result, pupils in all classes know what is acceptable and behaviour is very good. Pupils are attentive and concentrate on what they are taught. No time is wasted and this has a beneficial impact on the pace of learning.
51. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator monitors standards and the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. She uses assessment data to track groups of pupils and to analyse trends. Mathematics targets are set for each year group, although not all classes keep these completely up to date and they do not yet go home. This limits parental participation in helping their children to work towards their next target in the subject. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, which judged that standards were above average.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum to support work in other subjects, for example in presenting findings in science as graphs or tables. However, indications are that some opportunities are missed for pupils to practise measuring skills in practical situations, for example when designs of 'Joseph's coat of many colours' use a template instead of allowing pupils to draw and measure for themselves.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rapidly rising and pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to extend their investigation skills.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- In marking pupils' work, teachers do not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how they may improve.

Commentary

53. The 2004 end of Year 2 teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment in science is average. The inspection findings indicate that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and reflect the picture painted by the 2004 teacher assessments. On the basis of the 2004 end of Year 6 national test results, pupils' attainment is below the national average. There has been a mixed picture in how well pupils have performed in science for the last three years. The pupils' performance based on their prior attainment is well below average. The inspection findings point to standards being above the national average, reflecting the much improved performance by pupils in the 2005 National Curriculum tests where a high proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5. The school has made science the focus for staff development during the past year. Of note has been the shift in emphasis to developing pupils' learning through investigation work and this strategy is now a pivotal aspect of teaching. This work has had a positive effect on the standards that pupils reach and explains the difference between National Curriculum test results and inspection findings.
54. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. As they move through Years 1 and 2, pupils successfully learn about a range of different scientific ideas and concepts. They understand, for example, how to put together a range of equipment to make a simple circuit and that certain everyday objects require electricity in order to operate. As they move through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to build on this knowledge well and gain a good grounding in understanding the terminology of concepts such as forces, living things, light, sound and materials. Pupils make particularly good progress in their appreciation of what is meant by 'fair-testing' and understand well how the changing of one variable may well have an adverse effect on the validity of their investigation work. Older pupils are very adept at setting up and following through their own lines of enquiry as well as reaching sensible and realistic conclusions.
55. Teaching and learning are good overall. Since the previous inspection, staff have successfully built up a good understanding of how best to plan pupils' learning and to make activities meaningful and fun. Very good use is made of investigation work to enrich pupils' learning and older pupils in particular are given every encouragement to set up their own questions and hypotheses as well as determining the resources they may need to follow their work through. Teachers also successfully draw on the potential in subjects like English, mathematics and ICT to broaden pupils' learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, for example, get good opportunities to use multi-media software to present the findings of their investigations that are subsequently shared with the rest of the class. A weakness in teaching, however, lies in how teachers mark pupils' work. While they write supportive comments, too few of these give clear or precise enough information about how pupils may improve their work. As a result, some pupils' drawings and labelling of work which is not always sufficiently neat is not

picked up by teachers and pupils get very much ingrained in presenting their diagrams in a slap-dash way.

56. Leadership and management are good, leading to a good pace of improvement since the previous inspection. The monitoring of teaching had revealed weaknesses in how teachers teach certain aspects of the subject. This had led to ways to boost staff confidence in some aspects of their teaching, particularly in how best to guide pupils' learning through investigation work. Care has been taken to ensure that the subject makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development, resulting in pupils having very positive attitudes to their learning of science and the contribution it can make to understanding the world in which they live.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pace of change since the previous inspection has been good.
- Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The technician makes a valuable contribution to overall provision.
- There is insufficient use made of assessment information to plan pupils' future learning.
- The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear idea of what aspects could be strengthened further.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are above expectations and achievement by all pupils is good. The school has successfully built on the provision made at the time of the last inspection and the overall pace of change has been good. ICT is effectively embedded into many areas of the curriculum and the pupils make good progress in their understanding of the part that ICT plays in their everyday lives. In Years 3 to 6, achievement by all groups of pupils is good.
58. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to use a range of different programs to aid them in their learning. They can change the size and appearance of typewritten text and they can successfully download images from the Internet and place them into a word-processed document. Pupils' skills are successfully built on as they move through Years 3 to 6 using a more extensive range of software to support them in their learning. Older pupils are skilled in using multi-media software to help them make presentations about particular themes and topics and they talk confidently about how to combine text, images and audio files in order to achieve this. Pupils, through the good opportunities given to them by teachers to use the Internet as a means to locate, retrieve and download information, understand well how this resource is a powerful tool to help them in their studies. Pupils make equally good progress in using spreadsheets, programmable languages such as 'Logo' and in seeing the increasing use and impact that new technologies are having on their day-to-day lives.
59. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, learning is pitched too often at the whole class and insufficient attention is paid to planning learning to really push and challenge higher-attaining pupils. Teaching in the computer suite is consistently good. The school's technician works well with teachers and in some cases undertakes some of the teaching in small groups herself. The quality of this is good and her work has a positive impact on both provision and the achievement of pupils.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of interactive whiteboards to demonstrate particular teaching points. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their own lines of enquiry in the subject and this helps to boost their self-confidence as well as making a positive contribution to their personal development.

60. Effective leadership and management in the subject help to ensure that the subject has a high status in the school. Although the co-ordinator is new to the role, he has quickly identified where strengths in provision lie and where further improvement is necessary. Monitoring of learning does take place, but the co-ordinator has not yet had much first hand experience of monitoring the teaching of his colleagues.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. Teachers successfully draw on the potential of other subjects to support the development of pupils' ICT skills. Pupils consolidate their word-processing skills in English as well as their oral skills through making presentations using multi-media software. By using spreadsheets and other graphing software, pupils successfully develop their understanding of how mathematical data can be drawn together, explored and then presented visually in the form of different tables and charts.

HUMANITIES

62. Work was sampled in **geography**, with one lesson seen given to half the class. The subject was not a focus for the inspection and, therefore, it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. There is every indication from discussions with pupils and from examples of their work that standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages. Year 6 pupils talk knowledgeably about river formation and saw this in action on their residential journey in Wales. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the post, but has made a positive start in managing this subject. Unfortunately, pupils say it is their least favourite subject.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school reach an above average standard.
- Pupils are learning to be young historians.
- Interesting visits are planned to bring the subject to life.

Commentary

63. Standards of attainment in history throughout the school are above those expected of pupils nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. This is a similar judgement to that made by the previous inspection.
64. The emphasis that the school places on pupils actually reliving historical periods is one of the reasons for the high standards. History comes alive for all pupils through a very good range of visits to places of interest and visitors to school and is used successfully to stimulate new topics of study. Pupils in Year 3, for example, joined the parent teacher association organised evacuee parade in Rickmansworth High Street for VE day celebrations. They wore 1940s style of clothing, had a label and a small

suitcase. All pupils have a good understanding of famous people from history. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils learn about Dr Barnado and Lord Shaftesbury and their work to help to educate the Victorian orphans. These pupils experience the strict classroom rules and hear about the punishments for not keeping them when they visit a Victorian School Museum on their residential journey. The fact that pupils can recall in great detail historical facts about events in the past is evidence of how teachers make history interesting and enjoyable.

65. Teaching is good overall. Teachers are trying to make meaningful links with history and the rest of the curriculum. For example, in Year 3, pupils studying World War II investigate their family background, writing reports of life in those times. These reports are sensitive and well written, showing the keenness and interest pupils took in listening to older members of their family. They researched websites and the school log book for further information and used techniques learnt in design and technology to make air raid shelters. Pupils in Year 6 are clear about the differences between primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils learn to ask questions about their work and can use pictures, photographs and artefacts particularly well in drawing conclusions. Year 6 pupils are presented with challenging questions about the Trojan Wars and the skilled teaching helps them to tease out comparisons between ancient and modern society, their laws and customs.
66. The subject leader is very new to the school, but has already made an evaluation of the subject and identified areas to develop further. He is planning how the subject can be assessed and monitored. He is very clear of how to develop the subject further.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. **Physical education, art and design** and **design and technology** were not foci for the inspection and so are not reported in detail. In **physical education**, pupils have good opportunity to take part in a wide range of sporting and athletic activities, both in lessons and as extra-curricular activities. All pupils have regular opportunities to learn to swim, mainly in the school's own outdoor pool. Virtually all pupils attain the level expected by the end of Year 6. In **art and design** and **design and technology**, standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to learn to play a wide range of instruments.
- Extra-curricular clubs are of high quality and enjoyed by all who attend.
- The subject contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Simple systems to assess pupils' progress are newly developed.

Commentary

68. Music is given high status within the school and pupils have opportunity to learn to play a range of instruments such as the piano, guitar, brass and violin through peripatetic tuition. Teaching and learning are good overall and the subject is taught effectively using a commercial scheme supplemented by other work. In addition, in the last year all pupils in Year 3 now learn to play the recorder. By Year 6 virtually all of the pupils have had some extra tuition. As a result, most pupils in the older classes read music with ease and have a wide

vocabulary of musical terms, which they use correctly. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of that age. By the end of Year 6 achievement is good and standards are above those expected for pupils of that age.

69. Many pupils take part in clubs. About fifty pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 enthusiastically take part in the choir and another thirty from Years 5 and 6 play in the orchestra. A smaller group learns to play percussion to a good standard and rehearses each week under the careful and knowledgeable tuition of the caretaker. All of these experiences give pupils opportunity to learn to play and perform in a group and experience the fun that creating music can bring. Pupils talk with great enthusiasm of these musical opportunities and are very appreciative of them. In addition to developing pupils' musical skills these wider experiences contribute effectively to developing pupils' knowledge of music of different styles and from different cultures. They also make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school and the respect pupils develop for each other. For example, when groups play their compositions to their classmates during lessons the applause is spontaneous, enthusiastic and unstinting as pupils celebrate the success of others. Pupils regularly play and sing in assemblies. The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
70. The leadership and management of the subject are good and the co-ordinator has a good knowledge of standards throughout the school due to her monitoring of lessons in nearly all year groups. A simple new assessment system has recently been introduced to assess pupils against national curriculum levels. The success of this system is to be monitored over the coming year. As yet there is not much opportunity for pupils to use ICT skills when developing their music. The good progress noted at the time of the previous inspection has been effectively maintained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in this area of their learning.
- The subject makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient responsibility for the running of the school council.
- Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities for discussing themes and topics.

Commentary

71. Pupils reach standards above those expected for their ages in this area of their learning and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. The school has made good progress in developing the subject since the previous inspection and pupils benefit from the discrete teaching of the subject and the way that it is carefully interwoven through different areas of the curriculum. The subject makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development. Pupils get good regular opportunities to discuss issues in groups, thereby boosting their understanding of what it means to negotiate and listen effectively to the views of others.
72. As they move through the school, the pupils experience and learn about a range of different themes and topics. They understand well what it means to lead a healthy life and how to make informed decisions about not eating to excess and what foods are considered suitable as part of a balanced diet. Pupils have an equally good understanding of matters relating to drug misuse and to the impact of smoking on

people's day-to-day well-being. Very good opportunities are given to pupils to develop their understanding of what it means to play the part of a responsible citizen. The school council makes a satisfactory contribution to this process and pupils learn how to keep notes of meetings, feed back to their classmates the results of their discussions and set agendas. Given the very good levels of personal development demonstrated by many of the pupils, however, there is scope to broaden the part that the school council plays in the day-to-day life of the school with the pupils themselves, for example, setting and determining the issues for debate and discussion.

73. There is good teaching and learning in the subject. A key feature of the teaching is the scope of pupils' opportunities to discuss and listen to the views of others in many lessons. Pupils find the points for discussion interesting and lively and they respond well to the high challenge teachers present to them. Pupils are managed very well and pupils feel encouraged by the warm encouragement they are given to share their views with the rest of their classmates.
74. Good leadership and management of the subject have ensured that the subject has a high status on the curriculum and hence pupils' good understanding of the importance the subject should play in their day-to-day learning. The school is looking to develop assessment arrangements in the subject to boost provision further and to give teachers a clearer idea of the progress pupils are making as they move through the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
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	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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	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).

